



Komal Ansari

The Pedagogical Praxis of Creativity: an Investigation  
into the Incipience of Creative Writing in USJP

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THE PEDAGOGICAL PRAXIS OF CREATIVITY: AN  
INVESTIGATION INTO THE INCIPIENCE OF  
CREATIVE WRITING IN USJP

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THE PEDAGOGICAL PRAXIS OF CREATIVITY: AN INVESTIGATION  
INTO THE INCIPIENCE OF CREATIVE WRITING IN USJP

by

KOMAL ANSARI

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ABSTRACT

Creative Writing as a teachable artistic practice, and reinforcing its identity with an appropriate pedagogical approach, has been a vibrant research area for some years now. Yet, despite a strong increase in writing courses all over the globe, there has been little research into how creative practitioners can actually contribute to facilitate the process of skill development in higher education learners, especially in the public sector universities across Sindh, Pakistan. In an effort to introduce Creative Writing as an academic discipline to government universities in Sindh, the present research sought to observe the impact of a training programme on English fiction on a sample of native learners. A total of thirteen students volunteered for this project. The research sample was selected from a population of second year undergraduates, enrolled in literature courses at the Institute of English Language and Literature (IELL) in the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan (USJP); wherein Creative Writing had hitherto been a non-existent area of studies. Students were offered a twenty-nine session modular-workshop, aimed at exploring and expediting their artistic abilities in the short time span of a single semester. To ensure the trustworthiness of findings, the entire procedure was documented under the guidance of the researcher's supervisory team. A post-workshop evaluation survey was also used for attaining student feedback. The setup of assessment items and analysis constructs of students' narrative portfolios were adapted from validated sources and aligned with the context of this study. However, neither the feedback nor the assessment of students' work was counted as the findings of this research. Unlike non-artistic inquiries, the post-training creative output gathered from project participants was interpreted as the final research outcome. Methodologically, this process was conducted following a matrix of three practice-oriented research paradigms; whereas "performative research" was selected as the principle data creation and presentation strategy. The resulting research insight has exhibited an in-depth understanding of approaches that could facilitate fiction composition abilities of learners from different language backgrounds, while writing in English. It also allows practitioners to consider non-typical methods of research to contribute holistically to the existing body of knowledge in the field.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate all my endeavours to my family, who have been a guiding force behind my efforts throughout my life.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Background of the Study**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In the modern world, fiction is one of the most prominent genres associated with literature. It is a form known not only for its factual and socio-political analysis of ancient or contemporary life, but also for the imaginative prowess through which it transports the reader to dimensions hitherto unheard of (Tolstoy, 1997; LaMarre & Landreville, 2009). Additionally, since non-native speakers of English frequently find themselves in many situations where they have to use this language, it being a dominant mode of communication across a large spectrum of professions and academic institutions (Akram & Mahmood, 2007), English fiction has become one of the means through which they can attain fluency and better ways of communicative comprehension of this language (Rustam, 2010). While Hubbard (2009) views the presence of English novels and short stories as something of a habitual trend in Pakistani households, Chandio et al. (2013), Haider (2012a, 2012b), Khan (2011), Rustam (2010), and Siddiqui Z S (2007) believe not a lot has being done to make university level students perceive the possibility of attaining Creative Writing skills in English language. Native writing practitioners such as Kausar Bilal (2013), who is a lecturer at the University of Punjab (Lahore), and a novelist like Kamila Shamsie (2004) uniformly propound the presence of aspiring individuals who wish to compose literary fiction in English, so as to promote Pakistani culture throughout the world as many cultures

have been doing for a long time. Yet they have often been unable to do so due to limited exposure to proper Creative Writing approaches in this language (Shamsie, 2004). Consequently, the masses have neither been able to garner an awareness of Creative Writing as a practice, nor its identity as a field of studies (Bilal, 2013). Additionally, this situation appears to be somewhat more disturbing in the context of students enrolled at public sector universities in the Master of Arts in English programs, where students are required to concentrate on literature and reading, not on writing (Khan, 2012, p.59; Rustam, 2010, pp. 402, 458).

A divergent picture emerges when we observe the concrete presence of writing courses within contemporary private, and to some extent in public sector, universities across the country. Contrary to observing a complete nonexistence of the discipline, which has been depicted above, many universities and Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) recognized by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) have now introduced Creative Writing to their curriculum. This has been discussed in *Sections 1.2.4.2 – 1.2.4.3* of this thesis in detail. Clearly, therefore, native writing practitioners have now realized the significance of teaching learners to acquire better writing abilities, so they could explore various dimensions of their thought processes creatively and not just academically. In their research studies and writing workshops, creative writer-teachers such as Asma Mansoor (Lecturer in English, at the public sector International Islamic University, Islamabad) and Bilal Tanweer (Assistant Professor in Fiction Writing, at the private sector Lahore University of Management Sciences) have duly explored practice-oriented pedagogical approaches that could provide university learners with a motivational context where they could develop themselves as writers. See also, for instance, Mansoor (2010, 2011, 2012), and Lahore University of Management Sciences (2014) in this regard. To a great extent, their praxis and pedagogy conforms to that practiced by their international counterparts, such as Bell & Magrs (2001), Burroway (2003), Clarke (2008), Corbett (2007), Harper & Kroll (2008), Monteith & Miles (1992), and Vanderslice (2008, 2010, 2011). What stands common amongst these thinkers is their view of Creative Writing training workshops as a means of using practice-oriented activities to

achieve further good practice. And this is what this study set out to explore in the USJP.

The present project sought to establish various writing activities utilized in interactive learning environments by numerous practice-led and practice-based practitioners in different parts of the globe. By providing learners with a participative context, the study aimed to extend means that researchers knew about in order to foster creative writing abilities in students effectively. At the same time, through the administration of a strategically designed course module focusing on English fiction, and an observation of its impact on the students' narrative capacities, the research tended to examine the role creative practice, research and pedagogy could play in training students purely in a Pakistani university context.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide important background information about the subject of present research. This will include a discussion on the state of Creative Writing practices, especially the non-existent status of related pedagogy in the university sector, in Pakistan; a problem identified at Institute of English Language and Literature, in USJP, focusing on the need to introduce Creative Writing as a teachable practice to the institute; a brief discussion on the aims and objectives of the study; pertinent questions that the research would concentrate on; the principle research methodology and methods employed; the significance and scope of the subject treated; and will mention some constraints of the project.

## **1.2 Creative Writing in Pakistan**

Salam (2011) sees the trend of Creative Writing, not to mention its publishing market, as a post-modern development in Pakistan, even though he feels the same has been institutionalized in much of continental India, and the rest of the globe for a longer period of time. Naturally, it will be difficult for the notion of creativity" to outpace that of "academic writing" in every corner of the nation (Naeem, 2010). Having said that, Azam (2010) and Mansoor (2012) believe we

cannot, however, turn a blind eye to the huge network of native writers who have given creative practice a firm grounding, especially in the context of popular fiction in English. But there are others who believe the country exhibits a lack of creative prowess at large, which is visibly evident in its universities.

### ***1.2.1 Artistic contribution by fiction writers in English language***

Drawing on research encompassing the contribution of Pakistani novelists over the last century, Hashmi (1990) claims that numerous writers all over the country have acquired impressive creative skills that make it possible for them to compose ‘vibrant and fine body of writing in English, whose generic and formal traditions go far back into the nineteenth century British fiction worthy of receiving international recognition’ (p.48). Singh (2009) agrees with Hashmi when he reflects on the presence of a ‘more derisive and richly empathetic feel’ about Pakistani English fiction, especially when compared to the vast bulk of contemporary Indian writing in English. ‘From Zulfikar Ghose’s *The Murder of Aziz Khan* (1967) – “the first cohesive, modern English novel written by a writer of Pakistani origin,” (Azam, 2010, p.8), to the work of Bapsi Sidhwa, Adam Zameenzad and Sara Suleri, to the present-day novels of Kamila Shamsie and Mohsin Hamid, there has been a gradual blossoming’ (Tranquebarindia, 2011).

With her novels like *Ice Candy Man*, *The Crow Eaters* and *An American Brat*, Bapsi Sidhwa goes to show the various phases Pakistan has gone through, starting with its partition from India (Singh, 2005). In his works, states Ahmed (2009), celebrated filmmaker, novelist and short story writer, Hanif Kureishi, has highlighted the twin issues of ethnicity and patriotism. If we take a look at the contemporary scene, a rather recent writer like Khadija Mastur, author of *Inner Courtyard* (2005), incorporates widespread concerns, based upon indigenous as well as universal issues such as domestic violence, Pakistani immigrants living abroad, and the shortcomings of hasty industrialization and its effects on communities. Due mention should be given to Sara Suleri, who in her memoir, *Boys Will Be Boys* (2003), exhibits her personal life as she spent in the USA,

while simultaneously presenting an elegy of her father, and several details pertaining to the subcontinent's socio-political history (Manaf, 2006). Shehryar Fazli, a graduate of McGill University and the creative writing program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, has marked the beginning of a new era with his debut novel *Invitation*, which has been 'received with much enthusiasm' (Tranquebarindia, 2011).

Hence a lot has been done in the field of Pakistani fiction in English. Yet for some the writings in English still lack both in substance and in variety, as the analogy made on the current situation by Zakaria suggests, 'if literary production fits neatly into the picture of an incredible India, unique and yet globally engaged, a bookless Pakistan — one particularly shorn of English books — fits into one of a Pakistan in petulant times' (2014).

### **1.2.2 *Dearth of creative prowess in native contexts***

Despite the apparent onslaught on Pakistani fiction discussed above, there is still a visible scarcity of novelists writing in English in Pakistan. It's a nation where, 'one is accustomed to seeing a handful of the usual names tossed around (namely Bapsi Sidhwa, Mohsin Hamid and Kamila Shamsie) when talking about English fiction written by local authors' (Imtiaz, 2010a; 2010b). Likewise, in his response to an essay on Pakistani literature by Muneeza Shamsi, where she has presented her readers with a long list of forty-four Pakistani writers in English (Kamal, 2005), Amardeep believes the classification 'contemporary Pakistani writers in English' embraces something which is a kind of 'geopolitical marker,' perhaps failing in the test of compatibility to the actual corpus of Pakistani English texts, since the list is Anglo-Pakistani in nature (Singh, 2005). What is of particular importance here is the fact that the majority of the writers mentioned in Shamsie's list, if not all, aren't even based in Pakistan. They belong to a privileged class of the Pakistani society, who have received higher education in foreign institutes, and have been active abroad. See also, for instance, Sawnnet (2011) and Shamsie (2007) in this regard.

Surprisingly enough, a writer such as Zulfikar Ghose has been described as the first modern English writer of Pakistan, when ‘his only association with Pakistani nationality is the fact that he was born in Sialkot, and is a Muslim,’ but has never lived in Pakistan, and is currently lecturing the University of Texas in America (Singh, 2005). If the only criterion for recognition as a Pakistani author is birth, then Singh (2005) believes renowned Indian author Khushwant Singh, and Pakistani author Saadat Hasan Manto, should be recognized as vice versa as each was born in the others’ territory. Ahmed (2009) builds a similar argument for majority of Pakistani English Novelists, in that his list also includes writers publishing in the UK and USA, i.e. and not Pakistan (pp.57-62).

### **1.2.3 *English fiction and the publication market in Pakistan***

Speaking in terms of creative publications in English, Shamsie informs us about the presence of numerous printing houses that publish Paki-English language fiction in Pakistan today. Unfortunately, their print runs are small, and distribution limited (Shamsie, 2007). However, in all of this, Shamsie still discerns the importance of a slowly emerging 'home-grown' publishing base, which has already launched the careers of several writers (2007).

Over the past few years, Pakistan has witnessed a pervasive emergence of national journals, weekend magazines, and English Dailies that showcase creative output of writers. Thus we have the *Literary Review*, and *The Life's Too Short Literary Review* (Imtiaz, 2010a), *The Herald*, *Pakistani Quarterly*, *The Nation* (Lahore), the *Muslim*, the *Frontier post*, *The Star and Eveningwear* from Karachi, and *Dawn group of Newspapers*, to name a few (Naeem, 2010). Additionally, publishing houses associated with *Asian Institute Of Fashion Design Karachi*, British Council Arts project titled *Literature Matters*, *PENPC (P.E.N. Pakistan Centre)*, and ASR Pakistan, not to mention some university journals, such as *The Journal of the English Literary Club* (University of Peshawar), *Venture* (University of Karachi), and the twin journals titled *Ravi* and *Explorations*

(Government College Lahore) have also come to the forefront to publish the works of Pakistani writers and even critical articles and reviews of those works (Naeem, 2010).

However, other than these, Imtiaz (2010a) and Sikandar (2010) state we hardly have a noteworthy publishing market or substantive critical books on creative practices in Pakistan; a state that even our writers seem to be aware of (Imtiaz, 2010a). The writings about Creative Writing are ‘a precious few and far between, are mostly unavailable in libraries, with only the odd good article or review in a publication actually getting at its subject and putting the reader in a frame of mind appropriate to the reception of an event’ (Hashmi, 1990, p.48). Naeem (2010) likewise deprecates how ‘there is very little Pakistani criticism of this new literature in existence’; a thought also echoed by Ahmed (2009) who claims frustration at the ‘lack or absence’ of critical studies on Pakistani English fiction. In addition to this we are similarly informed about literature only in odd newspaper reviews or brief commentaries here and there, while researchers are constantly being hampered by an unavailability of a ‘systematic study’ to conduct their research on creative fiction (Ahmed, 2009, p.16). What is worse according to Naeem (2010) is the unintelligibly vague nature of publications on Creative Writing practices in English, which renders it practically impossible for anyone to follow all English fiction that is being published in the country. Consequently, the majority of our future writers belong to classes whose only link to English literature is either their teachers, or pirated copies of English works, or even to some extent television media that airs English plays based upon the writings of some great literary author. These students have hardly been able to avail enough opportunities to mingle with creative thinkers of the Western World, just as they have occasionally had thought provoking exposure to the writing approaches involved in any creative process (Bilal, 2013). Hence there is a serious need to involve more and more young writers in Creative Writing activities and projects (Ghafoor, 2012). And an ideal place to investigate the same can only be the university (Rustam, 2010, p.458).

#### **1.2.4      *The academic teaching of Creative Writing in Pakistan***

Contrary to the longstanding and deep-rooted establishment of literature and linguistic courses within the English departments, many writing practitioners have been unable to detect a presence of Creative Writing pedagogy in higher education institutes and universities in Pakistan (Bilal, 2013; Chandio et al., 2013; Haider, 2008; Rustam, 2010; Siddiqui Z S, 2007). Even in instances where the same is not the case, that is institutes wherein the form *is* practiced as a subject, it appears to be an academic discipline that is hardly ever driven by intellectual rigor, practice-oriented innovative work, and is therefore often unreceptive to its own pedagogical structure. See, for instance, Haider (2012a; 2012b), Khan (2011; 2012; 2013) and Siddiqui S (2007) in this regard. However, details pertaining to the current courses being taught at a few public and several private sector universities present a contrary picture altogether. Each of these divergent views about the absence and presence of Creative Writing as an academic discipline in Pakistan will be discussed next.

##### **1.2.4.1      *The obscure identity of the discipline***

On a preliminary investigation into Creative Writing as a discipline in Pakistan, it often appears to be one field that is not only marginalized within the literature and Applied English linguistics courses in universities throughout the country, but is in fact excluded altogether (Bilal, 2013; Chandio et al., 2013). A good number of researchers – Rustam (2010, pp.402, 458), Haider (2012a, p.216), Khan (2011), Mustafa (2009, p.1; cited in Khan, 2012, p.58, 59) – have likewise been unable to detect an academic presence, concrete or otherwise, of Creative Writing in the country's universities. Dated statistics indicate that the twin fields of Mathematics and Information Technology across Pakistani universities foster the highest number of applicants for postgraduate scholarship examination, while Creative Arts is left with the lowest number of applicants, which reflects on the state of education, both in terms of quality, and quantity, in this field (Siddiqui Z S, 2007, p.114). 'There are a very few institutions that impart education in Creative Arts

and again they are limited to only major cities of Pakistan, i.e. Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad' (ibid). Additionally, even in the cities mentioned above, Khan (2011, 2012) believes Creative Writing is mostly recognized as a 'theoretical' rather than as a 'practice' oriented discipline 'in schools,' and there also learners are neither being trained in a holistic manner to create original pieces of creative work (2011, p.111), nor are their activities being assessed as per the assessment protocol of Creative arts (Khan, 2012). The researcher also observes in this context how, just like their students, even Pakistani teachers tend to be somewhat 'confused about the term 'Creative Writing' and so 'tensions arise in the classroom' (Khan, 2011, p.112; 2012).

#### ***1.2.4.2 Creative Writing in HEC recognized public sector universities of Pakistan***

Contrary to the information discussed above, despite this rather callous attitude fostered within some academic institutes regarding the practice in general, or the art of teaching writing in particular, there exists concrete evidence revealing a definite inclusion of Creative Writing in the core course curriculum of privatized as well as government universities across Pakistan.

According to recent updates provided by the Higher Education Commission in Islamabad (HEC, 2015), the educational administration of Pakistan comprises of public and private sector universities or degree awarding institutes (DAIs) situated in, and chartered by:

- a) The federal capital territory of the state (Islamabad in the province of Punjab);
- b) The provincial government of four principal provinces of Pakistan (i.e. Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa (KPK), and Balochistan); and
- c) The Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, i.e. the disputed territory that lies between India and Pakistan.

The commission also estimates there to be, at present, a total of ninety-nine public sector universities across Pakistan that have been authorized by it to issue degrees and transcripts to their graduating students (HEC, 2015). Amongst them, twenty-four universities are either located entirely in the federal capital of Pakistan, i.e. in Islamabad (Punjab), or have main campuses that are situated in this city, and are hence chartered by the state government itself. Twenty-six universities are located in other cities of the Punjab Province, such as Multan, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Lahore, etc., and are therefore chartered by the Government of Punjab. There are nineteen public sector DAIs chartered by the Government of Sindh; nineteen by the Government of Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa; six by the Government of Balochistan; and the final five by the Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir.

Table 1.1 comprises of a list of three universities that offer Creative Writing chartered within the capital city of Islamabad, and six across the rest of Punjab province.

**TABLE 1.1****Creative Writing Course(s) in Public Sector DAIs / Universities in Punjab Province**

<i>Name of University / DAI</i>	<i>Course No / Name</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Campus Location(s)</i>	<i>Website Address</i>
Bahria University, Islamabad	Bes 102: Creative Writing	BS in Psychology, Inst. of Professional Psychology	Islamabad (Punjab) Karachi (Sindh)	<a href="http://www.ipp.bahria.edu.pk/bs-psychology/">http://www.ipp.bahria.edu.pk/bs-psychology/</a>
The International Islamic University, Islamabad	ENG 201: Creative Writing	BS (Hons) English, Inst. of Languages & Literature, Semester 3	Islamabad (Punjab)	<a href="http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page_id=2645">http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page_id=2645</a>
	ENG 404: Creative Writing II	BS (Hons) English, Languages & Literature, Semester 7		
	GC 202: Creative Writing	General Course in BS English, Department of English		<a href="http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page_id=4474">http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page_id=4474</a>
	Creative Writing	English Language Course for Specific Purposes at the English Language Centre (ELC)		<a href="http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page_id=111">http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page_id=111</a>
The National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad	ENG 303: Creative Writing	BS Hons in English, Dept. of English, Semester 3	Faisalabad, Lahore, Multan (Punjab)	<a href="http://www.numl.info/english-bs-honors.aspx">http://www.numl.info/english-bs-honors.aspx</a>

<i>Name of University / DAI</i>	<i>Course No / Name</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Campus Location</i>	<i>Website Address</i>
The National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad	ELT 505: Writing Skills (Narrative Writing)  Module 5: Creative Writing	MA ELT Program, Dept. of English, Semester 1  English Advance Diploma Language, Dept. Of English	Karachi, Hyderabad (Sindh)  Peshawar (Khaiber Pukhtoon Khwa)  Quetta (Balochistan)	<a href="http://www.numl.info/ma-elt-course-details.aspx">http://www.numl.info/ma-elt-course-details.aspx</a>  <a href="http://www.numl.info/english-advance-diploma-language-details.aspx">http://www.numl.info/english-advance-diploma-language-details.aspx</a>
Fatimah Jinnah University, Rawalpindi	Literature and Creative Writing  Creative Writing	Undergraduate CA Courses, Department of Computer Arts, Semester IV  Comm. and Media Graduate Courses, Dept. of Communication and Media Studies, Semester II,	Rawalpindi (Punjab)	<a href="http://www.fjwu.edu.pk/ca-courses/">http://www.fjwu.edu.pk/ca-courses/</a>  <a href="http://www.fjwu.edu.pk/comm-and-media-courses/">http://www.fjwu.edu.pk/comm-and-media-courses/</a>
Government College University, Faisalabad	BGD 611: Creative Writing	Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design, Semester 6	Faisalabad (Punjab)	<a href="http://gcuf.edu.pk/faculties/arts/fine-arts/bfa-graphic-design/">http://gcuf.edu.pk/faculties/arts/fine-arts/bfa-graphic-design/</a>
The Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore	GLIT 210: Creative Writing II	BA English Literature, Dept. of English, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	Lahore (Punjab)	<a href="http://www.kinnaird.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Road-Map-deptt-of-English.pdf">http://www.kinnaird.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Road-Map-deptt-of-English.pdf</a>
Lahore College for Women University	MC-205: Practical Journalism -II (Page Making, Editing, & Creative Writing)	BS in Mass Communication, 4 <sup>th</sup> Semester	Lahore (Punjab)	<a href="http://www.lcwu.edu.pk/mass-com-programs.html">http://www.lcwu.edu.pk/mass-com-programs.html</a>

Name of University / DAI	Course No / Name	Program	Campus Location	Website
University of Education, Lahore	Creative Writing as an “Elective Course” of studies	MA English	Vehari, Okara, D.G. Khan, Multan, Faisalabad, and Attock (Punjab)	<a href="http://ue.edu.pk/beta/programDetail/programCourseStructure.aspx?programCode=042&amp;programName=MA%20English">http://ue.edu.pk/beta/programDetail/programCourseStructure.aspx?programCode=042&amp;programName=MA%20English</a>
University of Gujrat	Creative Writing	BS English, Dept. of English, Semester II	Gujrat (Punjab)	<a href="http://www.uog.edu.pk/intro-english/programs/337-bs-english.html">http://www.uog.edu.pk/intro-english/programs/337-bs-english.html</a>

As table 1.2 shows next, the province of Sindh and KPK comprise of a lesser number of public sector universities that house Creative Writing as a major and/or elective course of studies across varied disciplines when compared to those in Punjab.

**TABLE 1.2**  
**Creative Writing as a Major or Elective course in Public Sector DAIs /**  
**Universities in Sindh and KPK**

<i>Name of University / DAI</i>	<i>Course No / Name</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Campus Location</i>	<i>Website Address</i>
The department of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts at Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi	<p>“Creative Writing” as an “Elective” course of studies</p> <p>HUM 360: Creative Writing Offered as (a) Business Elective, and (b) Non – Specialization course</p> <p>HUM 360: Creative Writing as a Business Elective</p>	<p>Undergraduate students undertaking ‘Political Science, Psychology, and Media &amp; Communication’ programs</p> <p>Bachelor of Business Administration</p> <p>BBA Program in Entrepreneurship</p>	Karachi, Sindh	<p><a href="https://iba.edu.pk/dept_ssla.php">https://iba.edu.pk/dept_ssla.php</a></p> <p><a href="http://bba.iba.edu.pk/BB A_Introduction.php">http://bba.iba.edu.pk/BB A_Introduction.php</a></p> <p><a href="http://bba.iba.edu.pk/BB A_Entrepreneurship_Introduction.php">http://bba.iba.edu.pk/BB A_Entrepreneurship_Introduction.php</a></p>
Sukkur Institute of Business Administration	<p>ENG 102: Creative Writing</p> <p>ENG 301: Creative Writing</p>	<p>BBA Part II (majoring in Finance, Marketing, or HR)</p> <p>BBS Part II, Leading to MBA in CS - Computer Science</p>	Sukkur, Sindh	<p><a href="http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:pQuXh0-wDQwJ:www.iba-suk.edu.pk/ibasuk/aboutiba/pdf/Spring%25202015-specialization.xlsx+&amp;cd=1&amp;hl=en&amp;ct=clnk&amp;client=opera">http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:pQuXh0-wDQwJ:www.iba-suk.edu.pk/ibasuk/aboutiba/pdf/Spring%25202015-specialization.xlsx+&amp;cd=1&amp;hl=en&amp;ct=clnk&amp;client=opera</a></p>
Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar	LIT 501: Creative Writing (English 3)	BSc (Hons) in Social Sciences program’ (majoring in either Sociology, or Political Science, International Relations, Public Administration, or Management Studies), Semester 5	Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa	<a href="http://imsciences.edu.pk/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=91&amp;Itemid=205">http://imsciences.edu.pk/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=91&amp;Itemid=205</a>

Unfortunately, unlike the rest of the provinces mentioned in Table 1.1 and 1.2, no university in Balochistan Province or Azad Jammu & Kashmir contains Creative Writing as a subject in their curriculum. The situation is alarming even in case of Sindh, which comprises of two out of nineteen universities commissioned by HEC (2015) that include Creative Writing as a subject.

In Balochistan, the stated aim of *The Department of English Literature, University of Balochistan, Quetta*, is to ‘offer courses for those interested in literature and creative writing’ (UOB, 2015, p.141). But no such course has actually been included in their curriculum to this day (UOB, 2015).

The “Institute of Communication and Cultural Studies (ICCS)” in the *Karakorum International University, Gilgit*, bordering Azad Jammu & Kashmir, yet chartered by the Government of Pakistan (HEC, 2015), planned ‘to offer graduate and undergraduate degrees from Fall 2013 in Creative Writing’ (Karakoram International University, Gilgit, 2013). But as the university prospectus shows, *The Department of Modern Languages* continues to ignore creative writing courses in English Linguistics and Literature, at both the Gilgit (Karakoram International University, 2015, p.45) and the Skardu Campuses (p.51).

#### **1.2.4.3 Writing courses in private Sector DAIs commissioned by HEC**

Of the 171 degree awarding institutes authorized by HEC to confer degrees in various disciplines, 72 universities have been categorized as the “private” sector academia of Pakistan (HEC, 2015). In addition to the above, after reviewing the inclusion of Creative Writing in twelve out of ninety-nine public sector universities, privatized DAIs include this subject to a comparatively greater extent. Information pertaining to the same has been presented in Table 1.3 as follows:

**TABLE 1.3**  
**Creative Writing as a Major or Elective course in Private Sector DAIs /**  
**Universities in Punjab**

<i>Name of University / DAI</i>	<i>Course No / Name</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Campus Location</i>	<i>Website Address</i>
Foundation University, Islamabad	ENG. 532: Creative Writing as an “Elective Course”	MA English in Linguistics and Literature	Rawalpindi and Islamabad	<a href="http://www.fui.edu.pk/FURC/images/Admission/ProspectusFoundation.pdf">http://www.fui.edu.pk/FURC/images/Admission/ProspectusFoundation.pdf</a> (p.103)
Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS)	Creative writing courses: ENGL 2452 - Fiction Writing Workshop I ENGL 3421 - Creative Nonfiction II ENGL 3511 - Theory of the Novel	BA (Honours) in English’ at Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences (MGSHSS)	Lahore	<a href="http://lums.edu.pk/fa/undergraduate-programmes.php/ba-honours-english">http://lums.edu.pk/fa/undergraduate-programmes.php/ba-honours-english</a>
Ali Institute of Education, Lahore	Teaching of Art and Craft / Theatrical Skills	Bachelor’s in Education program (B.Ed. Elementary), Semester III  Bachelor’s in Education program (B.Ed. Secondary)’ as a specialization course	Lahore	<a href="http://www.aie.edu.pk/index.php/courses-ali-institute-of-education/certificate-ali-institute-of-education/degree-ali-institute-of-education/bachelors-in-education-elementary-b-ed-elementary">http://www.aie.edu.pk/index.php/courses-ali-institute-of-education/certificate-ali-institute-of-education/degree-ali-institute-of-education/bachelors-in-education-elementary-b-ed-elementary</a>  <a href="http://www.aie.edu.pk/index.php/courses-ali-institute-of-education/certificate-ali-institute-of-education/degree-ali-institute-of-education/bachelors-in-education-secondary-b-ed-secondary">http://www.aie.edu.pk/index.php/courses-ali-institute-of-education/certificate-ali-institute-of-education/degree-ali-institute-of-education/bachelors-in-education-secondary-b-ed-secondary</a>
Hajvery University, Lahore	Writing Skills: Fiction writing... discovering creative writing ideas and inspirations, or improving creative writing... etc.	Bachelor in Commerce (B.Com. Hons)’ at School of Commerce and Banking, 3 <sup>RD</sup> Semester	Lahore (Punjab)	<a href="http://www.hup.edu.pk/bcomhons/83-school-of-commerce-and-banking/commerce-course-description/574-writing-skill.html">http://www.hup.edu.pk/bcomhons/83-school-of-commerce-and-banking/commerce-course-description/574-writing-skill.html</a>

<i>Name of University / DAI</i>	<i>Course No / Name</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Campus Location</i>	<i>Website Address</i>
Imperial College of Business Studies, Lahore	Creative Writing, Department of English Language and Literature	Certificate courses for academicians, teachers, and researchers	Lahore	<a href="http://imperialuniversity.edu.pk/department-of-english-language-and-literature/">http://imperialuniversity.edu.pk/department-of-english-language-and-literature/</a>
Institute of Management Sciences, Lahore	Report & Creative Writing	BBA, Semester III	Lahore	<a href="http://www.pakaims.edu.pk/bba.php">http://www.pakaims.edu.pk/bba.php</a>
Lahore Leads University, Lahore	ENG 1103: English III, Creative and Technical Writing	Bachelor of Studies (Hons) English Literature / Linguistics, Semester 3	Lahore	<a href="http://english.leads.edu.pk/Programs.aspx#UP1">http://english.leads.edu.pk/Programs.aspx#UP1</a>
Lahore School of Economics	Creative Writing	BBA (Hons) with Major in Marketing and Minor in a) Media Studies, Spring term of year two or b) Social Studies, Spring term of year two	Lahore	<a href="http://www.lahoreschoolofeconomics.edu.pk/Academics/BBAMajorMarketingMinorsMediaStudies.aspx">http://www.lahoreschoolofeconomics.edu.pk/Academics/BBAMajorMarketingMinorsMediaStudies.aspx</a>
	Creative Writing	BS (Hons) with Double Major in English and Communication Studies, Spring term of year one		<a href="http://www.lahoreschoolofeconomics.edu.pk/Academics/BSHonswithdoublemajorinenglishandcommunicationstudies.aspx">http://www.lahoreschoolofeconomics.edu.pk/Academics/BSHonswithdoublemajorinenglishandcommunicationstudies.aspx</a>
	Creative Writing	BS (Hons.) Social Sciences with Major in English and Minor in Management Spring term of year one		<a href="http://www.lahoreschoolofeconomics.edu.pk/Academics/BSsocialsciencesmajorenghishandmanagement.aspx">http://www.lahoreschoolofeconomics.edu.pk/Academics/BSsocialsciencesmajorenghishandmanagement.aspx</a>



As table 1.4 shows, the province of Sindh and KPK comprise of a lesser number of private sector universities that house Creative Writing as a major and/or elective course of studies across varied disciplines when compared to those in Punjab.

**TABLE 1.4**  
**Creative Writing as a Major or Elective course in Private Sector DAIs /**  
**Universities in Sindh and KPK**

<i>Name of University / DAI</i>	<i>Course No / Name</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Campus Location</i>	<i>Website Address</i>
The Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture	Creative Writing	‘Continuing Education Programme’ (Short and a professional diploma course)	Karachi (Sindh)	<a href="http://www.indusvalley.edu.pk/cep.html">http://www.indusvalley.edu.pk/cep.html</a>
College of Economics and Social Development (CESD) in Institute of Business Management	MMM329: Creative Writing Workshop	BS (Honors) Media Studies’ (majoring in either Media Studies, or in Journalism & Production)	Karachi (Sindh)	<a href="http://www.cesd.iobm.com/cesd/bs-honors-media-studies/">http://www.cesd.iobm.com/cesd/bs-honors-media-studies/</a>
Iqra University, Asian Institute of Fashion Design, Karachi	THT-323: Creative Writing Creative Writing	Bachelor’s (Hons.) in Textile Design Bachelor's (Hons.) in Fashion Design	Karachi (Sindh)	<a href="http://www.aifd.edu.pk/forms/btd-credit-transfers.pdf">http://www.aifd.edu.pk/forms/btd-credit-transfers.pdf</a> <a href="http://aifd.edu.pk/bachelor-degree-fashion.html">http://aifd.edu.pk/bachelor-degree-fashion.html</a>
Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Sc. & Technology (SZABIST), Karachi	MD 1213 Creative Writing	Bachelor of Media Science (majoring in Film and Television Production, Advertising Strategy & Design, and Journalism, third year)	Karachi (Sindh) Hyderabad (Sindh) Islamabad (Punjab)	<a href="http://khi.szabist.edu.pk/bs-mediasciences.html">http://khi.szabist.edu.pk/bs-mediasciences.html</a>
Air University, College of Education for Women, PAF	Creative Writing	4 Week Summer Vacation Short Course	Peshawar (Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa)	<a href="http://www.au.edu.pk/affiliated/affiliation_college_for_women.html">http://www.au.edu.pk/affiliated/affiliation_college_for_women.html</a>
Northern University, Nowshera, Pakistan	Creative Writing, “Script Writing”	MA English curriculum at NU	Peshawar (Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa)	<a href="http://www.northern.edu.pk/MA-English.aspx">http://www.northern.edu.pk/MA-English.aspx</a>

The situation is clearly alarming in case of Sindh, which comprises of four out of twenty-nine private sector universities recognized by HEC (2015) within the province that include Creative Writing as a subject.

Overall, excluding the thirty (twelve government sector and eighteen privatized) universities mentioned above, the course of studies has not been added to the curriculum of remaining 141 universities across Pakistan.

At this point it becomes pertinent to mention that forty-eight out of these remaining institutes are non-generic in nature and hence comprise of courses corresponding to particular fields. These include universities that specifically teach Information Technology, Engineering & Technology, Space Technology, Military Combat and Defense, Applied Sciences, Medical Sciences, Agriculture, Health Sciences, Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Emerging Sciences or those that teach Law related subjects only. See, for instance, HEC (2015), in this regard. Other than these, there still remain over ninety institutes across the nation that offer degree courses in the Arts and Humanities, which at present show no web-record of including Creative Writing as an academic discipline in their curricula.

A stark contrast is offered by Cowan (2013) with reference to the higher educational establishment in Britain, where Creative Writing has ‘spread rapidly’ as an academic discipline in recent years. Cowan and Swander et al. (2014, p.11) additionally inform us that the discipline has not only become firmly embedded at undergraduate, postgraduate and research levels, but that the pace of this expansion has been anything but ordinary (ibid). Thus, for instance, in 2003, Graeme Harper detected ‘over 140 undergraduate courses, over 70 Masters courses, and around 20 PhD programmes in Creative Writing’ running successfully in Britain alone (Harper, 2003). By 2011, Janet Murray documented more than 90 British universities to be offering ‘a range of postgraduate degrees, and around 10,000 short creative writing courses or classes’ annually (Murray, 2011). A year later, Heather Beck (p.11) realized the number of master’s and doctoral courses recorded between 2003 and 2012 had reached an addition of

about 15 and 50 percent respectively, when she discovered ‘80 MA courses’ and nearly ‘30 Ph.D. programmes’ progressing smoothly (p.11).

In the present times, the Teeside University English Research Group (2015) estimates that ‘the number of UK Universities offering undergraduate programmes in Creative Writing has more than doubled since 2003.’ Moreover, writing courses have not only become ‘an established part of the curriculum in higher education’ in most institutes across America, UK, Australia, Ireland, and Canada, but several universities in Korea, Mexico, Spain, Norway, and the Philippines as well (Swander et al., 2014, p. 11). Ironically, this ‘huge expansion in creative writing courses’ in most universities across UK has been observed despite them having taken longer to be convinced that creativity could actually be academically taught, or that a writing culture could actually be propagated effectively (Murray, 2011; Hancock, 2008). Given the same, there is no reason to believe why the same academic institutionalization of Creative Writing may not be successfully experimented with in a country like Pakistan. This nation, at the moment, seems to be faced with a lack of research exploring the writing practice of university students in their native context. This has been described next.

#### **1.2.4.4            *Writing praxis and the global academia***

Speaking in terms of the international academic context, numerous scholars from all over the world have conducted tangible studies focusing on training learners in adopting better Creative Writing abilities, so they can explore various dimensions of their thought process pertaining to their particular traditions (Anderson, 2007; Atkinson T S, 2003; Dobson, 2008; Harper & Kroll, 2008; Khan, 2012; Mansoor, 2012). At the same time, among these various strategic inquiries conducted in the field, most have dealt with issues involving those students who had either been receiving their education in western countries abroad, or were already proficient as writers. Pakistani practitioners, aside from a few exceptional studies conducted by writer researchers such as Khan (2011, 2012, 2013) and Mansoor (2010, 2011, 2012), appear to have neglected exploring the writing practice of university students in their native context. However, as Harper & Kroll (2008) inform us,

Creative Writing is a ‘still-expanding’ area of study, which would suffice to explain why not much ‘has been exchanged about the variety of pedagogical programs, methodologies and theories’ in the area, internationally (p.1). As plausible as the explanation would seem, certain facts still remain. The integration of Creative Writing into a Pakistani university syllabi, whether in terms of it forming a part of the mainstream major courses, or a subject in its own right aimed towards offering students a chance to develop as writers per se, is in many ways an uncharted territory (Bilal, 2013; Mansoor, 2010). Given this lack of exposure to and development of artistic approaches, especially in public sector university students, it is excessively important to discover productive means to having higher education learners acquainted with mechanics of writing creatively (Bilal, 2013; Haider, 2012a, 2012b; Khan, 2012; Mansoor, 2010).

What ensues is a detailed examination of factors deeming the establishment of Creative Writing as a full-fledged independent discipline necessary, thereby occupying a concrete place in the Pakistani academia.

### **1.3 The need for establishing Creative Writing as an academic discipline in the higher education sector in Pakistan**

It has long been a truism that universities tend to face an extensive assortment of competitive pressures when it comes to their need for better infrastructure, better business, and a better means of assimilating and disseminating knowledge bank (Toohey, 1999). To try to keep up with the pace, Almilia (2007), Andrews et al. (2006), Busquin (2003), and Haider (2008) believe university administrations cannot afford to do what they have always done the traditional way. They must seek a new paradigm of higher education institutions (Almilia, 2007, p.76). A similar course of engagement is followed by Materu (2007), who likewise proposes an expansion in the very fabric of higher education and an introduction of a new range of competencies in an HE institute critical in today’s competitive and globalized knowledgeable society.

The aforementioned proposition that emphasises a strengthening of the higher education knowledge and its research environment is something that has also been extended to Creative Arts disciplines (Devlin, 2010). Among the list of arts-based academics' stated objectives is the notion that higher education must venture out to 'promote student mobility among different fields of study, institutions, and in different nations' (2010, p.10). Devlin supports the academicisation suggested above, and states a positive contribution of creative arts institutions can be helpful vehicles for university administrations to meet their broader agendas such as 'widening access, knowledge transfer and innovation,' among many other things (2010, p.11). This, in turn, is resonated by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC). The basic stress of its programs is on the notion that this is the age of research and the universities should focus their attention on new ways of doing things (LID, HEC, 2011). To reiterate LID's summary of its key objectives (HEC, 2011), that is;

- To intellectually empower and professionally develop young faculty members of the Pakistani society.
- To mature research skills for contributing and discovering the existing knowledge in their respective fields

In light of the above objectives, and as a strategy to encourage the professional development of educationalists throughout Pakistan, it is therefore being asserted that in order to improve the higher education system, all major implications of education, as proposed by Almlia (2007), Andrews et al. (2006), Biggs (1979), De Corte (1995), Entwistle & Ramsden (1983), Haider (2008) and Materu (2007), will have to be taken into account. These are:

- a) The maintenance and enhancement of the developmental prowess and competence of a university,
- b) Research to ensure increase in student participation, and
- c) Improved standards in higher education, especially in terms of its curriculum.

By considering the aforementioned criteria, the need of introducing Creative Writing pedagogy to the university circles in Pakistan naturally emerges, where it has not been a part of the curriculum thus far.

### ***1.3.1 The developmental prowess and competence of a university***

Due to an increasing onslaught of competition in the higher education sector of developed countries, higher education institutions have become more competitive in the developing countries as well (Haider, 2008; Materu, 2007; Mughal & Manzoor, 1999; Rao, 2003). To this end, Almilia (2007) believes one of the basic 'problems of university development today is how the university is able to optimize its role' especially with respect to maintaining and enhancing its prowess and competency, 'with the resources it has' in the present world (p.77). This is a foremost concern for current Pakistani academia as well. To combat this global concern, Rahman (2011) and Ravitch (2011) have come up with a number of rational and dynamic policies such as the establishment of 'multi-disciplinary institutes' in the universities, with a broad array of courses being taught there; a thought fostered by the implementation of 'University's Resources Revitalization' strategy as mentioned by Soekartawi (2005; cited in Almilia, 2007). All universities in the country, state Mangi et al. (2011), must 'exploit current resources and find new opportunities to catch up with universities of developed countries' (p.657). Haider believes the intellectual fervour of students exerts a direct impact on the 'developmental prowess' and 'competence' of a university. To activate the same, university administrators would have to take serious efforts and introduce novel resources to their academic environment (Haider, 2008). The establishment of new and innovative courses in various fields, such as in art based or architectural departments, can give an institute a great benefit in the advanced world of education in Pakistan (Belgaumi, 2008). It would serve the twin purposes of infusing the above notions of 'enriched knowledge,' and 'innovative creative ideas,' in various 'multi-disciplinary areas

of education.’ This would automatically give a ‘new life’ to an institute, and better chances of ‘competitive prowess’ to a university as well (ibid).

### ***1.3.2 Research to ensure increase in student participation***

Regarding the second global aspect of education, i.e. to cater the needs of our students, to create value for them, and to evaluate whether an organization is providing course guidance to students as per their needs, which would then lead to better participation, much research has been carried out on improving teaching and learning in higher education over the last 20 years. See, for instance, Biggs (1979; 1989; 2003; 2007), De Corte (1995), Entwistle & Ramsden (1983), Gabel (1999), Marton (1988) cited in Andrews et al. (2006). In the context of Pakistan, various university academics have voiced the need to satisfy learning requirements and expectations of an ever-increasing number of students (Hameed & Amjad, 2011; Rahman, 2011; Siddiqui Z S, 2007).

The situation emphasized above seems especially crucial to the present research project in the arena of creative arts, particularly in the context of USJP, which at present does not employ a single scholar who specializes in Creative Writing or has been employed for the primary purpose of teaching and studying, or fostering research in creative writing in English. Additionally, the only research conducted so far has been in the twin arenas of English Language and Literature (Dhomeja et al., 2012; University of Sindh, 2013). Consequently, to ensure active participation by students in higher education institutions, it is imperative that research be conducted in various arenas and various subjects should be scrutinized to the extent that the gathered information could be utilized to produce a highly intellectual and well informed body of students (Zajda & Rust, 2009; Vessuri, 2008).

### **1.3.3 *Improved standards in higher education curriculum***

In order to cut down on an excessive concentration on academic knowledge, by replacing it with that on practical skills and development of personal attributes among learners, Allan (1996; cited in Can & Ozdemir, 2006) stresses the necessity of inducing students to acquire ‘new knowledge,’ (2006, p.5). Although there can never actually be a definite way, as such, of prescribing how an institute can create a tradition of advanced knowledge; it should be aware nevertheless of its educational responsibility of encouraging creativity and in fostering a culture that expedites innovative ideas being executed (Busquin, 2003).

Building up on the notion, Treherne (2008) claims it necessary for every higher education institute to introduce Creative arts in its curriculum, so as to ‘lead students into this exciting area of study, which is an excellent way to enrich their engagement with the culture in which they are living.’ Cummins (2009) believes creative writing tasks can not only help students associate with and establish a better understanding of literary processing but can also aid them in ‘adapting, extending, and responding to literary texts,’ in a better fashion (2009, p.42). Another way in which students can benefit from the whole writing experience is through its self-analysis (Cummins, 2009). On account of her critical review and her experience as a Literature academic, Cummins (p.43) states five reasons that rationalize a utilization of Creative Writing in classrooms:

- *Creativity and innovation are required in twenty-first century workplaces.*
- *Literature is perceived freshly when the method of analysis requires both creative and critical responses.*
- *The importance of literary genre, structure, style, and narrative perspective become clearer when one is crafting narrative, and characters can be comprehended more deeply when one imagines their unstated thoughts.*
- *Writing in various genres provides practice for students who will write as part of their careers.*
- *Evaluation of new assignments invigorates the professor, while creative activities provide a variety and change of pace appreciated by contemporary college students.*

Quoting from several English Literature Professionals, Cummins (2009) further informs us how in-class creative writing tasks can prove beneficial for students on more than one front. Thus Austen (2005) sees creative writing as a power that can enable students achieve more self-confidence through their active participation; whereas Bloom (1998) gives an equal importance to the writing of, apart from the reading of, literature, to reach a holistic dimension in literary learning. Bilal (2013) believes Pakistani students need Creative Writing programmes ‘from the grass root levels so that they can have strong foundations for their future literary and writing endeavors. Finally, when they reach college and university, they should be ready to make the most of their educational opportunities, which will result in having exceptional writers, thinkers and literature experts.’

#### ***1.3.4 Additional factors informing the project***

On various occasions throughout his research, Ahmed (2009) stresses the need to critically examine and acknowledge the contribution of the Pakistani English Creative writers ‘both on the national and the international level.’ He further asserts how ‘writers from other countries of South Asia have been the subject of many critical studies, when Pakistani writers, unfortunately, have seldom been in the critical limelight’ (2009, p.14). At the same time, Ahmad (2011), Haider (2012a, 2012b), Mansoor (2010), and Khan (2011, 2012) suggest there to be an even stronger need for popularizing and institutionalizing the trend of Creative Writing practice in English, in especially the higher education sector of Pakistan, and its curriculum. It is one of the least studied areas in the development of English literature in Pakistan; the dearth of studies on this subject being another reason due to which our students have not yet been able to receive a lot of guidance in this arena (Ahmed, 2009; Imtiaz, 2010b; Naeem, 2010). And as far as the higher education curriculum is concerned, at this point in time the pedagogical practice of Creative Writing has been established to be on somewhat shaky grounds (Khan, 2011). Khan observes in this context how, just like their students, even Pakistani teachers tend to be somewhat ‘confused about the term “creative

writing,” are unable to teach it, and so tensions arise in the classroom’ (2011, p.112).

Consequently, since specific procedures have not been found productive in investigating this lack of exposure to and development of writing abilities, especially amongst the native youth, therefore there is a dire need to discover more ways to have Pakistani learners acquainted with Creative Writing practice accordingly (Mansoor, 2010). For this, significant research is implied, specifically in the area of *Creative Writing Pedagogy* in the native context (Bilal, 2013). As an instructor who has conducted short training courses on Creative Writing and has taught Pakistani Literature in English to students in the International Islamic University of Islamabad, Mansoor (2013) has observed a thought-provoking research context in this regard. Their study discovered the existence of a rather intimate bond between literature students and English Literature, which develops since ‘they deal with the technicalities that go into the creation of a literary composition,’ while pursuing an undergraduate degree in the named subject (p.55). This offered the researcher with an interesting range of ideas for conducting an experiment on developing L2 learners’ creative writing practice (Mansoor, 2010). And the one appropriate place that could benefit such a form of experimentation would have to be ‘a class of undergraduate Literature students’ enrolled in a university in Pakistan (Mansoor, 2013, p.55); which, in case of the present study, has been the IELL at the USJP.

#### **1.4 The project site**

The USJP is the second oldest University of Pakistan. Its campus is situated in Jamshoro town, on the right bank of the Indus River, 15-17 kilometers from the city of Hyderabad. It comprises of a total of eight faculties: Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Faculty of Commerce & Business Administration, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Social Sciences. The faculties, in turn, are endowed with around 54 teaching institutes / centres / departments, a

small minority offering undergraduate, graduate as well as postgraduate degrees. At both bachelor and master levels, English is taught as a Remedial, Functional and Minor subject, except in the Institute of English Language and Literature, where English is taught as a Major subject in the form of English Literature, and English Language and Linguistics. See Dhomeja et al. (2012) and University of Sindh (2013) in this regard. Figure 1.1, below, illustrates the project site. Highlighted and dotted in the center of the Google map is where the University of Sindh is located.



**Figure 1.1 – Map of Sindh Province in Pakistan showing the location of the USJP**

As one of the leading universities in Pakistan, an institute at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro was chosen as the prospective site for this study.

#### ***1.4.1 Brief introduction to the Institute of English Language and Literature in the USJP***

The Institute of English Language and Literature in USJP offers students an opportunity to attain the degree of Master of Arts in Honours (in English Literature), or (in English Language and Linguistics) which is prerequisite for them to qualify as an English Language Professional at all levels throughout the

country. The institute offers a unique variety of literary and language oriented courses, covering Classical to Modern Writers of English, European and American Literature to language oriented subjects designed to enhance the linguistic proficiency of learners through hands-on strategic practice.

In its initial years, since 1953 through 2007, the institute was known as the 'Department of English,' and it offered the degree in English Literature at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. However, in the year 2008, the department was renamed as the 'Institute of English Language and Literature' (IELL), where students now had an opportunity to enrol in an undergraduate and graduate program of their own choice, selecting from either English Literature, or English Language and Linguistics. Since no specific syllabus was designed to facilitate the introduction of the new subjects at the time of repositioning of the IELL, a committee of senior faculty members led by Dr. Rafique Ahmed Memon (Doctorate in TESOL, from the University of Leeds, UK April 2002- October 2006), was formed within the institute with the intent of recommending a list of course material and reading text to be utilized for several new subjects associated with the study of English Language and Linguistics.

In addition to the above, certain measures were also taken by the university authorities to facilitate the IELL, such as relocating the institute to a separate building, equipped with adequate resources; and permitting the IELL to hire experienced English Language professionals from other institutes on good wages to meet the shortage of English Language teaching staff, since, with the exception of Doctor Memon, the existing teaching staff were all scholars of English Literature. However, as the University of Sindh (2013) catalogue demonstrates, today there are additional faculty members in the institute with doctorates and postgraduate degrees in various aspects related to Linguistics in addition to MA in English Literature.

#### ***1.4.2 A review of major courses taught in IELL***

Since the initiation of the Department of English in 1953, with the exception of courses taught at undergraduate level part 2, English Literature was taught as the sole major subject at bachelor's level for the first and third years, six semesters of six months each, and at the Masters level for two semesters of six months each. The prescribed syllabus for English Literature for the first year undergraduate level consisted of books on Introduction to the generic forms of English literature, such as Poetry, Drama, Fiction and Non-Fiction: only one course was about Grammar or language learning whereas the rest were on English Literature. The syllabus in the second year focused on books on the History of English Language and Literature, whereas books on Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Sociolinguistics and Psycholinguistics were also taken into account. The courses in the third year comprised solely of books on English Literature, such as Classical English Poetry, Romantic English Poetry, English Prose and English Drama; much like the courses in the fourth and final year (the Master's Level) such as English Fiction, Literary Criticism, Western Literature and the English Essay.

In the year 2008, for the first time in the history of the Department of English, English Language and Linguistics were introduced as the other 'Major Subjects' in what now came to be referred to as the 'Institute of English Language and Literature' (IELL). The students were now introduced to several new subjects such as Language Learning Theories, Lexical Studies, English Language Teaching, Semantics and Pragmatics, English for Specific Purpose, Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and Psycholinguistics, etc. These courses were more practical than theoretical in nature, as they tended to provide students with an opportunity to explore real world language related issues in the classroom context. Students were even assigned teaching and research oriented tasks as part of their assessment system.

Within the arena of English Literature as well, the Institute now offers additional courses based upon works by Modern, Postmodern and Contemporary Authors. The works are interactively discussed with learners, the primary purpose of the teachers being to provide students with an awareness of the writers' craft of writing. The same is then assessed through students' critical and descriptive statements underpinning their understanding of writers' style and thought process as evident by their works. The students, however, are not given any creative writing tasks in the classroom, or as assignments, since the same is not a part of the institute's literary assessment protocol.

Additionally, the institute has also been conducting 'Remedial' and 'Functional' English courses at undergraduate and graduate levels throughout the USJP in over fifty-five departments/institutes, wherein students are introduced to comprehension tasks designed to enhance their communication skills and build their general language skills through reading, listening, speaking and writing activities. A full detail of listed courses is available at University of Sindh (2013).

#### **1.4.3     *The academic professionals in IELL***

The Institute of English Language and Literature at present comprises of a total of thirty three faculty members, including twenty regular faculty, and thirteen Teaching Assistants, subdivided into six institute course co-ordinators, five Remedial English Tutors, and two visiting faculty. Altogether the teaching staff holds a general post-graduate Master's degree, an MPhil or a PhD in English Language, Linguistics or Literature, and is endowed with the responsibility of conducting major classes within the IELL, and Remedial and Compulsory English classes at undergraduate and graduate levels throughout the USJP.

In addition to the above, due to the ever-increasing number of students, the faculty at IELL is not only engaged to conduct morning classes but evening sessions as well. The evening sessions are especially meant for those students who have professional obligations by day and can only study in evenings. This increases the

workload of faculty members, especially since their number is already small, which hampers the smooth conduct of classes not only within the institute but all over other departments throughout the USJP. Furthermore, no faculty, till to date, has availed studies or support in the form of teacher training or development programmes in the arena of Creative Writing.

### **1.5 Rationale for this study**

In the Institute of English Language and Literature, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, students have an opportunity to enroll in an undergraduate (Bachelor's degree) program either in English Literature or in English Language or Linguistics. The academic staff at the institute comprises of five ranks of professionals: professors, assistant professors, teaching assistants, lecturers (full-time), and contract based English Language tutors (part-time), all having specialized in the fields of English Language, Linguistics or Literature, whereas so far no member has undertaken study in the arena of creative writing in English.

The study material currently available at the Seminar Library in the institute includes, for the most part, books detailing the contribution of renowned writers to English Literature (from Old English Period through 20<sup>th</sup> century), whereas a recent up-dated library catalogue is currently being processed at the institute that will lead to an addition of post-modern and contemporary contribution to the world of English Literature to the existing book bank. This is followed by a second majority of books on English Language and Linguistics, and a minority of reading material on creative writing, most of it dealing with theoretical aspects of the creative writing process, rather than various approaches and practices that teachers could utilize while teaching creative writing in a classroom.

At the institute, undergraduate students enrolled in literature courses are taught some modules focusing on fiction such as 'Introduction to the elements of the novel,' which is taught to the first year undergraduates; 'Writing Skills,' which is taught to the second year undergraduates; and finally a study of various novels in

the courses titled ‘Fiction’ and ‘Western Literature’ to fourth year students. As a rule, the writing students undertake is mostly interpretative, or academic, as is the case with first and second year undergraduates, or based upon the critical evaluation of processed and complete artifacts, that is the case with final year students, with less comprehension or communication directed towards the process of creating an artifact, which is the case with students at all three levels. The third year courses are primarily centered upon the history and evolution of English Literature, while Creative Writing modules are entirely absent throughout the entire four years.

For the conduct of quality education and smooth operation of its administration, and in accordance with the instructions proposed by HEC Pakistan, the former Vice-Chancellor of USJP, Mr. Mazhar-Ul-Haq Siddiqui established the ‘Quality Enhancement Cell’ in the university, which became fully operational in the university in November, 2006. Specialized Program Teams were later on constituted by the QEC in all Institutes / Departments at the USJP. A session with the Members of the Program Teams under the chairmanship of Dr. M. Suleman Shaikh was held on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2013, in the Senate Hall in the USJP, where the Advisor, QEC explained the Quality Enhancement Procedures the teams were henceforth to follow. In that meeting the members were given an assignment for the ‘reshaping of the syllabi of the programs taught in various faculties; and to develop further programs according to the rising needs of faculty and students’ as per the HEC mandate (Shaikh, 2013). To recapitulate Shaikh’s summary of their key objectives; the main areas seeking modification were as follows:

- Curriculum Change;
- New Teaching and Assessment Methods;
- More Flexible and Responsive Learning Environment;
- Introducing New Approaches to Use and Support of IT Enabled Learning;
- Innovation in Practice-Oriented Learning;
- New Ways of Formulating Research;
- Quality Tracking. (Shaikh, 2013, p.11: the researcher’s emphasis)

The areas emphasized above seemed especially crucial to the choice of this institute as a prospective project site, whose *raison d'être* now includes encouraging teachers, academics and researchers to push against conceptual and disciplinary boundaries, to challenge conventional assumptions through their practice and study the impact factor of their practice as well.

Creative Writing is therefore a poorly researched and non-specialized area in IELL. This makes it imperative to plan basic research into the genre from a practice-oriented and pedagogic perspective. Seeing as the academic staff members who conduct academic courses at this institute confine their teaching to literature studies or language analysis, all they tend to aim for is helping students comprehend fundamentals of English language acquisition, English language teaching, and of critical study of processed works, without ever collaborating with Creative Writing process. Therefore, any study encompassing an exploration into the nature and complexities of various Creative Writing pedagogical approaches, thereby presenting students with a practice-oriented workshop atmosphere properly based on the utilization of a course module on fiction, could mean a strategic establishment of the writing practice in the Institute of English Language and Literature. The same could be seen as a gateway to a more holistic curriculum design, with emphasis on craft and technique, which would build students' creative thinking and an enhanced means of grasping literary information on both graduate and undergraduate levels. This would contribute to an enhancement of their practical skills, which is what the current courses at the department lack.

## **1.6 The aim(s) and objectives of the study**

The present study intended to investigate the impact of implementing motivational strategies in the teaching of Creative Writing on university learners from non-English cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Credible insight pertaining to the same was to be generated following the utilization of a sample Creative Writing course module, focusing on English fiction, on a population of second year undergraduate students undertaking literature courses at the Institute of English

Language and Literature (IELL) at University of Sindh, Jamshoro, in Pakistan (USJP). The entire project was deemed to be supplemented by the establishment of a supportive learning environment seeking to observe learners' writing abilities in the short time span of a single semester. A comprehensive mechanism of the environment entailed the application of modern, post-modern and contemporary creative writing pedagogical approaches, through substantial activities, and national and international creative and critical writing samples, against a workshop setting, in order to explore and extend undergraduate students' creative writing abilities. The purpose of the aforementioned environment was to allow participants to:

- Grasp their creative writing potential at the present stage, and to proceed with a build-up of their practice accordingly.
- Frame their practice in the form of original creative work, unhindered by how lacking in terms of techniques such samples might initially be.
- Visualize their shortcomings and conduct further research on their writings and abilities.

The resulting findings of this research were expected to explore native students' creative, literary, and professional potential, contribute to research in the field of Creative Writing, and establish the role of the literary arts particularly in the USJP, where an area like this had ever been investigated before. A prioritization of four basic objectives for the research project consequently emerged, which are as follows:

- To develop a practice-oriented Creative Writing course module focusing on English language fiction for university learners in Sindh, Pakistan.
- To observe the impact of a twenty-nine day training program on native USJP participants' critical and creative writing abilities.

- To observe the impact of the project on current course curriculum utilized at IELL.
- To suggest and recommend measures for further research in the arena of Creative Writing pedagogy at large.

### **1.7 Research questions**

This study seeks to provide satisfactory answers to the following research queries:

- 1) Which pedagogical means can be utilized to instill Creative Writing skills in university learners in Sindh, Pakistan?
- 2) What can be achieved by USJP learners following their participation in a Creative Writing training program on composing English fiction?
- 3) What difficulties could be encountered by native university students over the course of a modular-workshop while attempting to write creatively?
- 4) What implications will the outcome of this research generate with respect to the future of Creative Writing as an academic discipline at IELL, as well as in Pakistan?

### **1.8 Research methodology and instruction methods used in this thesis**

During the initial stages of the research project, a close connection was observed between the research questions mentioned above and the need to inquire into the global practice and established teaching context of Creative Writing in the higher education community. A subsequent exploration was undertaken to identify varied practical approaches towards teacher development, which could have progressive effects on the over-all learning environment fostering creative practice at IELL in the USJP. The idea was to observe dilemmas faced by numerous English professionals all over the world with respect to their creative practice and their

academic teaching of Creative Writing, and use the information to develop an understanding about the practical ways of expediting the writing practice for numerous learners at IELL in the USJP. However, before moving forward with the project mechanism, it became necessary to take all existing contextual limitations of the institute into account.

As mentioned earlier, Creative Writing is a poorly researched and non-specialized area in IELL. The academic staff members who teach English courses confine their teaching to ‘language studies’ or ‘literature studies,’ usually aiming to help students comprehend fundamentals of critical study of processed works without collaborating with creative writing practice or process. Furthermore, since Creative Writing is neither a major nor a minor component of English literature curriculum at IELL, students were expected to lack prior writing practice. In addition to this, as Shah (2011) and Soomro (2012) report, the institute comprises of over-populated classes, with the number of students ranging from two hundred and above, and lacks resources, which would mean the introduction of a novel subject hard to manage. See also Burroway (2003) and Monteith & Miles (1992).

Having established the above, the study needed to explore a form of research strategy and pedagogical method that could be practicable in USJP within its existing context, while paying attention to the nature of creative arts research as well. In this regard, a tri-dimensional matrix comprising of constructs particular to “practice-based research,” “practice-led research,” and “research-led practice,” seemed as an appropriate research design. See, for instance, Boyd (2009), Barrett & Bolt (2007), Dawson (1999a), Harper & Kroll (2008), Nelson (2008), and Smith & Dean (2009) in this regard. The method found suitable to conduct this kind of research has been visualized by Haseman (2006) as ‘performative research,’ which tends to differ from both the qualitative and quantitative research methods, while surprisingly stemming from qualitative research tradition. In this method, Haseman establishes the exhibition of creative artefacts as the principal research outcome.

To enable learners generate their writing artefacts, modular instruction and the writing workshop surfaced as appropriate teaching methods. The methods corresponded to the contextual issues of the USJP. The development of a course module had been suggested necessary, especially in wake of lack of sufficient textual resources to conduct a course (Birol, et al., 2006; Emotin-Bucjan, 2011; Parsons, 1975). The module comprising of three units (*Appendix B*) was deemed to be implemented in a twenty-nine session writing workshop (*Appendices C-D*) because the latter had already been used for open-ended voluntary work with students. See, for instance, Bell & Magrs (2001), Burroway (2003), and Monteith & Miles (1992). Additionally, since in research associated with creative writing ‘... in most cases ... research practice is intimately connected with the writers’ creative practice’ (Webb & Williams, 2007; cited in Kroll, 2008, p.2), therefore, as a practice-oriented scholar, an investigation of the researcher’s individual writing practice also emerged as a relevant step in this project.

## **1.9 Significance of this study**

Research has been defined by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development as:

Creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including the knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications (OECD, 2002).

The same definition is what conceptualizes research for numerous governments and research institutions, and tends to ground much creative work as well (Craft, 2001; Webb & Brien, 2008). But at the same time, as Webb & Brien (2008) additionally conclude, artistic practitioners basically need to ‘produce work according to the logic of the field of creative production: work that is autonomous (made "for art's sake") and critically respected’ (2008). Accordingly, they suggest the need to stimulate work that is rigorous, beneficial to our future generations from the perspectives of economic and research gains, and also a source of enhancement to our existing bank of knowledge. This further points to a

comprehension of our role as ‘university based arts practitioners’, and to bring together ‘creative research’ within the ‘practice itself’ (Devlin, 2010).

Given that the outcome of this study is expected to further a broad understanding of the nature of creative writing practices in Pakistan, as well as the consequences and impacts of the same, this will be the first study at IELL in the USJP attempting to provide a holistic insight into the phenomenon of development of narrative abilities among learners, and looks at the correlation between theory, pedagogy, and the practice of creative writing itself. At a curricular level, the research encourages a need for course and program development, and a kind of training for undergraduate-level teacher preparation to further explore the arena’s dynamics and pedagogy, and establish it as a proper field of studies in the university sector at large. Thus, it will also serve as the starting point for future studies in the arena not only in the USJP but other institutes as well.

#### **1.10 Scope of the study**

In wake of an increasing popularity of Creative Writing in the social, academic and research spheres, it appears that the issue of launching a pedagogical inquiry into relevant teaching material, strategies and practices, and the ways they should be administered in a Pakistani higher education institute should continue to be of great importance. Such study will be highly beneficial for:

- Creative writers/scholars/teachers (writing in English), who can be considered as novice or beginners in the field, regardless of their national/international status.
- Practitioners who wish to explore the scope of the arena and conduct further scholarly research by considering the present project as their starting point.
- Creative writer-teachers belonging to comparatively developed institutions who want to export their pedagogical and writing practices to developing institutes.

The present project dealt with an implementation of assorted strategies in the teaching of Creative Writing, and involved undergraduate learners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The research outcomes of this study would be a particular source of information for:

- Teachers and educators intending to teach Creative Writing to second year undergraduate students, enrolled in a corresponding English Language / Literature discipline, or pursuing Creative Writing as an independent course of studies, at any university in Pakistan.
- Teacher training centres or institutions, that may use the results of this study to train prospective teachers of English at graduate or undergraduate levels by focusing on the rudiments of fiction form, and the teaching methodology proper to this form.
- Higher education professionals teaching Creative Writing at present, who wish to improve their strategies regarding the teaching of fiction writing mechanics at undergraduate levels.

Due to its complex boundaries, Harper claims it not always feasible to see Creative Writing as solely a ‘Western Higher Education phenomenon’ to be traded to the non-West (2006, p. 1). The implication here is ideas relating to the field could be imported from the non-native English speakers from elsewhere as well. Therefore, the study can also aid creative writer-teachers belonging to comparatively developed institutions who want to import a possibly different way of fostering learners’ writing abilities from the point of view of the developing institute/students to their own, thus adding to a richer outlook in the field.

### **1.11 Project limitations**

The intention of this study was to investigate “the incipience of Creative Writing” as a teachable artistic practice “in the USJP”; with a view to identify practices and issues relevant to the field, purely in the USJP context. Its aim was neither extended to any institute other than the IELL, nor to the existing arts disciplines,

such as visual, fine and performing arts programs, offered across Pakistan. The investigation was, therefore, restricted to a single study site, and the outcomes were not generated to provide a detailed research insight about various other institution/disciplines.

The research also acknowledges that the resulting data generated by thirteen individuals representing a particular year of studies may not be sufficient to provide a complete overview of the writing practice of other writer-students from the same level. However, the cross-sectional population sample was delimited to thirteen students from B.S. (Honours) II due to their selection being based on the “judgement purposive sampling technique”. Only those students from the selected level of studies were included in the sample whose writing portfolios collected prior to the initiation of the project depicted an ‘epistemological disposition’ toward creating a piece of fiction, and a ‘critical responsive understanding’ of the creative processes involved in this disposition (Harper, 2008). This method of selecting sample population was considered similar to the Creative Writing cohort selection protocols currently prevalent across the global academia, as per their benchmark standards.

The modular-workshop project was launched at the beginning of participants’ academic semester. Therefore, it was a given that some students would not be able to cope up between managing the workshops and their regular course work for the stipulated period.

Only three units were included in the sample course module to be administered in workshops for the research project. This was due to the limited time schedule and the onslaught of regular academic courses scheduled to take place within the institute.

Additionally, since “the manifestations of creativity vary quite a bit, and creativity is most successful when practices are tailored to the specific situation,” (Degraff & Lawrence, 2002), it is suggested that creativity appears in many different forms

and produces many different results depending upon the context. So the current way of conducting the Creative Writing course (in, for instance, a mandatory setup such as this), may not prove fruitful in any other context (relating to, for instance, a non-mandatory setup).

The goal of this study was to explore participants' actual writing acts and actions pertaining to the fiction writing process. The Creative Writing training utilized to achieve this aim was validated through participants' feedback on questionnaires ascertaining their workshop and modular learning experience. However, it is the participants' creative and analytical outputs that have been consolidated as the main data generated by the research. Despite the same, the study was not concerned with approaches that might be taken more widely across the idea of a 'final' creative writing product, or the publishing market realities of the fiction form.

Conclusively, therefore, despite producing insights that many practitioners would find encouraging and useful, the present research project embodies various limitations as well. Notwithstanding the same, it is expected that the study will make a number of valuable contributions to the body of knowledge existing in the field.

## **1.12 Conclusion**

This chapter aimed to explore the practice of Creative Writing as it presently exists within the context of this study: Pakistan. It was discovered that many native writers have successfully been able to study and scrutinize this 'sixth most populous country in the world (the second most populous Muslim majority nation), and the beholder of rich and unique cultures,' through their English novels and short stories (Manaf, 2006, p.6). However, despite the apparent onslaught of Pakistani fiction discussed thus far, there is still a visible scarcity of novelists writing in English in Pakistan. Other than the few same names emerging across the literary scene, there still remain a number of scholars who wish to

practice Creative Writing, and master the skills informing the art, but have simply been unable to find any difference in the mainstream achievement and a proper place in writing workshops (Bilal, 2013; Shamsie, 2004). Creative Writing as an academic discipline seems to be non-existent in most universities. Given that many higher education learners in Pakistan are unaware of ‘the practice,’ ‘unsure of the professional scope of Creative Writing,’ and do not know ‘about the Creative Writing job market,’ they simply wind up ‘compromising, opting for other careers, no matter how richly pregnant they are with writing talent’ (Bilal, 2013). Thus, the university students are left with fewer choices other than getting enrolled in English Literature courses, or taking up Linguistics, with instructors likewise setting out to apply for positions as specialists in English literature, Applied English Linguistics, or English Language Teaching (Bilal, 2013; Rustam, 2010, p.402). Additionally, until recently, there has been little attempt in public sector universities in Sindh to develop and explore writing pedagogy and praxis. The present research conducted at the Institute of English in the USJP was one attempt to ground this process.

The next part of the thesis traces the emergence of Creative Writing as “practice, pedagogy and research” with particular reference to the developments in the UK, USA and Pakistan. The resulting account will define what the practice is and consequently not about; give a brief overview of the practice of imbuing learners with writing approaches necessary to create fiction; survey the diverse areas within the field’s research context; summarize key reference points on how creative writing pedagogy emerged as an approach in the higher education sector in global context; and develop an argument for why, to allow the researcher to meet the research objectives, conventional academic teaching of Creative Writing in a classroom is not the best model. The chapter will then discuss the modular and workshop teaching methods, and will conclude with the implication of conceptual premises for devising a practice-oriented course module focusing on fiction to explore students’ writing practice at the IELL.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Since the inception of writing programs in higher education institutes, especially in terms of its correlation with the praxis of research, Creative Writing has emerged as a discipline with a complex identity. It appears to be a form wherein the relation of theory to practice, and the establishment of pertinent standards, procedures and policies for assessing artefacts and researched study produced within the field are confined by complex perspectives and unusual methodologies (Harper & Kroll, 2008). The same continues to be the case especially within the university sector, to the point where the very concept of research becomes a blur (ibid). Donnelly (2012) holds a number of factors responsible for this complexity in the arena's research context. For one thing, Creative Writing appears to be a field that may provide us with something entertaining, but not necessarily generate anything new. Nor does it contribute affluently to our existing knowledge banks. Additionally, since it is merely a shuffle or a re-arrangement of a prior knowledge that relevant practitioners already possess, the development of Creative Writing course modules may not necessarily supply us with anything innovative or recent. And finally, it seems to be a discipline that does not follow 'the same research requirements (or research methodologies) of its neighbouring disciplines in literary and composition studies,' and therefore comprises of

dynamics that may or may not necessarily fall under the criteria of current research practice (Donnelly, 2012, p.2).

Given the context, it is easy to consider how research in the field of Creative Writing stands at a crossroads. On the one hand, we have a crossway that leads one to view any research based on development of Creative Writing course modules and students' writing skills as an academic anomaly (Tate, 1964, p.182). On the other hand, we have a group of scholars who believe that Creative Writing possesses a rather complex and distinctive character, which renders it impossible for the field to be connected to a particular type of learner or learning (Harper, 2006, p.1). The same naturally applies to its framework for research as well.

In universities and colleges all over North America, Australia, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere beyond the Western world, the field has seen a gradual change in its genetic and research makeup (Harper, 2006, p.1). Yet, despite a varied and diversified range of the Creative Writing research context, there has been an ongoing quest among academics and the research community to inquire into the nature of this form (2006, p1). With the concept of writing practice as research being cross-examined more thoroughly, classifications about the 'production of type and forms of knowledge it generates have begun to filter down to affect how Creative Writing is taught at higher education levels' (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.1). This issue is of particular importance for practitioners who view all investigation centring on the Creative Writing pedagogy or processes as a means to add new dimensions to the scholarly reshaping of, and a definite grounding of the arena as a proper academic discipline. Besides, this can also enable valid stakeholders to establish Creative Writing studies in higher education institutes as a means of fostering a different variety of student learning. In this regard, a number of researchers have identified various grounds implying a genuine need for strategic inquiries conducted in the field, resulting in a generation of concrete outcomes (Atkinson T S, 2003; Chandio et al., 2013; Dawson, 2007; Donnelly, 2008, 2012; Harper & Kroll 2008; Haider, 2012a, 2012b; Khan, 2011, 2012, 2013; Mansoor, 2010, 2011, 2013).

However, as established in the previous chapter, within the majority of public sector universities across Sindh, Pakistan, Creative Writing has been ignored as an academic discipline (see, for instance, Table 1.2 and 1.4 in this regard).

For several international academic practitioners, on the other hand, the form has ‘increasingly and inevitably become the subject of research interest,’ as they ‘draw upon current literary and cultural theory to develop new pedagogical methods, and to examine the role of Creative Writing in the contemporary humanities’ (Dawson, 2005, p.1). Also see, for instance, Anderson (2007), Baranay (2008), Brophy (2008), Cole et al. (1999), Gureghian (2010), Vanderslice (2008), York (2008), and Webb (2008) in this regard. At the same time, among the various strategic inquiries that *have* been conducted in the field, most allude to the integrated nature of Creative Writing as a university discipline, in its capacity of being identified by ‘a triumvirate of Practice, Research and Pedagogy’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.1). Some scholars end up delving into any one of the aforementioned areas in their study, therefore choosing to draw attention to either the Creative Writing practice, or emphasize the nature of research, or look into the discipline from its pedagogical angle alone. Inevitably though, the focus of most investigations turns out to be on a combination of two or more of these areas, highlighting the rather noticeable cross-connection between them (ibid).

In this chapter, the researcher looks at the multi-perspectival views and approaches attached to Creative Writing as a form of knowledge and in the broader context of its recognition as a field of studies. Section 2.2 explores means by which Creative Writing has evolved as a practice, both within and outside the academia, and where it presently stands in its correlation with the artistic process and the creative product. Section 2.3 discusses research that has been conducted on Creative Writing as a university discipline, focusing on certain frameworks most suitable for an investigation in the field. Section 2.4 discusses what place strategic pedagogy has in the discipline and makes some observations about its current role in the contemporary university circles. Section 2.5 indicates certain means through which Creative Writing instructors can develop the best teaching

methods in their classrooms. Section 2.6 presents critical assessment of Creative Writing Studies and conclusions.

## **2.2 Identifying the writing praxis**

A critical understanding of Creative Writing as “practice” has recently come to the forefront in the research community. But, as Lim (2003) suggests, there still persists a strong need to carry out further inquiries in the field, emphasising its nature and a firm knowledge of the techniques associated with it. Lim’s justification for her stance stems from the rather apparent manipulation of ‘provisional practices,’ within the English discipline, ‘that pass for creative writing pedagogy and programs’ (p.151). Such features may in fact be alleged or assumed, and lack a real identity. Once subjugated under the influences of English Language, Linguistics or Literature departments, traits associated with the Creative Writing praxis could easily be misperceived. Lim’s major concerns subsequently deal with how the modern research university incorporates or contains creative writing, and what kind of practices can be drawn from it (Lim, 2003).

Reflecting on the issue, Harper and Kroll (2008) have classified creative “practice” as an all-embracing and a rather broad-scale concept. Ideally, the term in its most universal connotation stands for ‘professional practice (in art, design, etc.)’ or for procedures frequently utilized in professional and creative domains to ‘produce work for any purpose other than the (deliberate) acquisition of knowledge’ (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.3). While this generally incorporates the artistic production of drama, poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction (Green, 2008, p.4), ‘and its contexts through creative production and reflection on process’ (Kroll, 2013, p.249), practice can also be understood as ‘the application of skills, knowledge and expertise, through action or exercise’ (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.9). The term “practitioner” correspondingly alludes to ‘anyone who pursues professional / creative practice,’

or ‘works in the academy and carries out research to inform their practice’ (ibid, p.3).

It is easy, therefore, to make out the variety of multiple meanings and the protean nature inherent in this form (Mansoor, 2010, 2011, 2012). In its correspondence with research, for instance, the writing practice becomes ‘an active engagement with knowledge producing creative results’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.4). However, if in the aforementioned research-based context, terms such as “experimentation,” “risk taking,” “problem solving” or “intuition” have been used to refer to the creative practice (Haider, 2012a, p.218; Khan, 2011, p.117), with reference to the publication market, terms such as “industry,” “consumption,” or “making a living” through publication become ‘the defining components of practice’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.5).

Within the aforementioned research-based framework, creative practice is usually understood to be an essential constituent in the research process ‘as a method to generate or acquire knowledge’ (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.13). At the same time, it can simultaneously represent any entity that has been produced as an outcome of the research resulting from the embodiment of such knowledge (ibid). However, when used purely in a ‘creative’ sense, where research is deemed as ‘a systematic inquiry and investigation that leads to new knowledge or understanding, usually in form of concept or theory building’ (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.9); creative practice acts as a ‘variable process, usually seen as un-systematic inquiry’ (ibid, p.10).

Creatively speaking, the practice of writing can entail ‘an action, or a set of actions’ and due attention to both ‘action and artefact’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.3). The transcription of abstract ideas in the form of a concrete text tends to involve ‘a great many practices’ ranging from ‘some simple acts of inscription, some acts of recording, some acts of invention, interpretation or distillation, some acts of revisiting, rewriting or editing,’ to the full-fledged composition of ‘finished artefacts’ (2008, p.3). Whereas while transcribing such ideas, or more

comprehensively while a writer struggles to comprehend and ‘work the raw material’ of their work, ‘dissolution, difficulty and frustration’ become the natural constituents of the ‘creative process’ (York, 2008, p.22). It is in the above context that researchers have a propensity to differentiate the ‘creative practice’ from the ‘theoretical study or analysis’ of literary forms, especially since the former refers to a more detailed, meticulous and profound knowledge and a genuine approach gathered as a consequence of the very ‘act of creating’ (Bilal, 2013; Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.4).

As to the question what could be tantamount to the nature of ‘practice,’ there have emerged some very thought-provoking inquiries in the field by higher education practitioners from Pakistan. Haider (2012a), to begin with, mentions a couple of rather interesting perspectives deduced by Humaira Khan (2011) in her study on *Testing Creative Writing in Pakistan: Tensions and Potential in Classroom Practice*. Their population’s conception of Creative Writing as ‘an expression of inner feelings and emotions’ and an art that ‘encourages discussion of social problems prevalent in society’ have clearly grown out of their understanding of English Literature, which they have studied (Khan, 2011, p.116; cited by Haider, 2012a, p.218). Yet this is what the writing practice, for their students, is all about (ibid). Again, if the Creative Writing practice is mostly said to incorporate ‘the writer’s thoughts, feelings and ideas, sketched in an imaginative, innovative, unique, and poetic way’ (Khan, 2012, p.67), a few researchers perceive the same not as a product of ‘artistic expression’ alone, but also as a learned ‘skill’ guided by restrictive mandates of objective thought processes and rationally coherent movement of analytical or descriptive writing (Chandio et al., 2013). Such kind of classification that confines this practice to linguistic and structural correctness tends to clash with traditional notions defining Creative Writing as an imaginative sway of emotions in various sources. See also, for instance, Cummins (2009), Dawson (2005), Haider (2012a, 2012b), and Mansoor (2011, 2012) in this regard. Not so surprisingly, therefore, Creative Writing is often considered ‘a mutual object of dispute seen from many different viewpoints’ (Sharples, 1999, p.xii). This conflict is even more evident while identifying the pedagogical nature of this

“practice,” dealing with the development of creative skills and writing abilities among students.

### *2.2.1 Pedagogical factors and the Creative Arts practice*

When it comes to defining Creative Writing practice in the educational domain, developing notions about the features that constitute its pedagogy become crucial (Dawson, 1999b; 2008; Walker, 2012). Such factors may relate to the methods utilized to teach ‘a subject or course of study in which students produce writing which is generally creative’ (Dawson, 2005, p.21), or help them create work that has an original and unconventional mode of expression in it (Mansoor, 2010, p.206). This also includes dynamics that become apparent while undertaking higher degree study within the university environment, which examines means through which Creative Writing practitioners can develop even their pedagogic practice and apply their acquired knowledge accordingly (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.6).

This concept is of direct relevance for many university practitioners in Pakistan as well, and can be readily applied to their context. Bilal (2013), in this respect, views this practice as a platform that can enable one to explore their emotional, psychological, individual, personal, ‘social and national matters through research’ and through innovative ideas. However, if Bilal’s perception of Creative Writing includes a forum that would ‘lead towards solutions and awareness’ (ibid), in another inquiry undertaken by Mansoor (2010), a comparatively divergent interpretation of Creative Writing as a practice ‘that is inseparable from correct grammar and vocabulary’ occupies the foreground. Central to their participants’ philosophy is the notion that this art is inherently interlinked with linguistic, syntactic and structural precision, due to which the creative aspect and generative features of this form of writing end up taking ‘a back seat’ (2010, p.206). Elaborating the role of Creative Writing instructors in this context, the researcher additionally suggests a similar connotation to have shaped their understanding as well. Language teaching, states Mansoor (ibid, p.206), accompanied by activities

devised by teachers to help students improve their grammar, word-usage, and sentence-construction, and develop their writing expressions, among other language skills, has become ‘an integral component’ of Creative Writing, as it is currently being practiced within the handful of institutions in Pakistan. This is primarily because the students who enrol in English Language or Literature programs at various universities in the country use English as a second, additional or as a foreign language (Mansoor, 2012). Given the context, Haider (2012a) likewise corroborates how, contrary to their counterparts studying Creative Writing as an established degree program in American, Australian, European or British universities, native Pakistani students neither have stable grammar, nor adequate linguistic expressions, nor even a settled base in syntax. In the absence thereof, they would be unable to have a handle on the internal structure of this language, and exploit it on impulse, unless they intentionally bother about grammatical rules (Mansoor, 2010, p.206). In case of students who speak English as a first language, their instructors hold an ‘added benefit’ of being in a position where they can skip the ‘correct syntax and grammar’ stage and ‘move on to polishing their expression and challenging their clichéd modes of locution’ instead (ibid). But the teachers in Pakistan have not yet had this advantage of promoting Creative Writing as, what Wirtz (2006, p.23) considers, ‘an avant-garde practice of fabricating ideas that are innovative, perspectives that are new and original, and modes or means of expression that are novel,’ or endorsing it as a way of ‘discovering meanings and creating new knowledge’ (Mansoor, 2010, p.203). Only a few exceptional practitioners realize the flexibility in the form’s boundaries that allows individuals to be excessively innovative (Arifa, 2009).

Bilal (2013) acknowledges, in this regard, the inevitable manifestation of a teaching pedagogy focusing on developing learners’ language skills as an essential strategy associated with the Creative Writing practice. Without this, no writer can exhibit an original approach in their text, and may end up ‘rephrasing’ existing content or knowledge instead. However, many researchers and writers in other parts of the world tend to focus on a rather contradictory approach. Strunk (1959) for instance, finds the idea of any plan or scheme igniting heartfelt

passions, or the same resulting in the sudden explosion of certain words in the mind, utterly questionable (1959, p.52). The writer hints at the unlikelihood of knowing for sure why certain words are capable of exciting the reader deeply, when the same may simultaneously, even if slightly rearranged, become a source of discontent. As mysterious as this writing process sounds, ‘there is no satisfactory explanation of style, no infallible guide to good writing, no assurance that a person who thinks clearly will be able to write clearly, no key that unlocks the door, no inflexible rules by which the young writer may shape his course’ (Strunk, 1959, p.52). Gallaher (2009), likewise, is unable to agree to the notion of Creative Writing being based upon a learned set of strategies, since he has never experienced so in the practice of writers he has read or is acquainted with, their practical strategies varying to a great deal.

Like Strunk, Gallaher’s refusal to acknowledge a definite set of rules culminating in a creative artefact is nothing new. Almost a decade ago, Haven (1999) and Sharples (1999) pointed out an identical concept. Research shows that the global literary scene surmounts with writers who continue to produce works using rules that experts would consider to be the antithesis of creative practice (Haven, 1999). The same stands equally true and applicable while composing narratives or dealing with works of fiction as well (Sharples, 1999, 2002).

### **2.2.2 *Creative practice and the art of writing fiction***

In light of information detailed above, Creative Writing can be unmistakably understood to function as both, a form of ‘communication and art,’ that ‘investigates and explores’ on one end (Harper, 2010b, p.117), and ‘articulates and speculates’ on the other (ibid). But most of all, given its overall disposition and content, the practice not only ‘operates as a synonym for literature; for published works of poetry and drama,’ but of ‘fiction’ as well (Dawson, 2005, p.2; Green, 2008, p.4; Khan, 2012, p.67; Mansoor, 2010, p.206). Emphasising the generic nature of the art of ‘fiction’ further, Chandio et al. (2013) have identified four levels of creative writing practice, with minor differences sorting them apart.

These are 'descriptive writing, functional writing, narrative writing, and story writing' respectively (2013, p.321).

Speaking of certain rules particular to the field, the compositional process of fiction, in terms of its correlation with story writing, includes edicts such as "a story should have a beginning, a middle and an end', 'a plan must be made before one writes', 'writers must think about their readers,' etc." (Sharples, 1999, p.4). As logical and sensible as they sound, despite such regulations being 'grounded in good practice .... always at hand to offer advice when in need,' they still fall short of offering a valid explanation of the writing process (ibid). Nor does the researcher believe these pointers could provide one with the means to understand or develop their skills further (p.4). What *do* inform the study and practice of writing fiction, however, is the 'close-reading techniques emphasized in the workshop,' and the study and praxis of thinking critically, which are honed outside the rules based teaching context (Green, 2008, p.8).

Haven (1999) mirrors the mentioned arguments in that he sees the presence of possible rules dictating how to structure and write a story, but then there is no reason not to believe that any avid reader of fiction can come across numerous best sellers that successfully violate those very rules. What naturally follows is an absence of any set of 'hard and fast rules in writing,' which can be easily deduced from the way 'the greatest writers bend and break every convention' (Cox, 2005, p.8). Numerous books on creating efficacious kind of writing are readily available these days; yet as Sharples (1999) advocates, writing can neither be installed as an art, nor can it be boxed neatly inside an instructional package. This is due to the simple reason that there is no such thing as a 'single best way to write' (p.xi). Seeing as different minds engage with the world in different ways to create a text, what could work out for one writer 'may just stifle another' (ibid). All the same, the writer also realizes the dual nature of Creative Writing as a 'skill' and 'a process of design,' grounded in the way one uses their praxes to create, craft and share the implications of the diverse aspects of this world (1999, p.xii). Therefore it is extremely important for a writer to look into the process of expressing

original ideas ‘in just the right way,’ which is what can make the communication more clear and evoke passion in the minds of readers (Sharples, 1999, p.3). Elucidating their point with respect to the correlation between creative process and the element of craft, Sharples (2002) additionally states :

.... Writing is a craft that needs to be learned and can lead on to particular specialisms such as academic, business or novel writing. Those who develop the skills of creative writing do so gradually, by reflecting on their experiences of reading and writing and by learning the styles, strategies and techniques of written communication. Even the most talented writers need many years of practice to become experts; (2002, p.12; also cited in Mansoor, 2010, p.206).

From this it can be safely assumed that despite there being no convenient or readymade formula for generating ‘great fiction,’ yet a ‘fundamental knowledge of writing craft’ can, above anything else, allow one’s practice to flourish and encourage a writer to exhibit their talent to a great extent (Fligelman & Grae, 2003, pp.v-vi). The American novelist Oates (2003) has suggested that ‘without craft, art is too private; and that without art, craft is just hackwork’ (p.xii). Oates claims that creativity is based upon compelling ideas, which stem from peculiar aspects of individual behaviour. Yet as personal as the creative practice may seem, ‘it is nothing without the scaffolding of technique’ (Neale, 2009, p.ix). Even within Pakistan, researchers defy creativity in writing as an ‘elusive,’ ‘personal,’ and ‘indefinable’ phenomenon that strongly resists, to the point of disregarding, ‘strict codification’ (Mansoor, 2011, p.2). Come what may, this form of writing conclusively requires ‘certain stimulants for catalysis’ (ibid), especially since ‘creativity flourishes where there is a strategy to promote it’ (Robinson, 2001, p. 12; in Khan, 2011, p.117; also cited in Haider, 2012b, p.179).

### **2.2.3 Practice as research**

In a critically challenging environment comprising of university-level students, states Mansoor, teachers should always confront the likelihood of coming across second language writers (2011, p.2). Cases such as above may place instructors in an awkward position of dealing with numerous ‘linguistic factors and socio-cultural inhibitions hindering unrestrained expression and inventiveness’ of their

students (ibid). When faced with a similar situation, Mansoor (2011) believes teachers must ‘resort to avant-garde devices and modified teaching techniques to extricate the potential of the students from the boundaries of reserve’ (p.2). Again, before establishing the same, pedagogical variations associated with the discipline would have to be taken into account, for which substantial study is required (Chandio et al., 2013; Haider, 2012a). Inevitably, then, among the various other strategic inquiries that *have* been conducted in the field, many researchers following the practice-oriented line of inquiry consequently tend to develop notions of both ‘the writerly practice’ as well as ‘practice-led research’ in Creative Writing (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.1). This brings us to the aspect of ‘research’ within the domain, which is what will be emphasised in the section that follows.

### **2.3 Creative Writing and research**

In wake of the increasing popularity of Creative Writing as a field of studies among students, and as a source of professional awareness amongst teachers, this area is sometimes viewed ‘not as a practice (creativity), or as a synonym for literature, but as a discipline: a body of knowledge and a set of educational techniques for imparting this knowledge’ (Dawson, 2005, p.21). Bearing in mind the changing trends and varying teaching paradigms associated with creative arts subjects, Haider (2012a) holds it a definite responsibility of all related practitioners to conduct research ‘to understand the complexity of writing development’ (ibid, p.216), and to analyse ‘the composing process’ itself (p.223). Mansoor (2013), likewise, highlights the necessity of research to be undertaken so as to deduce appropriate aims and objectives associated with the area. Whereas a similar track of thought is maintained by Donnelly (2012) as well, who believes the purpose behind Creative Writing research is to provide us with new knowledge ‘adding operational significance to the field’ (p.2). Given that one way of achieving the same is by investigating the discipline with respect to its academic stance, Donnelly additionally supports contemporary research to be conducted on Creative Writing pedagogy due to three reasons:

1. Any research in developing Creative Writing course material, and the ways they should be administered in HE institutes, will ‘welcome intellectual analysis that may reveal new theories’ (2012, p.2).
2. Such research ‘will have important teaching implications and insights into the ways creative writers (from diverse backgrounds) read, write and respond’ (p.2).
3. Even though a set ‘curricular design of Creative Writing programs’ continues to exist, Creative Writing still remains in its ‘nascent phase’ and must therefore ‘undergo necessary inquiries and research into its field in order to fully develop and be measured as an academic discipline’ (Donnelly, p.2).

This is the basic reason why, in the UK, students are now being encouraged to conduct scholarly research in the discipline not only in ‘the traditional categories of poetry, fiction, and playwriting, but can also link it with science, critical theory, journalism, or the teaching of Creative Writing,’ (Beck, 2005; cited in Swander, et al., 2007, p.14). However, as Harper and Kroll (2008) report, despite observing recurrent researches that correlate ‘creative writing practice, and university research’ with ‘university teaching,’ and despite such inquiries having spread to ‘institutions worldwide,’ the same is not yet concretely established by and large (2008, p.2). The researchers also note that Creative Writing as a practice-led discipline needs to be investigated more thoroughly, and that such examination should identify the link between ‘critical understanding drawn from investigating this practice and modes of teaching it at university level’ (ibid, p.2).

The same stance on the need to conduct research in Creative Writing pedagogy is echoed by American practitioners as an attempt to track its future course, and the manner this subject could be taught at all levels of study (Dawson, 2007, p.87). In American universities, despite the widespread proliferation of Creative Writing programmes following the Second World War, the discipline remains to serve as

‘a practical studio training for aspiring artists’ alone (2007, p.87). On the contrary, Dawson believes the area should be grounded in as a research oriented field of study for future intellectuals, academics and instructors, instead of just focusing on the artistic dimension independently. Given the context, Creative Writing continues to occupy an uncertain position in the American academy, and its equally ambiguous impact on the literary and scholarly culture has exposed the system to enormous criticism and complaints (p.88). Citing Kelly Ritter (2001, p.208), Dawson supports research in Creative Writing ‘be re-configured towards teacher training, specifically the ability to teach undergraduates in the field’ (2007, p.87). For Dawson, the future of this discipline depends on ‘how it theorises and manages the traditional nexus between research and teaching in the modern university’ (2007, p.88). Higher education teachers of this subject, states York (2008), must make out the present university environment. He suggests ‘each semester’s students’ are less familiar with the creative language conventions and ‘increasingly ill-equipped’ to enter meaningfully into any discussion involving ‘poetics,’ which considers the material and language arrangements responsible for the art of creation (p.22). The researcher further reflects on the necessity of carrying out frequent investigations on Creative Writing teaching pedagogy, and ‘adjust our teaching practices accordingly,’ with the intent of enabling students to acquire a working knowledge of ‘poetics’ (York, 2008, p.22).

Other than in the British and American context, in the last decade or so, Creative Writing has increasingly and inevitably become the subject of research interest from the pedagogical point of view, in countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand, and seems to be also developing in Asia-Pacific countries (Dawson, 2005). The researchers’ justification for the same is to draw upon current literary and cultural theory to develop new pedagogical methods, and to examine the role of this field in the contemporary humanities (2005, p.1). In India, as well as certain parts over the Middle East, research in Creative Writing pedagogy has fostered at a gradual yet a surprisingly strong pace. See, for instance, Rollason (2006) and Azerbaijan University of Languages & UNESCO (2010).

Within the context of Pakistan, Bilal (2013) classifies Creative Writing as a platform that can enable one to investigate their traditional context artistically. At the same time, Haider (2012a) considers various developments to have entered the domain of traditional writing and Creative Writing pedagogy across the globe in depth, and identifies a lack of research carried out in the later arena nationally. Apparently, the majority of HEC recognized universities across Pakistan do not hold it mandatory for learners to utilize creative practice or skills. This becomes more evident when we observe the presence of only thirty out of a hundred and seventy-one universities that comprise of Creative Writing as a major or elective course, as has been detailed in *Section 1.2.4.2* and *1.2.4.3* of this thesis. Having said that, once established as an academic practice, the ‘condition of creative writing may be different in different areas of the country’ (Chandio et al., 2013, p.324). Prior to a concrete manifestation of the same, researchers feel that much research is required to examine ‘the condition of creative writing skills ... of students ... and compare it according to different demographic variables’ (ibid, p.325).

### **2.3.1     *The research context***

In his research conducted in the field, York (2008) has identified a unique research context, whereby a university writing classroom can successfully function as a laboratory for pedagogic investigation focusing on the nature of some particular genre (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.xii). Elaborating further, researchers inform us how the writing of any sort of literary genre, which in the above case is poetry, could form the basis of an investigation and ultimately of ‘innovative teaching practices’ specific to that field (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.xii). Referring to a case study undertaken by Mahony (2008), Harper and Kroll point out the researcher’s suggestion to consider pragmatic and concrete dimensions of research, in order to construct a creative piece. The same is followed by a concurrent need to study all artistic, personal or professional issues that form a backdrop to such a line of inquiry (2008, p.xiii). As a useful addendum to the above notion, Baranay (2008) asserts that the composition of all creative artefacts

is preceded by an examination of the development of both form and practice. The investigation in this context, according to Vanderslice (2008), borders around pedagogic research, especially since any study encompassing the formal teaching of Creative Writing can connect artistic invention to the formal aspects of technique.

In a researched study titled *The Rise and Fall Of Mr Choakumchild – Learning Outcomes and The Teaching Of Creative Writing*, Tom Dobson (2008) cites Harper (2006) and supports the latter's differentiation of "intellect" from "intelligence" (2008, p.27). Intellect, according to Harper, refers to a 'point of view' that deals with 'product, or fixing an already known commodity of knowledge,' while intelligence has to 'do with process,' that sees 'knowledge as an organic and ever-changing movement' (Dobson, 2008, p. 27). The researchers evidently view Creative Writing practice as being grounded in "intelligence" (ibid). In Pakistan, Haider (2012a) claims that all form of writing is currently based upon 'the product approach,' which is a borrowed model that has not grown out of any kind of investigative inquiry, experimentation or research endeavours. On the contrary, this is a classical rhetorical model that follows the overall 'invention, arrangement, and style' scheme of discourse production, focusing on the 'written product' alone (Haider, 2012a, p.218; Khan, 2012). The mode is deemed an efficient method of writing by most Pakistani literature scholars as well, who prioritize the end and not the means of composing their work (Khan, 2012). This implies that our writers have 'no idea of process approach or in other words still the process model approach is not popular if ever it exists in Pakistan,' which is why inquiries must be conducted to 'test the traditional product oriented model against the composing processes of actual writers' (Haider, 2012a, p.218).

A cross-connection is further observed between the former notion and the changing trends investigated in the teaching of Creative Writing in the global context. Investigative inquiries conducted by Pakistani teachers on 'the interests of students,' with a view 'to enable them to be expressive in writing,' are now being deemed an absolute must, so as to extend to the international repertoire of

knowledge existing in the field (Nadeem, 2007, p.2; cited in Khan, 2011, p.112). Haider (2012a) holds it a genuine responsibility of instructors to examine Creative Writing as a process and a practice, and ‘understand the complexity of writing development’ observed in students (ibid, p.216). In another study, the researcher cites Khan (2011, p.112) and suggests the need to conduct systematic inquiries examining various ‘approaches to teaching, such as the genre approach or the process approach for developing creative writing’ (Haider, 2012b, p.179). In the absence thereof, there is a danger that Pakistani students would be forced to follow the footsteps of their antecedents by utilizing the ‘product approach’ while writing creatively, and indulge in concentrating more on the product rather than the process (Haider, 2012a).

Khan (2012) likewise encourages the teaching of Creative Writing as per the ‘genre approach’ in universities. Teaching the subject, with reference to the overall structure and purpose of a particular genre, such as descriptive, expressionistic, narrative or story writing, thereby viewing how language could be used for a specific purpose within that specific context, can make a positive difference in native classrooms (pp.58-59). However, since information pertaining to a particular genre neither guarantees the teacher’s ability to develop their students’ writing skills, nor does it ensure a marked enhancement of their learners’ capability in the writing process (Hasan, 1996; Harper, 2006), the method may in fact backfire unless approached somewhat strategically (Khan, 2012, p.59; Dobson, 2008). This is primarily because learning to write creatively is guided by some sort of training objectives (Harper, 2006). If the basic aim followed by students, in this regard, involves learning about the essential components of any literary form alone, then once they achieve such an objective, this could lead them to believe to have mastered the ability of writing creatively (Dobson, 2008, p. 27). On such grounds, the researcher differentiates genre-approach to generating formulaic work from writing creatively, and suggests taking up teaching Creating Writing in a different manner (ibid). For this significant research is implied in the area of Creative Writing Pedagogy, which in this case should ideally be conducted in an academic setting offered within the

university (Bilal, 2013; Mansoor, 2012). Cucciarre (2008), Minot (2003) and Moxley (1989) imply a similar proposition by suggesting that there is a dire need for carrying out study in the arena, especially at the undergraduate level (Cucciarre, 2008, p.13).

#### **2.4 Creative Writing as an academic discipline**

For some time now, higher education learners have been flocking to join the English Literature and Creative Writing programmes in various parts of the world, intending to become writers. Trying to match up with their enthusiastic pace, a vast majority of institutes have come to the forefront to offer writing courses, most of them offering the workshop as a part of that course (Cole et al., 1999; Green, 2008; James, 2009; Monteith & Miles, 1992). The academic teaching of Creative Writing is therefore no longer given an alienated status. With the pedagogical mechanism of developing creativity in students contextualized with immense response, numerous academics have grasped the importance of an underlying standard which informs their teaching of writing skills to learners (Bell & Magrs, 2001; Smith & Dean, 2009; Donnelly & Harper, 2012; Harper & Kroll, 2008). At the same time, as Donovan (2008) and Haven (1999) inform us, we are also surrounded today by a varied body of practitioners whose views on Creative Writing pedagogy are informed by their input on ‘creativity’ as a non-teachable art form. Additionally, it is a form that, according to some, continues to occupy an uncertain stance in contemporary academia, thereby providing the arena with its unique set of contradictory perspectives and approaches, especially with respect to developing and enhancing students’ writing abilities.

Emphasizing this rather ambiguous position occupied by Creative Writing ‘both as a practice and discipline, within the context of higher education’ in the UK, Clarke (2008, p.42) touches upon matters concerning student recruitment, suggesting the affluent rise in the subject’s scope therein. Yet Clarke continues to observe a persistent need for Creative Writing to be acknowledged as an academic discipline, and establish a strong hold in the academic circles as well. Vanderslice

(2008) notes that despite struggling for a pertinent place in the UK higher education, the discipline remains to serve as a rather marginalized and an invisible 'component' of the academic profession (p.66). Examining the 'anomalous position of creative writing at the research university' further, Lim (2003) refers to a number of researches demonstrating 'the ignorance and disdain said to characterize the estrangement of creative writing programs, usually institutionalized in English departments, from the rest of the profession of English' (2003, p.151). The researcher counters the inappropriate identity of the area and intends to 'avoid' all 'such characterizations' that place Creative Writing on an unequal footing with other disciplines.

With respect to the presence of this discipline in Pakistani academia. Khan (2011) examines the discipline's mixed up demeanour, and elaborates the mechanism it tends to follow in the few institutes that do house it. Similar to Lim (2003), Khan perceives the teaching of Creative Writing these days to be mostly assimilated with an English Literature course. Within the rudiments of such a course, the arena tends to be confined to the works of classical authors such as 'Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, Shakespeare, Charles Dickens,' with emphasis being placed on the authors' biographical sketches, the eras in which they lived, and the related trends and movements, and therefore teaching about literature rather than composing literature itself (Khan, 2011, p.113). In comprehensive terms 'the students do not write the stories themselves' (Khan, 2011, p.114), and hardly ever generate any fiction or poetry (Rahman, 2002). They are neither taught to 'develop the plot, characterisation or dialogue' (Khan, 2011, p.114); nor provided with a supporting classroom environment allowing genuine freedom of expression (Rahman 2007); nor motivated to use their cognitive thinking processes to produce a creative piece of work (Chandio et al., 2013, p.323).

The same thought is voiced by Yagelski (2000) and Zubair (2003; cited in Zubair, 2006), and Khan (2012). The writers contend English Literature, as it is being taught in contemporary higher education sector in Pakistan, has lost its former prestige and productivity. This is mostly since canonical British texts continue

being administered in the classroom in ‘a traditional pedagogical style focusing on themes, character and genre analysis, in contrast to the current trends of developing critical literacy awareness among students in order to challenge and deconstruct the texts’ (Zubair, 2006, p.251). The researchers have, however, been unable to make out the presence of creative writing at all.

While corroborating the named researchers’ views, Haider (2012a) implies that Creative Writing is a highly misunderstood phenomenon in Pakistani universities these days. Academics regard the discipline as ‘literature, including the variety of its genres’ (2012a, p.216), while students inaccurately presume that MA English or MSc Applied English Linguistics offer ‘English language, literature and Creative Writing skills,’ until they join such courses and discover them to be something entirely different (Bilal, 2013). This is because while English composition and literature courses emphasize scholarly writing, Creative Writing students view literature as existing modes or exemplary versions of genres and craft, ‘rather than through the lenses of literary theory, history, or biography’ (Green, 2008, p.4). As a replacement for the classroom based instruction in lecture halls, ‘students learn from peers and professors in workshop or studio settings’ (ibid). Instead of studying literature merely for the sake of studying literature, amidst heavily loaded theory and criticism, they enrol in Creative Writing courses for ‘artistic training,’ where ‘the focus of the curriculum is on the production of original work, the technical understanding of the craft, and the role of the writer as the unintentional architect of the story’ (Green, 2008, p.7)

Seeing as ‘literature analysis and Creative Writing are two different disciplines,’ yet get interlinked with each other (Bilal, 2013), Haider (2012a) considers this overlapping to be the factor responsible for clouding Pakistani students’ and teachers’ perception of the term ‘creative writing’ and ‘so tensions arise in the classroom’ (2012a, p.216). The conceptualization of creative practice or the art of writing in the country seems especially ‘puzzling and conflicting’ since ‘English teachers in Pakistan do not teach to develop the creative abilities of students .... choose topics from the textbooks and explain them for writing in the classroom....

and are confused about strategies needed in rousing learners' interest in creative writing' (Khan, 2012, pp.57, 58). Mansoor (2010) refers to coming across a similar conflict while conducting certain teaching experiments in 'Creative Writing' classes at the university level in Islamabad, Pakistan. Given that the majority of the participants enrolled in the three month short training course were 'products of the local education system,' of a nation like Pakistan 'which does not have an active industry that engages Creative Writing Skills in the professional domain,' they 'appeared accustomed to pursuing clearly defined lines of thought as articulated by a teacher or a text book' (Mansoor, 2010, pp.202-03).

Following up, Ketzle (2007) has likewise been unable to detect a concrete presence of Creative Writing pedagogy in higher education institutes, including those that are situated in America. Even in instances where the same is not the case, it appears to be an academic discipline that is hardly ever driven by intellectual rigor, and is often unreceptive to its own pedagogical structure (Ketzle, 2007). York (2008), however, disagrees with the above notion in light of his own experiences and those of his colleagues in 'dozens of American universities', where they have actually been able to observe the establishment of Creative Writing not only as an 'academic or research discipline but as a teaching program' as well (p.22). Commenting further, York believes the state of this discipline in American higher education is deep-rooted and independent of other academic structures. Over the last decade or so, the academia has observed a 'gradual separation of composition from literary studies', a literature coursework which is progressively more 'immaterial to composition training', and the students' 'argumentative skill' development, particular to the American creative education, which excludes 'analytic techniques specific to certain disciplines, English or otherwise' (York, 2008, p.22).

In countering the popular belief that writing cannot be learned, that establishing a pedagogical praxis of creativity is unimportant, and storytelling or character development is innate, that a writer's creativity is manifested experientially, or finally that some authors are naturally better able to manifest creativity than

others, some American practitioners argue that creative skills can be learned and mastered by using texts. York (2008), for instance, points out the utilization of the Great Books model within the American university curricula, whereby books are being used to help Creative Writing students come up with 'ideas,' 'themes,' and even 'plots' (2008, p.22). Other writers similarly believe that 'successful and effective Creative Writing is borne of a healthy balance of both learned skill and inherent talent', and 'all those mechanical writing skills that must be learned' (Donovan, 2008). Anthony (2007) also views Creative Writing as a combination of creativity, craft and commerce. From concept to first draft, for instance, is creativity; from first draft to final story is craft; the publication process that ensues is all business. The four skills of Creative Writing art are innovation, change, restructuring, and editing, respectively (Anthony, 2007).

Bell (2001a) opposes the notion of Creative Writing as something mysterious, impenetrable, something 'inspired by muses and shaped by genius,' something one either has it in them or not, thus excluding all possibility of trying to teach it (2001a, p.xi). She considers the same as a myth that has been disproved in light of the success rate of writing courses not only in the UK but everywhere across the globe. In conjunction to the above claim, Harper and Kroll (2008) have detected many a creative writers who have been actively involved in their pursuit of innovative pedagogic practices within the American, Australian and the British academy. Not so surprisingly, their keen engagement with issues based on 'encouragement, development and support of learners' and their surge to demonstrate a particular interest in 'the career trajectory and employability of their graduates' has given an obvious rise to 'increased student interest' as well (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.8). In fact, as Vanderslice (2008) reports, Creative Writing courses, modules and programs have been increasingly dotting the American higher education and the British university landscape, ever since the 1920s and late 1960s, respectively. And towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of universities developing courses in the named arena began growing in larger numbers; an expansion that has been proliferating to date (Vanderslice, 2008, p.67).

## 2.5 Approaches to teaching Creative Writing in higher education

Within the American pedagogical framework, Gallaher (2009) claims ‘the study and teaching of Creative Writing,’ despite being administered everywhere, ‘is at present, as has it always been, at a crossroads.’ Personally, concepts such as ‘theory,’ ‘teaching,’ and ‘training’ in Creative Writing classes seem like a ‘cake recipe’ to him. This suggests that story writing does not result from a definite set of rules, which could be attained or taught as a skill to students. However, there are laws that describe how stories work, and the only thing we could do about their transmission is guide our students into comprehending, adopting or even mastering the principle ingredients of the story writing process and engage in successful Creative Writing efforts (Haven, 1999). Gallaher and Haven’s perspectives are followed up by Evans (2009), who believes ‘writing isn’t something that can be taught. It’s guided, refined, sharpened’ (Evans, 2009). Similarly, Atkinson also believes one has to learn for himself how to write. She is somewhat incredulous of the idea of writing courses, since she sees Creative Writing as a process which by virtue of its complexities is reasonably baffling and may never be explained (Atkinson K, 2003).

Contrary to the aforementioned group, there still exists another division of American creative practitioners who agree to the whole proposition; but to a certain extent. Numerous ‘direct encounters with creativity in action’ have led, for instance, Degraff and Lawrence to re-examine the conservative conventional prejudice about creativity and to advance a rather ‘multidimensional view’ of approaching creativity. This ‘requires more work than following a grocery list of best practices, but the pay-outs’, which in the present context could be taken to mean motivational instruments, ‘are far more substantial’ (Degraff & Lawrence, 2002, p.xvii). Their view on formulating a theory of creative practice, with accompanying strategies and methods for motivating students to produce valuable results is mirrored likewise by Cox (2005). Cox views writing as something that cannot be learnt except by doing. Nor can one, according to her, be provided with a step-by-step instructions manual for composing an artefact. But by showing one

how other writers have handled structure, characterization, narrative voice, dialogue and other aspects of the craft, ‘could end in deepening the insights one learns from his own practice’ (Cox, 2005, p.6). Stern reflects an equivalent thought when he suggests no amount of reading about writing could stand equal to the act of writing itself. A book on fiction cannot possibly make anyone compose a full-fledged narrative piece overnight. Despite the same, it would hardly be justified to dismiss Creative Writing pedagogy or a writing course as useless especially since each allows budding writers to build-up on their existing repertoire of skills and learn so much in so less time, especially through others’ experiences (Stern, 1991).

Deliberating on the rationale behind Creative Writing pedagogy, Mayers’ (2009) outlook is to introduce changes in the perceived view of the function of Creative Writing as an academic enterprise, or to bring about transmuted notions of the intentions underlying the existence of writing programs and courses. He believes that the basic purpose of such courses is not just to produce writers, but to promote the ‘general intellectual framework concerning literacy itself.’ By expanding the canvas of Creative Writing from practice-based to practice-led, from practice alone to practice and theories incorporating diverse and ‘practical knowledge of (and facility with) the composition of fiction, poetry, and other creative genres,’ and back to practice, Creative Writing programs strive to ‘fashion themselves as producers of academic professionals, scholars or writers who are capable of teaching not only writing but also composition, literature, and theory, depending on their ancillary areas of expertise and interest’ (Gallaher, 2009). In an introduction of her forthcoming book titled *Rethinking Creative Writing in Higher Education: Programs and Practices that Work*, Stephanie Vanderslice notes how important it is for a Creative Writing pedagogy to not only improve the writing experience of students, but also to employ a more varied, ‘outward-looking, outcomes-oriented training and to make a more direct contribution to the development of a literate society’ (Vanderslice, 2011c). Additionally, she believes in the instructive prowess of good practice as a means to achieving further good practice.

The basic objective of any Creative Writing programme, claims Haake (2000), should be to further learning experience, and ascertain the provision of reading material, and construction of an adequate instruction framework in such a manner within which students can define the controlling factors and leading skills that will sustain their writing practice throughout their lives. However, as Andrew Motion suggests, any good Creative Writing course may not necessarily aim to discover ways of ‘establishing worldly success’ (Motion, 2001, p.x). Bell likewise reflects on the presence of numerous students who may take up such a course of training not with the intention of pursuing a creative or publishing career in the field as much as with that of adding something novel, important and pleasurable to their ‘repertoire of life skills’ (Bell, 2001a, p.xi). Whatever students’ rationale for opting for this form of training may be, the identity of Creative Writing as a properly taught course of studies can hardly be underemphasised (Green, 2008)

Dealing with numerous contemporary issues, queries, predicaments and ideas concerning the establishment of Creative Writing as an academic field, especially in the context of the university sector, and its current position within the higher education, Harper & Kroll (2008) postulate their views of the field as a practice-led and process-based discipline; which encompasses manifold insinuations and inferences regarding its nature, practice, pedagogy and theory (pp.3,6,8). Given that it is a discipline that harnesses a pedagogical mechanism centering on developing higher education learners’ writing skills (Donnelly, 2010; James, 2009, Leahy, 2010; Mac, 2011), there are some very pertinent questions that could be raised in this regard (Sheared et al., 2001). Aside from investigating the kind of knowledge, for instance, that ought to be considered as critical for inclusion in the teaching process, a number of factors dealing with the way Creative Writing instructors could break the mould of traditional educational methodology, provide for reflection on content, transfer worldwide view with a range of voices to their students, and reach out to social movements, grassroots groups, and alternative epistemologies, etc. (Sheared et al., 2001), could prove to be of great help.

### **2.5.1 *Creative Writing pedagogy and its theoretical context***

In terms of its placement within the higher education academia, Creative Writing has emerged as a discipline that tends to evade any distinct association with specific forms of teaching paradigms or a singular code of practice. Much literature has been identified, in this regard, that either recognizes ‘creativity’ as an indefinable art (Donovan, 2008; Haven, 1999; Mansoor, 2010, 2011; Chandio, 2013), or situates ‘Creative Writing’ as a practice incorporating multiple definitions and myriad of perspectives (Bell & Magrs, 2001; Harper & Kroll, 2008). This diversity in its research context and a variation in the assortment of pedagogical strategies specific to it, according to Mansoor (2011), are evident because the form has always prompted ‘multiple responses’ vis-à-vis examinations ‘pertaining to its need and efficacy in both the educational and professional domains’ (p.3). Some therefore view Creative Writing, for instance, as ‘a practice-based discipline in which cultural awareness, identity and language skills are of central importance’ (Brayfield, 2009, p.201); whereas others counter it as otherwise. While academics in case of the former proposition place their creative practice ‘within the context of contemporary critical theory in this field,’ and treat it as a skill to be learnt against a strictly academic setting (Butler, 2013); others claim it to be a practice-led domain, ‘which tends to be less systematic, less easily reduced to an interpretive framework, less likely to offer its findings in a transparent mode and less susceptible to rational argument’ (Webb & Brien, 2008). Academic practitioners, who are dependent upon the form of studies in this respect, are neither confident of knowing everything about the practice from inside out, nor ‘even that knowledge can ever be full or final,’ but are nevertheless willing to remain open to interpretation, and ‘to accept gestures and notions rather than facts’ (ibid). Still others, however, consider the re-designation of creative writers as belonging to either a “practice-based” or “practice-led” discipline, ‘a big mistake’ (Goldsmiths, 2013). This group of practitioners opine that the mechanism of Creative Writing courses ‘lie outside the traditional academic realm’ (ibid). Within this domain, the only thing students are supposed to do is just ‘put pen to paper and “express,” “create” or “construct” worlds / characters /

situations / atmospheres / thoughts out of their words,' instead of bothering about the formalities of 'academic discourse,' or providing loads of evidence, read loads, or conduct research to back up their points (ibid). Goldsmiths (2013) finally concludes how this ostracizing of "creativity" under "practice," and the subsequent bringing of Creative Writing into the traditional academic mould, all but implies the 'killing of the whole discipline'. Be that as it may, especially if viewed in terms of institutes drawing learners from diverse communities and complex 'racial, national and cultural backgrounds,' the above perspective can hardly be applied to certain scenarios and formats (Brayfield, 2009, p.201). In such academic communities, 'new approaches to teaching practice and curriculum design,' that conform to their students' cultural identity and language skills, ultimately become adopted in developing a writing programme (ibid).

With such diversification in perspectives to deal with, Mansoor (2011) observes how the teachers of Creative Writing, especially those dealing with students from non-English lingua-cultural backgrounds, have an arduous quest before them. In order to enable their students 'to harness the linguistic as well as psychological resources that lie within and without them, as well as the reagents within their immediate environments that act upon these reactants to synthesise new ideas and innovative compositions,' instructors will have to take certain steps into account (p.3). Students will have to be provided with appropriate stimuli that could make it possible for them to enrich their English vocabulary, sort through their creative expressions, develop and arrange their words and sentences in a syntactic structure that the writer deems most appropriate, to come up with novel ideas and create innovative pieces of work (ibid). For the same, numerous factors that could help develop students' writing skills will have to be considered beforehand.

In his research underpinning the role of innovative instruction all over the world, with special reference to Pakistan, Behlol (2010, p.1) acknowledges that the development of epigeum skills in higher education learners depends on the extent of learner intake as well as the quality of teaching imparted to them. The aforementioned thought is in turn echoed by Holthouse (2002), especially with

reference to the utilization of Creative Writing pedagogy. The researcher (ibid) feels that students will only engage in their best efforts if they are ‘invested and interested in what they are writing,’ which implies that learners are more productive if involved in the active and the dynamic, rather than the passive form of instruction. Reverting to the teacher’s role as a facilitator to enhance their students Creative Writing processing, Mansoor (2010, 2011) identifies certain challenges that university teachers would most likely find themselves coming across. Given that creative practice is a ‘means of developing literary appreciation and critical skills’ (Dawson, 2005, p.71), therefore the foremost task of writing instructors would have to be to help their students develop an ability to think both creatively and critically (Mansoor, 2011, p.4). Literary appreciation, in this context, refers to the dual ability ‘to analyze, criticize and understand ... numerous forms of literature such as novels and poetry’ on one hand, and ‘to discuss the meaning behind the words and possibly write an essay on it’ on the other (Luxembourg, 2010). In order to further students’ understanding and appreciation of how literary writings work, and ‘what being a writer means within the framework of a wider culture,’ instructors will first have to bridge the gap that exists between ‘functional interpretation’ and ‘the more expansive forms of textual interpretation’ (Doloughan, 2012, p.182). A secondary task would therefore involve enabling writing students to develop an effective comprehension and communicative prowess, enhanced means of self-expression, and naturally better language skills (Mansoor, 2011, p.4). While useful teaching strategies can help teachers introduce students to ‘the practices that go into Creative Writing,’ in case of learners belonging to varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds, enrolled for a course of Creative Writing in English at the university level, ‘this task becomes far more formidable and exacting’ (ibid). To meet the above mentioned objectives, the creation of course modules (Mansoor 2010, 2011), if designed keeping in view the contextual shortcomings of native students (Chandio, 2013; Mansoor 2010, 2011), kept unrestrained by an assessment protocol restricted to its learning outcomes (Dobson, 2008; Harper, 2006), and utilized in a workshop setting (Atkinson T S, 2003; Azerbaijan University of Languages and UNESCO, 2010; Bilal, 2013, Shamsie, 2004), could prove to be of great help.

### ***2.5.1.1 Creative Writing pedagogy and the necessity for module innovation***

In Pakistan, much planning and policy mapping by the Higher Education Commission in recent times involves an up-gradation of the existing curriculum and the ways it is delivered in classrooms (Shaikh, 2013). This is partly due to the recent onslaught of diverse subject areas all over the world, and also on account of the contextual mandates of novel courses (Karim & Shaikh, 2012, p. 106). With this intention as their basic rationale, the National Curriculum Revision Committee (NCRC) set forth to achieve a revamp of various ‘existing courses in vogue’ in the public and private sector universities throughout the country, and ‘made very significant recommendations’ with reference to the existing teaching methods in their periodic meetings during the years 2006 and 2008 accordingly (ibid). One of the most significant suggestions issued by them pertained to the endowment of ‘adequate material resources like books for uniform implementation of the scheme of studies across the universities’ (p.106). However, this is one recommendation which, like various other set of suggestions proposed by the NCRC, has not been ‘fully addressed in the universities, and a lot of work needs to be done before the aforementioned changes could be accommodated and implemented uniformly in the country higher education institutes’ (2012, p. 107). Coincidentally, the learning of students can hardly be facilitated unless the kind of reading and writing texts being incorporated by teachers across various disciplines are aligned properly, or are on the right path (Nicosia, 2005). The same would naturally apply to a prospective teaching of Creative Writing as well.

For many academics, practitioners and researchers, the ability of writing creatively tends to be an ineffable skill that defies strict classification and is hard to define (Mansoor, 2011, p.2). However, while creativity is viewed as an individual and intimately personal phenomenon, it still thrives on techniques and teaching strategies which work as stimulating substances that promote it (Neale, 2009, p.ix; Robinson, 2001, p. 12; cited in Khan, 2011, p.117; also cited in Haider, 2012b, p.179). Against the backdrop of university environment in

Pakistan, Mansoor (2011) additionally emphasizes the responsibility of teachers to resort to novel or unconventional resource material and modified teaching methods to deal with linguistic or socio-cultural factors hampering students' creative expression and artistic inventiveness (p.2). The implication, in this respect, points to the development of writing course modules to facilitate the creative learning process.

Coming across the particular context of the creative pedagogy, Emotin-Bucjan (2011) endorses that when it comes to the development of learners' writing practice, much instruction processing can be effectively aided through the strategic construction and the utilization of self-made modular material in classrooms (Vitasa, 2006). However, as Mansoor (2011) informs us, such course modules must agree with the pedagogical mandates, and established aims and objectives specific to Creative Writing discipline on one hand, and confirm to learners' needs and their requirements and expectations from the subject on the other (p.2). The teacher of Creative Writing must, therefore, be a specialist in their field, have an ability to develop valid curricular material, and support their students' creative faculty accordingly (Bilal, 2013; Chandio et al., 2013; Haider, 2012a; Mansoor, 2010).

Following a similar chain of thought, Salandanan (2009) furthers how the sign of an effective educator is their growth 'in his/her chosen area of specialization,' and their 'ability to organize and develop curriculum materials suited to learners' level of readiness and understanding ....' (2009, p. 160). Highlighting the significance of 'complete learning packages' the researcher further states that 'study modules are definitely here to stay. Their use for either enrichment or remediation cannot be overemphasized' (ibid). This entails the necessary requirement for teachers to remain well informed of the current momentums in their particular discipline, together with guided logic, readily available strategies and activities, and a motivation to facilitate learners in their acquisition of basic content skills. Ultimately, the same is what will enable instructors prepare and produce self-instructional course modules with a better impact value attached to them

(Salandanan, 2009, p.160). Much of this is in turn supported by Birol, et al. (2006), Emotin-Bucjan (2011), and Parsons (1975), who acknowledge the need for instructors to develop educational modules, especially when faced with a scarcity or absence of main textual material or prescribed books to be utilized in the classroom. Their rationale for the same is to facilitate the learning process by providing students with instant and easily accessed course material when required.

In wake of the marginalized status of Creative Writing courses within the Pakistani universities' curriculum at large, as advocated by Ahmad (2011), Imtiaz (2010b), Khan (2011; 2012), Naeem (2010), and Siddiqui Z S (2007), with the present reading material on writing skills development being scarce (British Council, 2004) or often reduced to mere ornaments of a library (Mansoor, 2010), there is an increasing demand for valid and balanced educational material in this area. In consequence, the research deems the formulation and implementation of a sample course module, to observe and enrich creative writing practice of undergraduate learners, in a workshop based environment, as the central part of the project.

The need for the composition of a sample course module is further supported by strong 'anecdotal evidence, validation experience, and external examining experience which suggests that there is little uniformity over the value, principles, aims, techniques, level descriptors or assessment patterns and weighting, or even amount, of Creative Writing practiced in various parts of the world these days' (Sheppard & Thurston, 2002-2003, p. 3). This necessitates the formulation of a module necessary to be used as an instruction manual with a uniform set of objectives to study and enhance learners' writing abilities in the classroom in a supportive and balanced manner.

#### **2.5.1.2            *Modular teaching & the supportive writing environment***

The academic teaching of Creative Writing initially emerged as a growing area, according to Monteith & Miles (1992), not in terms of student numbers as much

as in terms of its demand at the higher education and the further education levels. This in turn exerted considerable influence on especially those academics or administrators who were ‘in the process of planning new courses’ based on the ‘writing component’ (1992, p. 1). This was so because ‘the natural economy’ of creative teaching implied the usage of a student-centered text material, ‘in which examples of canonical and contemporary writing are mixed with critical discussion’ (1992, p. 1). The teaching of Creative Writing was seen to be extensively strengthened through such utilization of concrete examples and reproducing or ‘sharing of good practice’ (1992, p. 2). By offering an instruction booklet comprising of exercises, that allows a degree of experimentation on the part of learners, before moving towards a formal composition, such pedagogy has been found to encourage a sense of adventure and prove less threatening at the same time (Burroway, 2003).

In their qualitative enquiry on creative teaching and learning, Torrance and Myers (1970) discovered the vital significance of establishing a responsive classroom environment for enhancing students’ writing skills. This implies optimizing a setup where teachers are ‘respectful of unusual questions, respectful of imaginative and unusual ideas, show [students] that their ideas have value, occasionally have pupils do something ‘for practice’ without the threat of evaluation, and tie in evaluation with causes and consequences’ (Torrance and Myers, 1970, p. 253; cited in Cole et al., 1999, p. 4). When teachers create this environment, their students naturally become more confident about their creative expression and less nervous or apprehensive while sharing those ideas in class (ibid). Andrew Motion reinforces the aforementioned notion on similar grounds. For him, the purpose of a Creative Writing learning environment is to present students with ‘an intense and supportive atmosphere’ where they could avail an opportunity to concentrate on their work, develop their writing skills, experiment on their imagination, and diversify their approaches by allowing them to search introspectively within (Motion, 2001, p.x). A good writing training session ought to leave the writer feeling buoyant, feeling that they discovered themselves about the artistic skills that inform the creative process, and that they know more about

their own work than they did before they went for the training; in an ineffective training, on the other hand, the writer might well end up flinging all the pages in the bin and never write again (Mansoor, 2012).

Much of this connects with research outcomes established by Ali (2005), and Behlol (2010) who claim course modules allow for optimum, flexible, and supportive learning as per individual learning styles. Stewart & Wilkerson (1999) also view course modules to be the most effective resources that ‘allow instructors to transform their sessions into active, student-oriented learning environments’ (1999, p. 1). Some other inquiries conducted by art practitioners in this regard indicate the need for teachers to concentrate on fostering a learner centred focus, and a collaborative format, if they wish to develop their students’ creative skills effectively (Andersson, 2009; Cole et al., 1999).

### **2.5.1.3            *Creativity and further ethos of module based instruction***

In their study emphasizing the role of teachers to enhance creativity in students, Grainger et al. (2005) assert that instructors need to adopt a learner centered approach in their pedagogy, and make the writing process fun (p.183). This implies undertaking efforts to stimulate their imagination and encouraging their critical output in accordance to their needs (ibid), which is only possible if teachers regard their learners as individuals and are sincerely engrossed in their passions, aptitudes and personalities (Barnes, 2007, p. 27). It is excessively important for Creative Writing teachers to perceive their students as competent entities who can ‘think and act for themselves’ (Moss, 2001, p. 136). See also Torrance & Myers (1970), Woolfolk & McCune-Nicolich (1980), cited in Cole et al. (1991). The Researchers additionally remark that students’ writing approach depends upon and is shaped and influenced by the ‘skills, talents, motivations, knowledge and understanding of their teacher’ (Grainger et al., 2005, p. 178). Hence if their teachers are autonomous, reflective, knowledgeable, proficient and skilled (Moss, 2001, p. 136), if they rely on freedom of expression and thought, have fervour for their art and are immersed in their writings (Laevers, 2000, p.

24), and if they do not shy away from taking risks, thereby remaining open to novel opinions, ideas and approaches that may benefit their learners (Anderson et al., 1970; Hill & Amabile, 1993; Richardson, 1988; cited in Cole et al., 1999), then their students' Creative Writing abilities will develop accordingly (Grainger et al, 2005, p. 5).

Unfortunately, within the present education system of Pakistan, Khan (2011) has observed lack of teacher autonomy, which renders it impossible for them to foster spontaneous and uninhibited creativity, or to teach anything else for that matter, without seeking permission from the authorities first. They are compelled to follow an inflexible curriculum and an assessment protocol that does not give them the opportunity to act independently. This has been found to diminish the Creative Writing instructors' creativity, inside the classroom environment, and their students' creative potential as well (Burgess et al., 2002; Fisher, 2004; Hanke, 2002; cited in Khan, 2011, p.112). A typical classroom setup in Pakistan, furthers Khan (2012), also falls short of introducing students to collaborative writing practice, which is entirely placed at the heart of all creative training (p.59). This is where the development of new and innovative curriculum material (Andres, 1993; cited by Khan, 2012, p.59), and novel course modules could come in handy (Mansoor, 2010; 2011). However, if a rather innovative course module can effectively utilize 'a transformative power ... geared toward the development of the entire individual, extending beyond mere intellectual development,' then the creative skills acquired therein 'lend themselves to success in the writing workshop' (Green, 2008, p.3).

### **2.5.2 *Creative teaching and the classroom practice***

In her analysis of the mechanism of Creative Writing pedagogy in the context of a developing nation such as Pakistan, Khan (2011) points out several significant constrictions that obstruct instructors' efforts to developing 'Creative Writing skills' of learners in the classroom environment. Quoting Siddiqui S (2007, p.161) she lists the factors as 'large-size classes, lack of resources, untrained teachers,

fixed syllabus, forty minutes duration for English and external examination bodies', apart from 'curriculum and assessment' (Khan, 2011, pp.111,112). Given that most of the traditional classrooms in Pakistan are overcrowded, writing abilities are neither taught nor can they be developed properly (Mansoor, 2009). Evidence also shows the absence of an interactive atmosphere against this large classroom setup; where teacher centered activities occupy the pole position, while students are hardly involved in the learning process (Bashiruddin, 2003). In such a space, the teacher operates as an authority figure, exercises a tight control of the instruction mechanism, and directs usage of learning material, concepts and rules, which obliterates all opportunities of providing learners with a natural or communicative creative learning environment (Siddiqui S, 2007). Being the most active participant within this classroom setting, the teacher completes all tasks supposed to be done by students, while students act as passive listeners, actively engaged in listening to the lectures, taking notes and copying all that is scripted on the soft board, word for word (Khan, 2011). This naturally ruins students' creative potential, tarnishes their talents, and intrudes on their originality in thought instead of exposing, exploring, channelizing or polishing their artistic abilities or genuineness of interpretation (Chandio et al., 2013, p.322). This situation does nothing to help students in recognizing their creative powers, and renders it impossible for instructors to foster a classroom atmosphere of spontaneous and uninhibited inventiveness as well (Khan, 2011, p.112). Ultimately these inborn abilities are not utilized properly and automatically die within learners themselves (Rasool, 2009; Shaughnessy, 1991).

In their comparative study on Northern and Southern Punjabi students' creative writing skills in fiction, Chandio et al. (2013) discovered that learners belonging to smaller classes performed better. As per their findings, the researchers recommend that the training grounds selected to facilitate Creative Writing sessions should;

- Have a smaller number of students;

- Enable students to interact with each other, so that personal or cultural differences between participants could be reduced;
- Foster student learning by encouraging them to write new ideas and present them to other students. (Chandio et al., 2013, p.329).

In the absence of a group formation at a smaller scale, likewise reflect Cole et al. (1999), leaner collaboration and an exchange of multiple perspectives deemed important for Creative Writing students may not be as effective (p.16). This is because a successful narrative practice derives its prowess from skills of ‘observation, perception, perspective taking, empathic-reasoning ... and imagination’ (Green, 2008, p.8). These skills enable a student to identify ‘cause-and-effect relationships’ inherent in the structure of a literary form, and help him to act as a ‘creative problem solver,’ which is ‘an asset that aids the student far beyond the task of writing stories’ (ibid). However, such skills can only be sharpened, practiced and groomed outside the classroom environment and inside a more experiential and interactive setting (2008, p.8). Unlike in classrooms, Dobson (2008) believes a teacher can act more like a “facilitator” rather than “instructor” within a more collaborative and student oriented form of environment (p. 27). By establishing the method of ‘peer assessment where fellow students comment on each other’s work with the lecturer largely a by-stander (Bell & Magrs, 2004),’ teachers can foster a setup where they can help develop ‘students as independent learners’ to a great extent (Dobson, 2008, p. 27). It is in this respect that Gureghian (2010) also recommends how important it is for especially the novice writing students to discover a place where they can discover their talent and sharpen their craft. Ideally, there is no better a starting point ‘to hone and nurture writing than a Creative Writing workshop’ (ibid, p.121).

### **2.5.2.1      *The workshop as a signature approach to teach Creative Writing***

The term ‘workshop,’ says Harper (2010a), has long been associated with the concepts of productivity and creation, especially of a holistic kind. It has also been used to imply forging something, as per the word’s etymological connotation

in the French language; and taken to represent the English term ‘homework’, i.e. ‘the work done at home.’ However, perhaps more acutely, the term points to a phenomenon, ‘something,’ which has to be worked upon to generate something else, a product, that could be ‘valued.’ The only question he asks is ‘what it is that we value in and about the workshops, and for what reasons?’ (xvii).

A unique stance on the art of teaching and the acquisition of Creative Writing skills and practices is adopted by Gureghian (2010), who opines a serious need for writers, teachers and students alike to become aware of the varied mind-sets of their diverse audience. He asserts that learning about their audience is ‘extremely beneficial to the student writer,’ especially in the beginning stages. However, it is up to the teacher to help them discover that, and one of the most convenient of ways to achieve this is through the workshop method (2010, p.121). Leahy (2010) likewise supports the “audience” factor of the workshop, which has made it one of the principal methods of instruction in the Creative Writing pedagogy. When compared to various other modes of teaching, such as the rather direct classroom teaching, she observes how the workshop students get an opportunity to come across an actual audience rather than having the teacher as an only ‘audience that students’ writing ever has, or at least the only audience that seems to matter’ (p.94). Additionally, since an important element of vitality in a writing workshop is its double nature as a place of instruction and a process of interactive discovery (Cook, 2001, p.302), this is something which is hardly possible in a classroom setting.

In his analysis of the workshop dynamics, Brophy (2008) describes the workshop as a ‘live event’ which focuses not only on students’ aptitude, ability and skill, but also allows ‘learning, decision-making, and the application of critical intelligence’ to take the centre stage, against the backdrop of spontaneity and excitement (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.xiii). James (2009) sees the workshop as a perfect opportunity for writers to come across their audience on a one-on-one interactive basis, and discover their readers’ reactions to their work. By isolating problems and offering solutions, these ‘reactions and suggestions’ of peers can be a

valuable asset in developing further skills of workshop participants (Stern, 1991, p.250). At the same time, the participant-writer also has the 'benefit' of being exposed to 'the actual experience of bringing texts into being,' as against finding out about the same from another critic's point of view (Monteith & Miles, 1992, p.4; cited in James, 2009, p.52). This is coupled with an added advantage for students on two levels: first, they get an opportunity to develop and produce their own creative piece of work, and measure it against the existing work; second, the whole process 'further contributes to formation of more theory which can be used in the production of more texts' (James, 2009, p.52).

Workshops are also viewed as a valuable context in terms of expertise; a place to hone especially the inexperienced writer's confidence, with the help of a facilitative writer-teacher 'to guide students through the process' (Anderson, 2007). As Anderson elaborates, a writing workshop is a place where learners work on two fronts: not only do they learn about the basics of 'plot, structure, character, voice, dialog, description, and point of view,' but also how to write, and to observe in what way their work is acceptable to the peers. With its iterative working process, based on 'frequent feedback loops' and immediate evaluation of work, the workshop provides participants 'a structure' wherein they can 'maintain the discipline' of continuing to work on their draft (Wickersham, 2007). By reading the work out loud and by criticising it, participants 'learn to eliminate what doesn't work' and 'become ruthless in editing out the inessential and the irrelevant and write tighter, better prose as a result' (2007). Hernandez (2007) likewise perceives the workshop as a means to accumulate experience and to discover how good one's writing aptitude actually is. By exerting oneself to the continuous task of composition and re-composition, a writer discovers more about his/her frame of mind, and capabilities, which increases productivity as well. 'Practice is essential to developing the over-all skill' (Hernandez, 2007), and 'learning various alternative ways to improve the writing pattern' (Harves, 2012).

Russell Celyn Jones supports the workshop as a process wherein the inexperienced writer can get into shape by refining his/her writing along with help

of a writer-teacher, who nurtures an atmosphere of experiment; ‘the aim is to understand through practice the mechanisms of fiction’ (McLaughlin, 2009, p.246). It’s a ‘training ground’ where one comes into contact with a ‘diverse readership’, and acquires practical expertise coupled with confidence, by detaching oneself from one’s work and observing at a safe distance how pushing beyond one’s writing limit can be productive (Magrs, 2001, p.316). By providing students with tools through which they can begin to create a piece of imaginative writing, and by encouraging students to investigate various issues associated with the process of writing a text (such as the nature of character, narrative, point of view, landscape, etc) through the production of their own piece would build-up their faith in their critical abilities, and make them more coherent, more expressive, more malleable and more engaged with their texts (Burroway, 2003).

It is easy to understand why, therefore, courses seeking to nurture Creative Writing skills of learners make workshopping ‘the heart of their pedagogy’ (Mac, 2011, p.244; Donnelly, 2010). Harper and Kroll (2008) likewise identify ‘the creative portfolio, the responsive critical essay’ and especially ‘the Creative Writing Workshop’ as ‘tools of the trade’ that have been ‘staples’ of the discipline for a considerably long time (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.8). However, in terms of the pedagogical practice, despite the recurrent belief that ‘workshops foster creativity,’ research also points to writing instructors and students alike being likely susceptible to come across a contrary notion (Leahy, 2010, p.64). Given that there may be ‘missteps and failure’ in any arena of learning, the workshop method of conducting writing courses may not be so different either (ibid).

#### **2.5.2.2            *Strategies to overcome possible hurdles during workshopping***

James (2009, p.54) maintains that in spite of fostering training expertise and proactive measures taken to ensure creative success, a writing workshop may ‘occasionally’ backfire giving rise to manifold drawbacks. Aczel (2001) suggests the natural aura of workshop begets misunderstandings that are bound to spring out due to the varying voices participants share in the setup, each of whom ‘see’

and ‘hear’ words differently (p.313). Yet, despite the numerous concerns, practitioners, students and teachers alike continue asserting that in the context of Creative Writing pedagogy, every single effort within the workshop is worth the risks, and that ultimately it is this one medium of instruction that can foster creativity unlike any other teaching strategy (Donnelly, 2010; Stern, 1991; Vanderslice, 2010). What Mahar (2001) suggests is for instructors to go beyond the possible drawbacks, and create an atmosphere that is ‘supportive,’ furthers a degree of ‘commitment,’ ensures ‘easy networking,’ and a good sense among divergent ‘egos in a single room’ leading them to want to ‘improve their craft’ (p.311). And the only way the same could be achieved is if the workshop establishes ‘a set of rules and a shared vocabulary’ negotiated between the instructors and the students at the very outset (Magrs, 2001, p.317).

In this situation, it is in the best interests of students to ‘train’ them about the possible pitfalls they may come into contact with during the process, and consequently draw their attention to how they could veer away from them (James, 2009, p.54). ‘Ideas’ engendered between participants and Creative Writing facilitators in this regard might include the following aspects:

- How compulsory participation should be
- How participation is defined - can it mean just sitting and listening?
- Commitment to the process
- How work might be shared
- How comments are never personal
- The logistics of sharing work

James (2009, p.54) points out the usefulness of having a ‘list’ such as the above. Additionally, she recommends all instructors to use the list to have their students recall the opted set of negotiations and what they had chosen to intentionally pursue, once they feel the workshop to have deviated from the norms of ethics. This is perhaps one of the most effective of tactics through which ‘we can teach students’ the way to establish ‘constructive feedback’ and ‘how to receive and

react to that feedback,' in the classroom, or during the workshop (James, 2009, p.50). Conclusively, the same could also be understood in terms of a set of crucial principles from Michaelsen et al. (2002), which Mac (2011) suggests should be applied to creative teaching courses. Simply put, 'participants must be made accountable for their actions and behaviour, without which, they have no motivation to actually do the work necessary for a healthy workshop.' Mac (2011) supports this obligation by Michaelsen et al. (2002), and considers this 'individual pre-class preparation' vital as it will promote a positive contribution by participants '... to their team, [and] high quality team performance' as well (2011, p.226).

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The purpose of this literature review has primarily been to build up on the information presented in the previous chapter on "Background." Facts, figures and statistical evidence detailed therein suggested the necessity of a careful and close examination of the antecedents and contemporary accounts on Creative Writing research in the global pedagogical context. This chapter responded to the same by providing an overview of significant efforts undertaken by a growing number of practitioners in the US, Australia and UK, and by some in Pakistan, who have long been expanding the scope and context of the Creative Writing research within the university. What was consequently discovered was the fact that creative writing 'practice' itself comprises of a complex nature and multidimensional identity. Its classification is informed by investigative, contextual, artistic, educational, individual and cultural circumstances (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.6). As a pedagogical discipline, the form is informed by a conflicting set of perspectives, a tangled categorization and an obscure identity.

Contrary to the decades-long establishment of a critical lineage in literary education, and the theoretical landscape of linguistic analysis within the English departments across the globe, some research inquiries have been unable to detect a concrete presence of Creative Writing pedagogy in higher education institutes and

universities. Even within the larger context of the Creative Arts sector, while ‘Music, Theater, the Fine Arts, Filmmaking’ are grounded physically in the university, Creative Writing lacks a ‘site identity’ or a ‘material location’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.6; Ahmad, 2011). At the same time, in instances where the same is not the case, that is institutes wherein the form is practiced as a subject, to some practitioners it appears to be an academic discipline that is hardly ever driven by intellectual rigor, and practice-oriented innovative work, and is therefore often unreceptive to its own pedagogical structure. Researchers believe much of this jumbling of disposition has been due to the placement of the subject in ‘low-profile’ or ‘low-impact’ locations, housing it in a ‘myriad’ of departments or schools such as ‘Creative Writing, Creative Industry, English, Theater, Literary Studies, Media and Film, Communications and Cultural Studies’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.6). Even within higher education institutes in Pakistan, Creative Writing continues being offered to students undertaking English Language and/or Literature, Business Administration, Economics, Journalism and Media Studies, Film and Television, Fine Arts, and Psychology courses, at graduate and/or undergraduate levels. Also see *Section 1.2.4.2* and *1.2.4.3* in this regard. It is in circumstances such as these where the discipline tends to be under the impact of one set of characteristic influences or another. Given its concrete presence in universities across the Pakistani province of Punjab, the present review has supported a need for Creative Writing to be acknowledged as an academic discipline in Sindh Province, and establish a valid identity and a strong hold in the USJP as well.

Taking the discipline’s micro and macro environment analysis into account, this review set out to demonstrate how conducting further research in its pedagogy can benefit Creative Writing as a discipline by adding further knowledge in its context, both within the university sector in Pakistan, and anywhere across the world. Modular instruction has been excessively emphasised in this regard due to its tremendous dexterity, flexibility and efficacy when extended and applied to many different cultural and educational settings. Besides, module-based instruction is especially popular in all levels of teaching given it’s an interactive

and student-centred pedagogical approach, wherein a teacher acts as a ‘facilitator’ and not an ‘autocrat’. Indeed, this can encourage active involvement of learners and facilitate favourable participant reception of Creative Writing skills and information, by making the learning process lively and vigorous.

Relative to the above, this chapter also attempted to present an overview of the workshop method of instruction that has been employed to hone learners’ writing skills. The prototype has been utilized extensively by various practitioners in the field. This is mainly because of its specific focus on concrete analytical feedback, interactive student participation, practical productivity, a holistic means of creation, and ‘a critical understanding of a specific kind related to such creative achievement’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.6). While compared to various other modes of instruction such as the rather direct classroom teaching, despite it comprising of occasional drawbacks, the workshop method is believed to be more student driven, audience oriented, and fixated on the combination of tutorial instruction and a process of interactive discovery. This enables learners to build-up their faith in their creative and critical abilities, and makes them more coherent, more expressive, more malleable and more engaged with their texts.

The present study and its reviewed literature aimed to ground the development of a teaching philosophy, which could help establish Creative Writing practice at IELL in the USJP. Drawing on the findings of literature examined and explained in this chapter, the next chapter will contribute to this incipience of creative practice further through the presentation of a *theoretical/conceptual framework*. This has been worked up by the researcher to provide information detailing the logistics of the module design process and the over-all format and dynamics of the writing workshop, which will be used to introduce Creative Writing as an academic area of studies to the institute. The information gathered in the next chapter will be used to justify the present project’s practice-led, practice-based and research-led practice study design.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Conceptual Framework**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Drawing on the findings of literature examined for this research study, a theoretical framework was developed subsequently and it is presented in this chapter. The purpose of this frame is to illustrate multiple and varied “learning approaches” which can be used by teachers to foster creativity in students effectively. This will include details pertaining to the developmental, knowledge building, and instructional learning taxonomies identified by Moseley et al. (2005a, 2005b) and supported by Lenning et al. (2013) in their research. The account will also exhibit how the mentioned learning frameworks have directly influenced the design of a course module, and the selection of teaching methods to be employed within the writing workshop, to nourish the research participants’ creative practice. Learning theories supporting the development plan of the modular-workshop have been based on the grounds established by Sharples (2002) as their research setup as well. The details contained within this setup will:

- Provide ways to help other writers understand the researcher’s ‘thinking and working’ (Sharples, 2002, p.xii).
- Allow ‘academics and writing researchers to build up their own forms of understanding,’ following an evaluative study or critique of the researcher’s perspectives (ibid).

Like all academics, implies Sharples (1999), Creative Writing researchers propagate their own perception of fostering creativity and are often censorious of other critical outlooks. *Socratic Constructivists*, for instance, reproach *Isocratic Behaviourists* for not looking into a creative writer's individual mind and for reducing a complex artistic activity to a set of learning techniques labelled 'instruction,' 'strategic mechanism,' 'predetermined learning outcomes' and so on (Dobson, 2008, p.27). Behaviourists berate the Constructivists for not seeing that creativity, like other forms of learning, is all about compliance and conformity to an instruction pedagogy and not about 'exploration or uncertainty,' directed to make 'students realize their potential as creative, independent learners' (ibid). And against all of this we have all remaining groups of *literary theorists* who get accused for exhibiting 'a lack of rigour and for making an everyday activity unnecessarily complex by using language in deliberately obscure ways, bringing everything into doubt including the very existence of the writer' (Sharples, 2002, p.xii). Nash & Pyatt (2009) additionally note within a similar context how 'direct instruction' correlates to the "behaviourist" learning theory, while the 'constructivist instructional design model' is shaped almost entirely by "cognitivist" learning approaches (p.1). The selection of instructional methods, therefore, depends on the practitioner's 'philosophy toward learning,' whereas 'a model becomes a support system or the backbone for instructional delivery in response to the learning theory,' designed specifically 'to streamline the learner's experience - providing efficiency in delivery and effectiveness with content' (ibid).

This chapter attempts to do justice to the different approaches on the teaching of Creative Writing by establishing a middle ground. An amalgamation of a variety of learning theories will be indicated, and arguments on the rationale of their utilization for developing the teaching methods for the present study will be detailed as well. It is not within the scope of this chapter to draft a conceptual framework on exhaustive details of learning theories alone. Instead, the chapter offers a brief outline of such theories with a view to encourage purposeful

blending of learning experiences to develop the aforementioned teaching models. This chapter has been divided into four main sections.

‘*Section 3.2*’ sets up the framework pertaining to the establishment of the modular teaching method and workshop model of instruction. This will include *developmental, productive thinking* and *instructional* learning taxonomies relevant to their design, development and usefulness as reliable teaching methods. ‘*Section 3.3*’ describes the nature of the modular approach to teaching Creative Writing. This builds on the theoretical frameworks of various models used for creating instructional materials, offers an overview of key models themselves, and deals with the prerequisites for designing a Creative Writing course module. ‘*Section 3.4*’ considers key aspects of the workshop method. This draws on various pedagogical models used to design, stage and conduct the Creative Writing workshop. The fifth and final section concludes this chapter.

### **3.2 Framework description**

The present study maintains the view that a workshop-based setting can offer a rich environment that can support the implementation of a course module to foster creativity in students effectively. However, given that teaching methods or models alone ‘will not have a significant impact on learning’ unless they incorporate ‘a ‘broad array of learning experiences rooted in learning theory,’ it becomes pertinent to present an overview of valid learning theories that can shape and inform the design and implementation of such methods accordingly (Lenning et al., 2013, p.90).

Central to this study is the premise that artistic writing practice ‘allows students to become engaged in creative communication and critical thought, and to make sense of the world around them’ (Racco, 2010). It also ‘elicits an emotional connection between students and text, allowing the student-author to become reflective and critical and therefore, to engage in the act of writing (accessing, comprehending and retaining information)’ (ibid). However, to achieve the same,

Creative Writing practitioners would have to realize certain notions. First, the only way their students would be able to learn most effectively is if they are provided with adequate resource material, and if they are placed in an environment that fosters active and cooperative learning dynamics, and ‘a student-centered pedagogical approach’ (Stewart & Wilkerson, 1999, p.1). And secondly, as Doherty (2008) has pointed out, in the absence of an explicit attention to the various learning theories that can shape and inform teaching practices, chances are that the impact on creative learning would be limited to a great extent (p.33).

The goal of this section is, therefore, to promote an understanding of ways to develop teaching methods by grounding them in significant learning experiences. This will be done by establishing a validated fusion of developmental theories, holistic thinking traditions, and teaching practices that should result in effective creative learning. In their study on various learning approaches fostering creativity, Lenning et al. (2013) and Moseley et al. (2005a, 2005b) have presented three taxonomic models which will serve as the theoretical frameworks for developing teaching pedagogies for this study. The models deal with the creation of a setup fostering cognitive structure or development, a mechanism building the productive and creative thinking process, and an instructional design exploring critical and creative learning. The present project acknowledges that ‘a framework is a generic term’ which alludes to a structural setup supporting some form of practice or thought (Moseley et al., 2005a, p.34). ‘On this basis ... taxonomies are frameworks that may support such thought’ (ibid).

### ***3.2.1 Cognitive Structure and/or Development Frameworks***

There exist various theories of learning and individual perspectives of knowing or understanding the world that appear in a variety of research contexts (Doherty, 2008). Lenning, et al. (2013), citing from Evans, et al. (1998) and Moseley, et al. (2005a), present an overview of certain models dealing with cognitive structure and/or cognitive development that are underpinned by such learning theories. The approaches used by various practitioners within these frameworks are diverse and

tend to analyse the concept of intelligence in different ways (Moseley, 2005a, p.6). Most theories have been developed by psychologists, though each tend to ‘differ considerably in aims and epistemological assumptions’ (2005, p.185). Some are concerned with the progression of perceptive thinking of all individuals across their lifespan, while others deal with thought processes specific to adults (ibid). Research additionally identifies a paramount extent to which the frameworks differ, seeing as they either emphasise genetic influences to affect individual thought process, or environmental factors are taken into account (Moseley, 2005a, p.185). What stands common amongst these development frameworks is their depiction of “learning process” as an excessively complex entity, that is conditioned entirely by individuals and their circumstances or learning contexts (Lenning, et al., 2013, p.99). The idea behind these frameworks is to help professionals conceive ‘purposeful ways about applying theoretical approaches in order to design learning experiences that recognize the holistic nature of cognition, its structure and development’ (ibid). This, in turn, can be applied to fostering creative learning within students from non-English communities as well (Mansoor, 2010, 2011).

*Table 3.1* presents a general idea of eight thinking frameworks identified by Moseley et al. (2005a, pp.187-189), and adopted by Lenning et al. (2013, p.100), which focus on cognitive, affective and behavioural levels of development of individuals. Aspects common to these eight frames can be successfully extended to support effective learning in creative study environments, as has been explained in the subsequent description generated by these frameworks.

**TABLE 3.1****Cognitive structure and/or development frameworks in chronological order**

<i>Development Framework</i>	<i>Development Elements</i>
Piaget's stage model of cognitive development (1950)	Intellectual development undergoes sensorimotor, representational, and formal phases; following the childhood stage, intuitive reflection is replaced by logical thinking, though the formal operations phase is not reached by all adults, who continue thinking via abstract means
Sanford's readiness, challenge, & support (1966)	Experiences (in a supportive learning setup) encompassing critical conflict or difference of opinion can maximize the level of challenge
Perry's theory of ethical development (1970)	Individuals make meaning of their experiences in different ways (e.g. duality, multiplicity, relativism, etc.), which shapes how they learn
Astin's involvement theory (1984)	Amount of learning and development is proportional to the quality and quantity of involvement
Kolb's learning cycles (1984)	Effective learning is viewed as a cycle in which learners need to master 4 elements: 1) experience doing something, 2) observe and reflect on that experience, 3) analyse the learning attained from that experience, 4) draw conclusions on that observation, and use them to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences
King and Kitchener's model of reflective judgment (1994)	Adolescent reasoning progresses to adult maturity, wherein individuals learn to solve vexing or ill-structured problems by going through seven (pre-reflective and quasi-reflective to reflective) stages
Baxter Magolda's theory of self-authored learning (1999)	Learning is promoted by validating individuals as knowers, situating learning in individuals' experiences, and inviting groups to construct meaning mutually
Freire's dialogic model of educational practice, 2000	Dialogue within a learning community is designed to be a means of transforming social relations into new understandings of content

A specific feature that is common to the majority of above mentioned learning approaches is their emphasis on collaborative learning amongst individuals or supportive learning being possible within social, interactive or communicative group settings (Sanford's 1966 scheme; Perry's 1970 theory; Baxter Magolda's 1999 theory; Freire's 2000 model).

Given that 'knowledge is socially constructed,' brought on by numerous learning experiences and inconsistencies in peers' thought processes, or discrepancies and disagreements encountered in different collaborative situations between the ways

different people view the world, individuals can both be challenged and motivated to ‘strike a balance by developing new understandings’ (Sanford’s 1966 system; Astin’s 1984 theory; Kolb’s 1984 cycle; cited in Lenning et al., 2013, p.101).

Against the given models, learners are also able to formulate a better and more enhanced understanding if they assimilate their individual sympathies and perceptions with socially constructed information by using higher level creative thinking skills (Piaget’s 1950 model; Perry’s 1970 theory; Astin’s 1984 theory; Kolb’s 1984 cycle; King and Kitchener’s 1994 model; Baxter Magolda’s 1999 theory).

Whereas a final feature that ties these frameworks together is their recognition of diverse personnel being at ‘different development levels,’ which implies that each individual has ‘different needs to facilitate growth’ (Lenning et al., 2013, p.100). What remains is for instructors and relevant practitioners to develop a teaching philosophy to encourage learners ‘to work with each other to reflect on newly acquired knowledge and remake meaning based on their previous experiences’ (ibid).

The above information can now be utilized to assert that within a Creative Writing training environment, the learning mechanism should be supportive and meant to encourage all students belonging to diverse backgrounds (Cole et al., 1999; Green, 2008; Harper, 2010a; Khan, 2011, 2012; Mansoor, 2010). A concrete manifestation of this form of environment has been ‘linked very closely with collaborative group work’ (Khan, 2012, p.57). Second, the above has also been found to imply the reliance of learning on an eclectic stance: people learn in different ways (Cole, et al., 1999, p.17; Dobson, 2008, p.27; Lenning et al., 2013, p.96; Mansoor, 2010, p.205, 207). Third, given that Creative Writing instructional philosophies recognize the complexity and diversity inherent in learners’ perceptions and their learning capacities, teaching methods need to be fully aligned with individual cognition and include a variety of activities accompanied by a freedom of choice (Cole, et al., 1999, p.11; Lenning et al., 2013, p.96;

Mansoor, 2012). Fourth, the setup must encourage higher order thinking skills, such as independence and risk-taking, etc., as they have been found to be most favorable to critical aptitude and to creativity (Anderson et al., 1970; Hill & Amabile, 1993; Richardson, 1988; Shaughnessy, 1991; cited in Cole et al. 1999, p.4). And finally, teaching emphasis should be on a set of integrated learning goals – students would be required to link knowledge acquisition with previous learning experiences, in an individually meaningful format, to foster creativity (Cole, et al., 1999, p.6-7; Gandini cited in Carter, 1992, p. 38; Lenning et al., 2013, p.8; Moseley et al., 2005a, p.6). And this is one learning criterion that has been ‘recognised in the fields of productive thinking and instructional design frameworks’ as well (Moseley et al., 2005a, p.185).

Several research studies have emphasised, in this regard, the establishment of a positive impact upon learners once ‘specific cognitive and metacognitive strategies are embedded in the teaching of academic subjects...’ (De Corte, et al., 2001; Fuchs, et al., 2003; cited in Moseley, et al., 2005b, p.369). What follows is a discussion of certain productive and holistic knowledge building frameworks, which are alternative guiding setups. These can ‘help in the design and implementation of effective teaching models,’ especially to foster constructivist and participant-led forms of instruction (Lenning et al., 2013, p.98); Creative Writing being one of them (CLPM, 2007; and Warschauer, 1997, p.471; cited in Chizek, 2008, p.36-37).

### **3.2.2 *Productive Thinking & Knowledge Building Frameworks***

Within the contemporary higher educational context, even more important than cognitive development structures, learning theories or specific knowledge is the ability of individuals ‘to learn and make sense of that new knowledge’ (Gough, 1991; cited in Doherty, 2008, p.34). Teachers today are surrounded by a plethora of learners ‘with learning difficulties,’ who ‘experience particular problems with metacognitive and self-regulatory functioning, involving, for example, checking, planning, monitoring, reviewing, predicting and evaluating their tasks’ (Wong &

Jones, 1982; cited in Moseley et al., 2005b, p.369). Due to this situation, the academic community should never overlook the all-embracing and wide scope of the way learners think and learn, which is conditioned by assimilated stimuli of their previous as well as their present educational environments (Lenning et al., 2013, p.98). These influences have an impact on both the learners' critical as well as creative thinking processes; and to attain a better understanding of how effective learning can be conditioned, practitioners need to explore all established frameworks for developing students' thinking skills (Doherty, 2008, p.34). Such skills have been identified as synonymous to 'decision-making, problem-solving, analysing information, sorting and classifying data, generating new ideas, hypothesising, evaluating options, making predictions, monitoring progress towards a goal, drawing conclusions, determining cause and effect, understanding about content knowledge and metacognition' abilities (Doherty, 2008, p.33). And although it is rather difficult to link these defining markers of thinking praxis to any one specific field of studies (ibid), yet the present investigation suggests the same can be deemed correlative to the effective writing practice of learners across creative contexts.

Table 3.2 presents an overview and brief description of some of the most commonly used frameworks for developing students' productive thinking. The given taxonomies 'span psychological and philosophical approaches to understanding both critical and creative thinking' (Moseley et al., 2005a, pp.119-22), and call for 'the development of effective and equitable materials, pedagogies and assessment tools capable of cultivating and extending such thinking beyond the narrow instructional setting to encourage the application of such "habits of mind" to personal life' (ibid, p.120).

**TABLE 3.2**

**Productive thinking frameworks presented by Moseley, et al. (2005a)**

<i>Frameworks</i>	<i>Productive Thinking Elements</i>
Altshuller's TRIZ Theory of Inventive Problem Solving-1956	TRIZ is a <b><i>creative</i></b> problem-solving method that includes following steps: define problems; select techniques to solve problems; generate solutions; evaluate solutions
De Bono's lateral and parallel thinking tools (1976 / 85)	Learning must aim to widen the scope of critical thinking by redirecting it away from conventional thinking paradigms and emphasising such techniques which promote innovative, <b><i>creative</i></b> or productive thinking instead
Halpern's reviews of critical thinking skills and dispositions (1984)	Learning must be metacognitive in nature (allowing individuals to think about their own thought process, and analyse or deduce information about their goal, existing knowledge, thinking skills that will help them achieve their goal, and decide <b><i>creatively</i></b> whether they have achieved that goal)
Lipman's three modes of thinking and four main varieties of cognitive skill (1991/95)	Learning contexts must incorporate all interdependent and equally effective varieties of thinking (critical, <b><i>creative</i></b> & caring thinking); sense and sensibility can both be utilized to strengthen students' judgment and reasoning prowess, and allow them to 1) enquire, 2) reason truthfully, 3) organize information or form concepts, and 4) preserve meaning
Jewell's reasoning taxonomy for gifted children (1996)	The taxonomy aims to understand how gifted students think and reason by learning and utilizing three mutually dependent or complementary forms of human behaviour ( <b><i>creative</i></b> , critical/logical and caring/moral thinking)
Petty's six-phase model of the creative process (1997)	The term ' <b><i>creativity</i></b> ' has multiple identities (to invent or to design any product in the creative arts based context, or to solve problems and take initiatives in entrepreneurial contexts); creative process is complex as it is affected by individual personality factors and by systematic or appropriate choices; teachers can help learners learn/improve their creative skills and art
Bailin's intellectual resources for critical thinking (1999)	Considers critical & <b><i>creative</i></b> thinking to be overlapping concepts; any approach to critical process that favours a pedagogy based on identifying and teaching specific skills is flawed; argues that educators need novel approaches to develop critical and creative thinking together

As is apparent in the above frameworks, Moseley, et al. (2005a) see no point in separating 'critical thinking from creative thinking' domains, since 'in many situations they overlap and are interdependent' (p.119). The named researchers have presented both variations of thinking in the form of 'Productive Thinking Frameworks,' which include an assortment of different thinking skills: 'analysis, synthesis, evaluation and various combinations of these and other processes

leading to a deeper understanding, a defensible judgment or valued product; planning, what to do and say, imagining situations, reasoning, solving problems, considering opinions, making decisions and judgments, or generating new perspectives or ideas, etc.’ (2005a, p119).

The *Productive Thinking Frameworks* clearly support an ‘applied educational purpose,’ rather than just trying to explain particular critical or creative learning domains (Lenning et al., 2013, p.98; Doherty, 2008, p.34). For one thing, the frameworks do not just list skills or focus on higher order thinking areas, but actually employ processes that deal with learners’ acquisition and build-up of ‘knowledge and understanding through individual perception and logical reasoning (Moseley, et al., 2005a, p.250). These theories dealing with mental operations can be applied to groups that contain a learning process based upon ‘gathering of information and formation of ideas, moving to a phase involving some kind of doing experience, and concludes with reflective dialogue’ (Lenning et al., 2013, pp.98-99). In comprehensive terms, the process according to Swanson (1999, 2000), and elaborated by Moseley, et al. (2005b, p.369), would include:

The use of advanced organisers (statements in learning materials that remind learners of procedures that they should employ in order to be more strategic in their approach), elaboration (in which students are actively encouraged to link material to be learned to information or ideas which they already have in mind), attributions (in which the reasons for a strategy succeeding or failing are considered), and thinking (metacognition).

The method sketched above can be successfully applied as an effective pedagogical mechanism to a Creative Writing training (Burroway, 2003; Monteith & Miles, 1992). Additionally, there are other aspects that imply the possibility of using *productive thinking frameworks* to support innovative learning in Creative Writing study environments.

Common to the presented frames is their emphasis on rational capabilities for effective thinking: decision-making, problem-solving, information analysis, data management and classification, idea generation, assessing preferences, formulating predictions, examining progress towards achieving aims/goals,

drawing conclusions, determining cause and effect, understanding about content knowledge (Doherty, 2008). Learners, if encouraged to apply a majority of these approaches while dealing with their creative practice, can produce valuable artefacts (Cole, et al., 1999, p.4; Cuddy, 2012; Dobson, 2008; Haider, 2012a, p.221; Mansoor, 2010, p.201; Mansoor, 2011, p.6; Nilsson, 2012). This is because writing creatively is a complicated process that involves the use of cognition and thinking skills to produce and shape something innovative (Khan, 2012, p.59). Citing Harmer (2004), Chandio, et al. (2013) list four basic steps involved in this process: 'thinking about the ideas, arrangement of the ideas, writing the ideas and revising the ideas' (p.322). Genuine expressive writing, suggests Arnold (1991), grows out of writers' search for meaning, or their communication or exploration of issues through vivid imagination or creative thinking (p.9). Once the cognitive process becomes activated, such creative thinking generates multi-ranging ideas that explore an even wider gamut of possibilities (ibid).

Given that due attention to this mechanism of productive thinking is a prerequisite to developing learners' creativity, this research supports the inclusion of authenticated approaches of thinking skills within all forms of Creative Writing instructional design frameworks necessary (Chandio, et al., 2013, p.322, 323; Lenning et al., 2013, p.98-99). 'One way of taking this idea forward,' suggests Doherty (2008), 'is by using taxonomy of thinking' in terms of its relevance to higher education teaching (p.33-34). Some well-established taxonomies of this sort exist, and 'whilst there are some differences in scope and emphasis, there are also many commonalities that provide a useful framework for understanding or developing student thinking,' that may exert an impact on instruction models as well (ibid, p.34). The *Frameworks Dealing with Instructional Design* by Moseley, Baumfield, Elliott, Gregson, Higgins, Miller, and Newton provide exactly such a setup (Lenning et al., 2013, p.96).

### 3.2.3 *Instructional Design Frameworks*

A number of teaching models can provide insight into ways whereby useful instruction techniques could be designed for Creative Writing pedagogy. As discussed in *Section 3.2.1* (pp. 94-95) of this thesis, a creative learning environment needs to be sympathetic to learners and designed in accordance with the socio-cultural background and learning capacity of different individuals. It also needs to foster teaching material(s) that include a variety of activities accompanied by freedom of choice, and encourage higher order thinking skills, such as creative problem solving, thinking outside the box, independence and risk-taking, etc. Lenning, et al. (2013) and Moseley, et al. (2005a) present an overview of certain frameworks dealing with instructional design models that are underpinned by such teaching rudiments. Table 3.3 identifies a taxonomy of instructional design frameworks in order of their appearance. With the exception of *Dobson's Model of Unstructured Instruction* (2008), *Marquis's Revision and Expansion of Bloom's Taxonomy* (2012), and *Nilsson's Taxonomy of Creative Design* (2012), all models have been inspired by Lenning, et al. (2013), who have taken their information from Moseley, et al. (2005a, 2005b).

It also needs to be identified at the outset why three external models have been included in the 'instructional design frameworks' list. While the majority of teaching models presented by Moseley, et al. (2005a, 2005b) hypothesize the educational context in general, Dobson, Marquis and Nilsson expand particularly on how Creative Writing practices can be understood or fostered within learners. Dobson's (2008) teaching methods rely on the needs and the mind-set of their writing students. Marquis (2012) builds on an updated version of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy by his own student, Lorin Anderson, who developed a teaching model correlating to the various 'attributes of the Creative Arts and higher level thinking' (Rohrer, 2012). Whereas Nilsson (2012) theorizes on the nature or disposition of creativity, various stages involved in the writing process, and presents means of analysing, evaluating or measuring creative work, both in terms of form and content. The taxonomies are as follows:

**TABLE 3.3****Instructional design frameworks in chronological order**

<i>Design Framework</i>	<i>Significant Design Elements</i>
Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives (1956)	Student performance can be improved by supplying them with complex learning objectives/goals; motivating them to comprehend, apply, analyse, and evaluate their knowledge can help build it more
Gagne's eight types of learning and five types of learned capability (1965)	Suggests creative problem-solving to be the most important learning goal; also highlights the need to establish conditions for learning according to individual needs
Ausubel and Robinson's six hierarchically-ordered categories (1969)	Learners' creativity and creative problem-solving skills can be improved by allowing them to relate prior understanding to new knowledge, scaffolding it with teacher-structured learning
Williams' model for developing thinking and feeling processes (1970)	To develop creative talents and encourage creativity, instructors must enable learners to be fluent/spontaneous; flexible; original; elaborative; curious; risk-takers; complex and imaginative thinkers
Hannah and Michaelis' comprehensive framework for instructional objectives (1977)	Skill development and learner inquisitiveness can be strengthened by focusing on critical thinking and creativity, in each of the three (cognitive or intellectual thinking, psychomotor or emotional sensibility and affective or physically kinaesthetic) domains
Stahl and Murphy's domain of cognition taxonomic system (1981)	Learning experiences are grounded in 21 cognitive processes (e.g. abilities to classify, organise, select, utilize or verify information, etc.) before information can be generated or processed
Biggs and Collis' SOLO taxonomy (1982)	Improves cognitive performance through accommodating assessment and feedback
Quellmalz's framework of thinking skills (1987)	Critical thinking can be infused across the curriculum by motivating students to actively engage in 5 cognitive practices (recall, analyse, compare, infer/interpret, and evaluate information); and 3 metacognitive practices (plan, monitor, and review/revise learning)
Presseisen's models of essential, complex and metacognitive thinking skills (1991)	Learners must be provided with complex and challenging tasks to develop metacognitive thinking skills, so they could select, understand and monitor a learning strategy themselves; similar processes are utilized in critical and creative thinking
Merrill's instructional transaction theory (1992)	Learners' construction of meaning can be supported by utilizing 13 cognitive strategies (identification, execution, interpretation, judgement, classification, generalisation, decision-making, design formatting, discovery, etc.)
Anderson and Krathwohl's revision of Bloom's taxonomy (2001)	Improves cognitive performance by refining and developing Bloom's taxonomy (1956) into a two-dimensional framework emphasising alignment of learning objectives with instruction
Gouge and Yates' Arts Project taxonomies (2002)	A matrix of educational objectives for the visual arts, music and drama promoting learning through peer coaching and collaboration
Dobson's Model of Unstructured Instruction (2008)	Emphasises the freedom of unstructured activities and learning which stimulates automatic creative writing and employs an assessment criteria without predetermined learning outcomes
Nilsson's Taxonomy of Creative Design (2012)	Ties diverse instructional strategies together depicting how creativity works, can be understood, improved, or developed incrementally
Marquis's Taxonomy (2012)	Flips Anderson's (2001) modified version of Bloom's taxonomy ( <i>remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating, creating</i> to vice versa)

A common element across the various instructional design models is their emphasis on the need to establish the supportive learning environment, by focusing on conditions for learning according to individual needs, peer collaboration and non-judgemental assessment protocol (Gagne's 1965 frame; Biggs and Collis' 1982 taxonomy; Merrill's 1992 theory; Gouge and Yates' 2002 taxonomies; Dobson's 2008 model). The models advocate increased attention to advanced level goals, abilities or skills that help build both critical knowledge and creativity (Bloom's 1956 taxonomy; Gagne's 1965 frame; Ausubel and Robinson's 1969 hierarchy; Williams' 1970 model; Hannah and Michaelis' 1977 frame; Quellmalz's 1987 framework; Presseisen's 1991 theory). The models also offer a strong environment for enabling learners to relate their knowledge to information from their personal experiences, and view the same as a gateway to active and creative learning (Ausubel & Robinson's 1969 hierarchy; Williams' 1970 model; Hannah and Michaelis' 1977 framework; Stahl and Murphy's 1981 system; Quellmalz's 1987 frame). All these factors seem to ground Creative Writing pedagogy, which the present study supports should emphasize the same (Khan, 2012; Cucciarre, 2008).

With reference to the higher level thinking skills leading to creativity, Dobson's Model of Unstructured Instruction (2008), Marquis's Revision and Expansion of Bloom's Taxonomy (2012), and Nilsson's Taxonomy of Creative Design (2012) have covered a novel base. These instruction frames deal with skills that enable learners come up with innovative ideas, tackle problems that arise as hurdles to their creative expression, monitor and analyse their data, determine cause and effect, and draw conclusions accordingly.

#### **3.2.4 *Creating an integrated instructional approach***

The above mentioned frames have been observed to cover a multifarious, varied and 'all-embracing' account of the way people think and learn within a variety of contexts (Moseley, et al., 2005a, p.250). Yet these acts of thinking and learning are not only seen as being influenced by individual, psychological and

motivational factors alone, but deal with social factors and varied educational contexts that influence and can in turn be affected by individual learning processes as well (Moseley, et al., 2005a, p.250). Despite the fact that ‘processes underpinning intelligence are universal,’ Sternberg (2002) believes ‘the ways in which these are manifested are not’ (p.336). Given the same, one sort of psychological approach or instruction method cannot possibly be applied to other cultures, for which new models and methods should be devised accordingly (ibid).

The provision of effective and challenge-oriented learning environments, such as workshops or other training programs, entail students be engaged in ‘authentic problem solving experiences like design, inquiry to explain, troubleshooting to repair, and synthesizing information/data to make decisions and generate new knowledge’ (Brophy, 2011, p.2). Such an environment can only be established by incorporating principles of learning, knowledge and instructional design frameworks, and integrating them to guide the development and implementation of an instructional model in that ‘effective learning environment’ (ibid). Similar to Brophy (2011), Lenning, et al. (2013) and Moseley, et al. (2005a, 2005b), the present study suggests fundamentals of “*Cognitive Structure and/or Development frameworks*,” “*Productive Thinking and Knowledge Building frameworks*,” and “*Instructional Design frameworks*” inform the successful adoption and adaptation of learning materials and environments various academics have constructed. When viewed holistically, ‘Flexible Modular Writing Approach’ by Atkinson T S (2003) and Emotin-Bucjan (2011), alongside the ‘Supportive Workshop Setting’ established by Cole et al. (2008), fulfils the various pre-requisite conditions of the given learning theories to a great extent. In the first case, teachers are seen as vessels allowing students to have a genuine say when it comes to control on format, topic, and purpose in their writing (Mansoor, 2010, 2011, 2012). This flexibility of permitting students to make responsible yet guided choices forces them to think about their reading preferences, make unforced assumptions on the information they encounter, and leads them to a fuller comprehension of thought (Racco, 2010). Much of this automatically connects with research outcomes established by Emotin-Bucjan (2011) in the context of promoting creative and

literary writing through the design, production and implementation of flexible course modules. Emotin supports the development of a learner-centered, flexible and supportive 'self-made' instruction manual for Creative Writing students, 'as a strategy that can help develop their skills in writing' with confidence (Vitasas, 2006; cited in Emotin-Bucjan, 2011, p. 67; Atkinson T S, 2003). Modular instruction is additionally valuable in terms of writing pedagogy, since, by taking the variable learner needs into consideration, modules place maximum responsibility on, and provide for active participation by the learners (Parsons, 1975, p. 31); an aspect inherently significant for the development of Creative Writing skills of students (Holthouse, 2002). However, this has to be done in the right atmosphere, which can only be created in a properly managed writing workshop (ibid).

Some research conducted by various art practitioners in this regard indicates the need for teachers to 'adopt a learner centred focus' if they wish to develop their students' creative skills effectively (Grainger, et al., 2005, p. 183; cited in Khan, 2011a, p. 113). Quoting Barnes (2001), Khan further suggests Creative Writing teachers need to engage their students to learn without detaching them from their individual 'perspectives, passions, capabilities and personalities' (Khan, 2011a, p.113). To help students determine their 'individual talents' and discover 'their own voice,' Gureghian (2010) stresses the necessity of establishing 'unique writing exercises' amidst the 'comfortable learning environment' (2010, p. 120). Through their participation in writing workshops and seminars, learners attain information about the mechanics of writing creatively from inside out, and continuously discover, create, and learn during the various stages of the writing process, thereby transforming their dormant writing skills into a confident and often well voiced textual production of literary thought (Azerbaijan University of Languages and UNESCO, 2010). What follows is a detailed exploration of teaching methods deemed effective in developing learners' creative skills of writing.

### 3.3 Modular instruction

In a study conducted on modular instruction as a means of promoting student learning in an active and interactive study environment, Stewart & Wilkerson (1999) identify the overall mechanism involved in such a format. Ideally, a course module functions as an instruction manual. It should incorporate thought-provoking questions, intending to enable students to understand and apply subject related concepts in a practice-oriented learning environment. These questions and their accompanying areas of exploration or inquiry must be designed in such a way so as to provide learners with a 'contextual framework,' wherein they can formulate resolution of their problems, ground a premise, postulate, and even reach a hypothetical stance (1999, p.3). The module is usually divided in 'a series of sessions of varying length, each of which focuses on smaller, more specific questions, or explorations, which include in-class and out-of-class exercises and activities' (ibid). The learners are expected to understand and explore given problems and activities on the one hand, and answer given questions, by using them as substitutes to standard lectures and teaching methods on the other. Eventually, only by applying such answers to their learning can they be deemed to have gained an understanding relevant to their subject. According to Stewart and Wilkerson, this *understanding* of learners culminates in a final module activity, which is usually a project-based task designed to assess students' learning and thinking prowess.

Throughout the modular instruction process, Stewart & Wilkerson (1999) see no harm in providing learners with other reading material or a textbook, along with the module, or encouraging them to use it as an additional resource. Instructors can 'put the textbook reading assignments or activities in the module syllabus,' while students could be allowed to 'read the relevant parts of the textbook as they work through the module,' and use the same in their activity tasks, which can 'provide extra "practice" on some of the concepts' (1999, p.3). But what should be given due attention, in this regard, is to select best ways to ensure proper use of

the additional text (ibid). This in turn implies a preliminary exploration of certain models to formulate an affective module design.

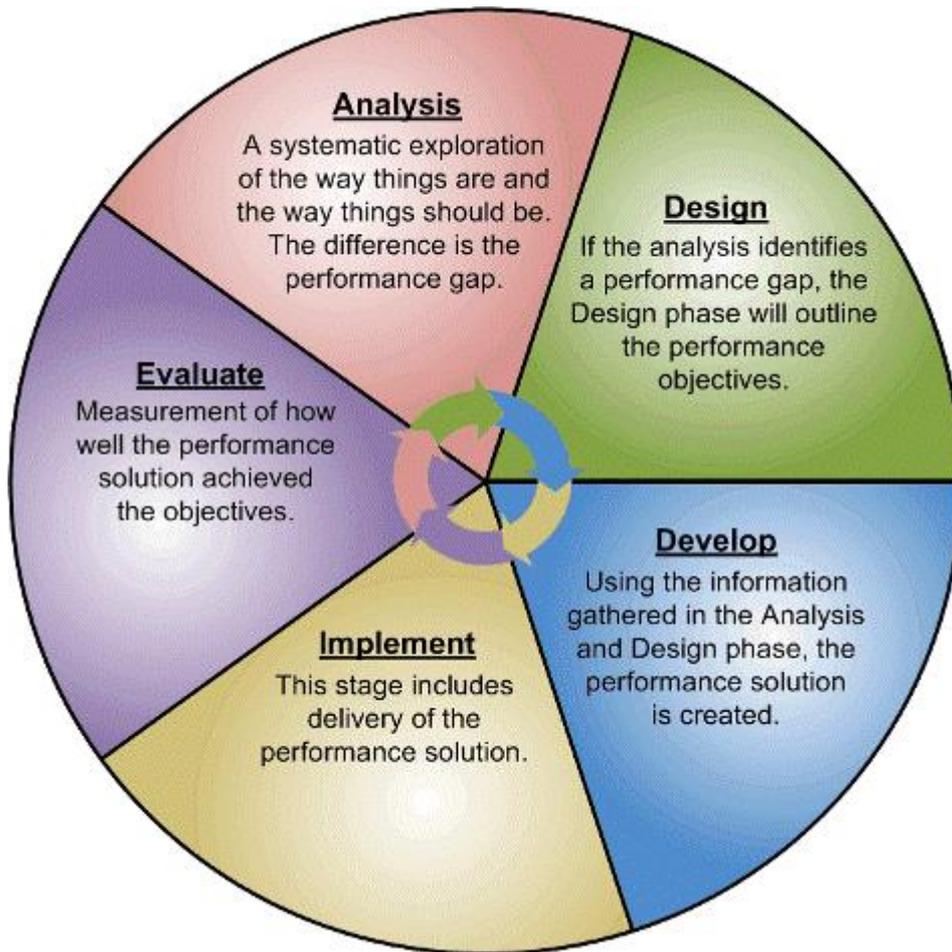
### **3.3.1 *Instructional Systems Development (ISD)***

Instructional design models, according to Anagnostopoulo (2002), are seen as convenient structures that explicitly identify ‘the relationships between the internal and external components of the learning environment’ (p.2). They are an exceptional means ‘for formulating hypotheses about how learners will be affected by the design of learning activities and their context’ (ibid). Such models, along with ‘the processes they represent,’ are collectively referred to as ‘*Instructional Systems Development (ISD)*’ (Dick et al., 2005, p.3).

#### **3.3.1.1 *Systematic Instructional Designs***

Speaking of contemporary developments that have taken place in the pattern of imparting instruction in colleges and universities throughout the world, one particular change has to do with the varied ways of organizing and disseminating learning material among students (Behlol, 2010). Academic staff in various institutes or departments have very ‘different ideas about what should be included within a curriculum,’ in what manner, and leading to a particular set of learning outcomes (Toohey, 1999, p. 5). This has inevitably led to a classification of various types of modules, each based on a set of implications, frameworks and design sequences similar to the classical ‘Systematic Approach Method’ of the ‘ADDIE’: (1) Analysis, (2) Design, (3) Development, (4) Implementation, and (5) Evaluation (Emotin-Bucjan, 2011, p.68).

See, for instance, Figures 3.1 and 3.2 for further information about ADDIE, and Table 3.4 for specific details of its variant models.



**Fig 3.1 – System specifications of ADDIE**

(Source: <http://www.addiesolutions.com/addie.htm>)

Analyze	Design	Develop	Implement	Evaluate
Pre-planning; thinking about the course	Design your course on paper	Develop course materials and assemble the course	Begin teaching	Look at the course outcomes with a critical eye
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of course</li> <li>• Audience</li> <li>• Goal</li> <li>• Objectives</li> <li>• Identify content</li> <li>• Identify Environment and Delivery</li> <li>• Instructional Strategies</li> <li>• Assessment Strategies</li> <li>• Formative Evaluation</li> <li>• Constraints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name the learning units of Instruction</li> <li>• Identify content and strategies for an individual unit of instruction</li> <li>• Write instructions for the learning unit</li> <li>• Name the menu items for a learning module</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on design phase</li> <li>• Build content, assignments, assessments</li> <li>• Build course structure</li> <li>• Upload content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of course</li> <li>• Expectations</li> <li>• Initiate instruction</li> <li>• Interaction</li> <li>• Ask for feedback early on (formative evaluation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the students achieve expected learning outcomes?</li> <li>• What have you learned?</li> <li>• How can you make the course better?</li> </ul>

**Fig 3.2 – Corresponding stages of ADDIE**

(Source: <http://instructionaldesigndit.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/addie2.png>)

The following table presents an overview of modular designs adapted from ADDIE.

**TABLE 3.4**  
**Instructional Systems Development variants of ADDIE**

<b>Module Identity</b>	<b>Correlating Framework</b>	<b>Module design Steps</b>
<p><b>Henne and Kelly's Module Matrix (2009)</b></p> <p><b>By Henne (2007), and Kelly (2009)</b></p>	<p>Emphasizes a modified version of ADDIE model to <u>avoid confusion</u>, perplexity and chaos among learners while working with a course module in the class; <u>encourages the ability to comprehend</u> what exactly learners are expected to do, from beginning to end; suggests that by employing a module design or structure that <u>students could somehow relate to or feel comfortable with</u>, after a difficult start, the second week and subsequent weeks could be consistent; the 'Module Matrix' with six components outlined for a learning module can help achieve a comfort level.</p>	<p><u>Pre-assessment</u> activities or tasks identify the initial knowledge that learners have before module start; <u>Learning objectives</u> state exactly what learners should be able to offer following the end of the module; <u>Assigned reading</u> mentions paragraphs, book-chapters, internet documents, lecture notes, etc. containing important points for learners; <u>Assigned writing tasks</u> can incorporate anything from the informal discussion-based pieces to the formal critical write-ups; supplemented by <u>interactive oral activities</u> (class or group discussion or feedback), aiming to support critical thinking &amp; a practical utilization of learning material contained within the module; <u>For further study</u>, additional electronic and print resources are to be explored, so as to enrich students' learning and stimulate their curiosity; Towards the end of a module, learners' final contributions go through <u>post-assessment</u>.</p>
<p><b>UNESCO Regional office for education in Asia and Oceania Model (1987)</b></p> <p><b>By Behlol, 2010) and Rashidi (2011)</b></p>	<p>The UNESCO came up with the design in view of a report presented by seven authors from India, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand, Republic of Korea, Philippines and Pakistan, at the module development workshop at Bangkok. The authors prescribed an additional component in the form of 'Units' in the formation of a module; the selected content should first be defined, analysed, and divided into learning units and then the materials should be written for teaching the corresponding units; Their version of the core components of a module is as follows:</p> <p>1) Title; 2) Background; 3) Introduction; 4) Pre-requisites; 5) Overview; 6) Objectives; 7) Learning activities - Unit No. 1; Unit No. 2; 8) Learning material about each unit; 9) Formative test of the: Unit No. 1; Unit No. 2; and 10) Summative test.</p>	<p>Based on Johnson's 1998 <i>Writing Skills</i> Model: design phase, development phase, field try-out phase, and evaluation phase.</p>
<p><b>Delfin (2004) material development.</b></p> <p><b>By Emotin-Bucjan (2011)</b></p>	<p>Focuses on writing skill development as suggested by several academics: Collin (1998) in Prado (2004), Dosinaeg's writing skill development model in Clarpondel (2002), theory of Krashen as cited by Schutz (2007), Nicosia (2005) and Vitasa (2006).</p>	<p>Based on Johnson's 1998 <i>Writing Skills</i> Model: design phase, development phase, field try-out phase, and evaluation phase.</p>

When it comes to facilitating a flexible, supportive and collaborative environment for effective learning, Ali (2005) proposes a design format similar to the module formation procedures outlined in the above table. His module includes certain steps:

- Entry (starting) behaviour of learner analysed.
- Objectives specified.
- Content selected and sequenced.
- Learning activities designed.
- Continuous (formative) assessment (built-in), and a mastery achievement test (summative) specified.
- Effectiveness of the module evaluated (2005, p.24).

The six steps listed above can be further ‘Sub-systematized’ into a simplified three-step sequence, i.e. Input – Processing – Output Cycles (IPOs).

- Input Phase (comprising of objectives and content).
- Processing Phase (involving participant interaction with the content through activities and critical discussions).
- Output Phase (demonstrating achievement by producing something tangible); (Ali, 2005, p.25).

Coincidentally, the method sketched above has also been found to correlate with the Workshop methodology in creative writing, wherein various researchers practice the ‘Neutral’ way of Workshopping (Burroway, 2003). In this mode, creative practitioners are concerned with three stages of art making process: free combinatory play/activities, supplemented by sample creative/critical extracts dealing with some aspect of composing fiction, along with at least an (in-class constructed) working draft, if not the final product, coupled with simultaneous, but brief, reflections on the students’ experience of writing amid the criticism (Khan, 2002; Monteith & Miles, 1992).

### **3.3.1.2            *Non-Conventional Instructional Design(s)***

The present study views modular instruction as a supportive learning process, which can be designed or developed by any academic or researcher, and undertaken by a number of students, whatever the level of expertise involved. At this point it would be far more convenient to move towards the rather less systematically complex module designs, the ‘less known or less representative models’ that have been suggested by practitioners with respect to their central focus being on the learners’ perspectives, instead of designing systematized content (Anagnostopoulo, 2002, p.8; Davis, 2013; Nash & Pyatt, 2009; Utami, 2013).

A perfect example of such designs is the Hoffman & Ritchie’s (1998) I CARE model, which is often cited for promoting creativity among students (Anagnostopoulo, 2002; Morrison et al., 2011). The design tends to focus entirely on ‘the individual learner or learning process’ and ‘how to improve individual performance,’ instead of being involved with the ‘management aspects of the instructional design’ (Lori & Manal, 2013). Like aforementioned models, the ICARE also comprises of certain steps: ‘Introduce, Connect, Apply, Reflect and Extend’ (Stockman, 2003, p.110). Instead of being systemetically dealt with by an entire team of specialists, the model comes packed with ‘built-in guidelines for use by academics with little experience in instructional design’ (Anagnostopoulo, 2002, p.9). Instructorial engagement with the model often results in outcomes that provide even a novice researcher with useful ‘formative and diagnostic information’ that can help designing further effective modules (Byrum, 2013, p.1; Stockman, 2003, p.111). Additionally, if applied within creative contexts, allowing students to apply the design in a proactive environment (Byrum, 2013, p.2), ICARE ‘is likely to produce a well-balanced learning experience in regards to teacher-learner and learner-learner interactions’ (Anagnostopoulo, 2002, p.9).

Figures 3.3 and 3.4 present an overview of constructs specific to the ICARE as follows:

<b>Introduction</b>	This section consists of the introduction to the unit of instruction including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context</li> <li>• Objectives</li> <li>• Prerequisites</li> <li>• Required study time</li> <li>• Equipment required</li> <li>• Essential reading materials</li> </ul>
<b>Connect/Content</b>	Almost all content will reside in this section.
<b>Apply</b>	All activities, exercise, thinking questions, etc reside in this section.
<b>Reflect</b>	This section provides time and space for learners to reflect on their acquired knowledge and articulate their experience. This section may include: topics for discussion, a learning journal/log, a self test, an end-of-unit test, etc.
<b>Extend</b>	This is an amalgamation of all the previous sections offering materials and learning opportunities which can be remedial, supplemental, or advanced.

Fig 3.3 – The five stages of ICARE reviewed by Montazer & Bahreininejad (2009)

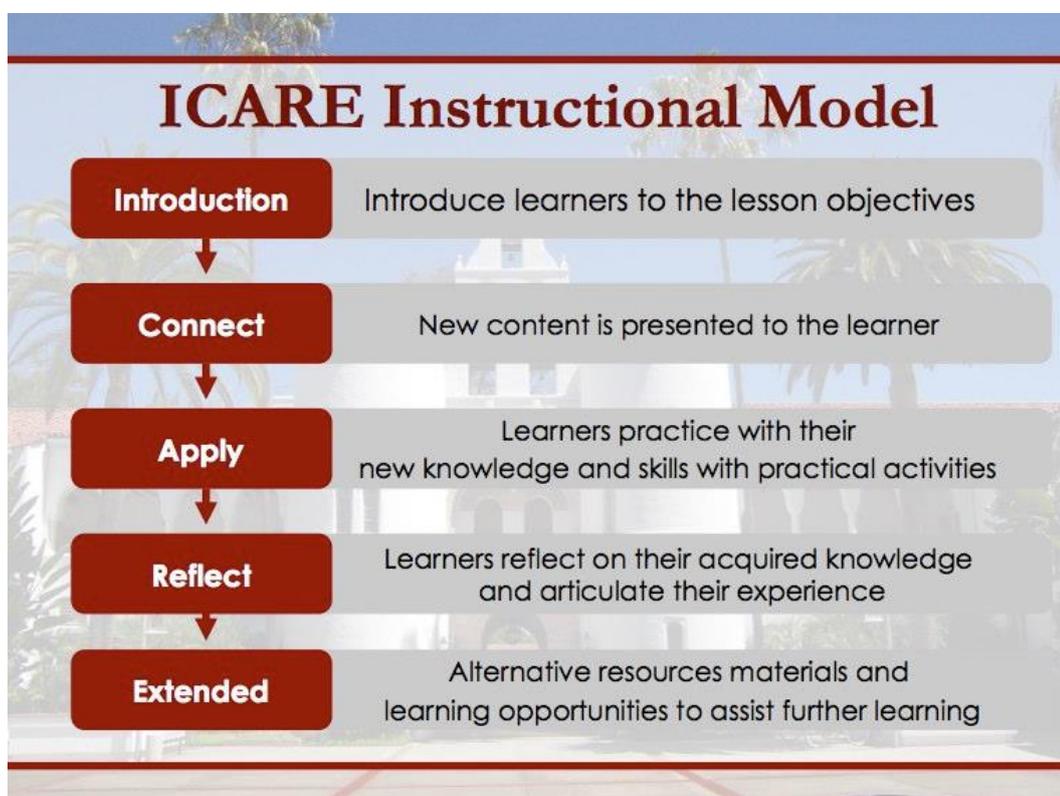


Fig 3.4 – The ICARE rationale

(Source: <http://instructionaldesigned.com/training-materials/sdsu-university-seminar-course/>)

### ***3.3.1.3 Selecting appropriate model(s) for Creative Writing module design***

The models presented above aim ‘to create engaging and effective educational material’ by seeking to combine "design processes" and "problem-solving processes,” guided by clearly defined concepts and skill sets (Anagnostopoulo, 2002, p.2). This can greatly benefit module developers in their authoring of learning materials and collection or assimilation of ‘pre-existing texts,’ making them available to support students (2002, p.3). However, most of these instructional design models can hardly be considered as a ‘final product,’ with each of them tending to utilize ‘a process, a series of stages, decisions and experiences,’ specific to their format (2002, p.2). Given that ‘each process may generate several alternative outcomes’ (Anagnostopoulo, 2002, p.2), while selecting a model it becomes pertinent for module designers to draw on their particular rational and creative context, and proceed with their instructional design accordingly (McKimm 2007). This means if educators consider it feasible they can integrate multiple approaches and models, or create a connection between them, so as to facilitate learner autonomy and flexible learning (Dijkstra & Merrienboer, 1997; McKimm 2007). A balanced approach, however, can only be created if the utilization of several elements or design phases can be inspired from more than one model as conditioned by the teaching context and circumstances for learning they are to be implemented in (Anagnostopoulo, 2002, p.11).

This study suggests that the ICARE model comprises of features that can be successfully utilized to create a creative writing learning environment. However, similar to the other models presented thus far, the ICARE will have to incorporate a variety of design approaches as per the participants’ learning context. While the strategies have been explicatively discussed in *Section 4.5.2.1* of this thesis, it is essential to initially elaborate time constraint issues and selection of a proper activity format one would have to deal with, before designing a course module on composing fiction.

### 3.3.2 *Contact hours in Modular Teaching*

In most Pakistani universities, the student contact hours are represented as at least four to six credit hours, per course, per week (Ali, 2005; Rogers, 2006). Any extension in students' choice of courses, or modules, will therefore lead to a direct increase in timetable hours (Rogers, 2006). To maintain the timing slots properly, Rogers implies managing the module timetable in such a way that could be deemed as acceptable timetable course hours for students. Endorsing the same, Ali (2005) points out the need for establishing 'a carefully determined number of "contact" hours for courses based on the modular approach, to be decided by module writers in advance' (2005, p.21).

A module can be thought of as something that seeks to replace a 'conventional classroom programme' (Birol, et al., 2006) and so it must be designed keeping the differences of both formats of teaching in mind (Ali, 2005, p. 21). If a conventional higher education course is spread over a period of one week, comprising of a division between three 'one hour' theoretical and taught lectures (on the initial three days) together with three hours of practical course work (timetabled as separate sessions for the rest of the days of the week), the same should not necessarily be the format of a course module based instruction (Ali, 2005, pp.22, 62). Given that the modular plan of instruction often lasts for more than the usual one-hour session timings of a class, 'the number of timetable hours is normally greater than the class hours of any individual student' (Rogers, 2006), but could be smaller than the timeframe of an entire semester (Kulkarni, 1986). Thus, as Ali (2005) elaborates further, it could well be that the 'one hour' schedule of the conventional class timetable could be expanded into 'two hours' instead, provided that the modular course does not necessarily extend to the entire week. In other words, to adjust to the modular time frame, the entire one week 'six hour' conventional course time schedule could be split into three equal parts (2005, p.22). 'Alternatively, smaller units might be more appropriate (for instance, three 'two hour' slot modules) especially if each unit can lead to clearly stated outcomes (Sampath et al., 1989; cited in 2005, p.22).

In addition to the above, the sessions can be so arranged as to accommodate ‘from about 20 to 120, with some provision for personal tutorials on a one-to-one basis’ (1994, p.2), with the design aimed at integrating ‘theory and practical work,’ rather than create the normal course void between the two components of learning (Ali, 2005, p. 22). This could be managed either within the allotted modular timetable, or by allowing students to meet and reciprocate outside the designated in-class learning centre (Greene & Hicks, 1984).

### **3.3.3 *Indigenous context and proposed activities***

Brookfield (1994) has suggested that the expedition of effectual learning and support to higher education students has to be grounded in the personal, social, political, institutional and occupational environment in which they live. The students’ context is therefore not a static container through which learning flows but is active and dynamic; the community being our point of focus at all times (ibid). The cultural environment should likewise be considered while designing a course module (Mansoor, 2012). Given that ‘the purpose of a model is to act as a source of ideas for constructs that are useful in our own context’ (Fulcher, 2008), approaches and activities within the module must be selected in accordance to the present level of learners and their learning environment (Mansoor, 2012, p.1).

The majority of the students studying in public sector institutions in Pakistan belong to middle and lower middle class families, who hold fewer resources to sustain a better livelihood and very limited exposure to epigeum skills throughout their education. See, in this regard, Behlol (2010), Karim & Shaikh (2012), Memon & Badger (2007), and Shah (2011). According to Siddiqui S (2007, p.150), about 70 percent of these students are from rural areas, where they are taught English by instructors on short-term basis. Due to their weak language skills, most of these multilingual learners face enormous difficulty when it comes to satisfying ‘the needs and expectations of their English language university teachers as writers’ (Haider, 2012a, p.215; 2012b, p.172). Citing Nadeem (2007, p.2), Khan (2011) suggests that ‘Pakistani teachers should keep in view the needs

and interests of students,’ and use ‘suitable approaches’ to enable them to be ‘expressive in writing’ (2011, p.112). She (ibid) additionally believes that teachers can only endorse Creative Writing if their students, belonging to different backgrounds and comprising of varying aptitudes, find the area ‘pleasurable and self-developing,’ and if their ‘expressive and communicative needs’ motivate them to write.

The situation emphasised above necessitates the formulation of a flexible course module, aiming to develop and enhance self-learning creative writing skills among students with varying learning needs (Biggs, 2003). It should be designed in a way so as to enable participants to obtain critical feedback to their creative output on the spot, further their active participation throughout the project, elevate the degree of their interest and facilitate their levels of commitment (Ali, 2005). The module should comprise of a convenient combination of activities, designed especially for undergraduate learners with varying levels of comprehension abilities. Ideally the students should have an opportunity to opt for or skip a particular activity from the given selection of tasks focusing on a single element or skill related to creating fiction, on the basis of their capacity and previous experiences, to expedite the group of mixed ability students throughout the module (Atkinson T S, 2003; Behlol, 2010; Birol, et al., 2006). Mansoor (2012) asserts that learners act and react within their social frameworks, highlighting various experiences that are ‘essentially entrenched in their own cultural substratum’ (p.2). Mansoor also observes how Pakistani students have a tendency to respond more thoroughly to English works written with a native outlook in them (2012, p.2). Their openness and more intimate interaction with such works is due to ‘the level of familiarity and affinity with the local environment and culture’ present within (ibid). Given the same, it becomes pertinent for second language creative writers to be motivated to write using activities based on the ‘local literary paradigms,’ including the conventions of ‘Urdu Literature’ (Mansoor, 2012, p.1). This in turn can be used to ensure confident interaction throughout the workshop, which is one of its stated objectives, as is discussed in the next section.

### **3.4 Planning the workshop model for instruction**

When one refers to the pedagogy or the discipline of Creative Writing, the workshop is automatically alluded to in the ‘address’ (Donnelly, 2010, p.5). It is a model of instruction that has been defined in a variety of ways, all such definitions implying similar goals.

#### **3.4.1 *The workshop design***

A Creative Writing workshop is usually preceded by a pre-seminar session, which is given to the establishment of certain ‘ground rules’ for the entire process (James, 2009, p.49). The workshop design itself is taken up with ‘semi-taught modules consisting of lecture-type input from the tutor, seminar-type discussion of texts used, a writing exercise done in the classroom, the sharing of the work produced according to the group’s workshop rules, and a more serious attempt at a similar exercise for homework to be workshopped at the next session’ (ibid). The workshop is not necessarily focused upon a specific genre, or upon an attempt to encourage cohorts to pair-up and produce work collectively. Numerous writing samples are worked upon during the course of the workshop, the production phase which is then followed by an analysis phase when ‘the main strengths of the piece are identified ... the main weakness is highlighted ... suggestions are given about techniques which will help the writer to improve their writing ... along with a general note of encouragement’ as well. Towards the end of the workshop, students are to produce a 2000 or 3000 word ‘creative piece of prose,’ that may be ‘a short story, an extract from a novel or a piece of life-writing’ along with a 1000 word contextual analysis essay or a ‘Writer’s Reflection’ (2009, p.50).

Speaking in terms of her own practice, Shamsie (2004) utilizes the above process while conducting Creative Writing workshop in Pakistan. It is largely taken up with a discussion of ‘the ‘building blocks’ of fiction (i.e. language, character, setting, point of view) with the aid of short writing exercises, analysis of excerpts of prose from writers the instructor particularly admires; ‘extracts from their work being distributed to students prior to the commencement of the workshop, with

supporting notes, so that students can get to know the writer and the text in advance.’ At the end of the in-session workshop time, the students are assigned with a writing activity, related to the morning’s work, which they are to submit on the allotted time. During the entire process, students are encouraged ‘to read each other’s stories, post responses to each other’s work, perhaps pick up on ideas from one story and use it to help construct another,’ whereas ‘after the last day, the interactions occur in an electronic world, with a series of one-on-one e-mail tutorials as students work on their final stories’ (Shamsie, 2004). The same model is also applied by Khan (2002) as well.

According to the model of teaching Creative Writing as advanced by Azerbaijan University of Languages and UNESCO (2010), ‘the classroom operates as a laboratory’ where the students experiment with the elements of fiction form, without being particularly concerned about their linguistic style, and then share their investigated outcomes with their peers. The instructor offers constructive criticism, and their focus is drawn to motivate the participants to ‘explain their points/critiques.’ Upon receiving their feedback from other students, participants edit their work, their act of revision in turn being followed by a final presentation. The purpose of the process is to develop their writing skills, motivate them to be creators, and help students ‘learn to critique others’ writing, and slowly learn to bring these kinds of critique to their own writing’ (Azerbaijan University of Languages and UNESCO, 2010, pp.1-2).

Columbia University (2011) has devised Creative Writing workshop designs in relation to their level of students. Though their advanced level workshopping varies, the workshop at the rudimentary level is designed in the same aforementioned method. In case of participants who have ‘little or no experience’ of the art of creative composition in fiction, the focus of the course is directed to essentials of the fiction form: ‘voice, character, setting, point of view, plot, and lyrical use of language’. Participants are encouraged to comprehend ‘a range of imaginative concerns’ through meaningful ‘exercises and discussions’ purposefully aimed at motivating them to create writing samples of their own and

have the samples subjected to a critical analysis of their peers. The exercises, discussion and critique are further informed by supplementary reading material from a diverse assortment of fiction, through which 'students begin to develop the critical skills that will allow them to read like writers and understand, on a technical level, how accomplished Creative Writing is produced'.

### **3.4.2      *Staging the Creative Writing workshop: aims and objectives***

Cook discusses how the primary purpose of a beginner level workshop has traditionally been to use it as a means of learning the craft of writing through writing exercises. This was what the first workshops in the US focused on (Cook, 2001, p.296). Andrew Motion believes at an earlier stage, such as the Creative Writing component of an undergraduate course at a university, the teaching practice usually incorporates 'a combination of openness and rigour which begets adventurous output (Motion, 2001). It offers students an opportunity to develop their writing skills, leading to an in-depth exploration of their selves and their imaginations, to conduct experiments in what should be a largely 'supportive environment' (2001, p.x). Jones sees the design of teaching Creative Writing workshop at an undergraduate level should be based upon activities that could 'get students looking at literature from the inside,' and observe how a writer depicts the inner life of a character, how he employs landscape and setting to reveal a character, how he builds his character and gives him life from scratch, etc.

Slightly different than the rather conventional model of the workshop, with its substantial 'emphasis upon critique and revision' and a regular onslaught of traditional Creative Writing activities, Bishop on the other hand prefers a workshop course format that sees writing as a constant process. During the various stages of the writing process, she typically includes "full-group critique" to "performance," "student-led discussion," and "one-to-one conferencing -- student to teacher *and* peer to peer" (Bishop, 1990, p.44; cited in Guilford, 2009, p.5). And at the same time, she switches from the usual to the alternative assignments that she borrows from the non-creative traditions (LoNano, 2011).

Thus, as LoNano elaborates further, Bishop gives constant importance to the unconventional methods of fostering creativity that are used by composition instructors or those that teach non-fiction writing as well. The act of creation as well as the critical examination in her 'transactional Creative Writing workshop' encourage an all-inclusive approach grounded in 'exploration (expressive discourse) and evolving toward instrumental (transactional) or imaginative (poetic) discourse as the author's ideas and purposes are clarified in the act of Writing' (Guilford, 2009, p.4).

Having established various models based upon a wide range of objectives, one of the least similar to the aforementioned models in the workshop context is Pie Corbett's model of 'Imitate, Innovate and Invent'. The mode regulates Creative Writing to be a process of 'weaving' various elements of a story together (theme, setting, plot, characters, etc), a process which arises out of 'building up' and 'drawing upon' a bank of well-known stories, or a 'narrative warehouse' and then glides towards artistic creation (Corbett, 2007).

Given this aforementioned variety of frameworks, it becomes but natural to come up with a specific and unified pedagogic mechanism dealing with writing workshops.

### ***3.4.3 Developing a teaching philosophy to help conduct writing workshops***

From knowledge and skills required by higher educators, to adult education policy and research, to the history and political economy of educational philosophy, Foley (2004) has surveyed various issues and innovations in adult education and learning. His is the belief that there is no one best way to understand learning, since learners and educators are each very different and are constantly changing. Keeping this as background, educational practitioners must understand one vital point of information. There is no one correct way of teaching students or a generic teaching methodology that can be successfully implemented in conduct of courses, given the myriad differences between people and the various changes

they experience (Edelson & Malone, 1999). Therefore there has to be a blend of various teaching techniques and practices that should be based upon various situations, keeping in mind several different backgrounds of students a teacher is likely to come into contact with (ibid). Wills (2010) likewise views much of the current research innovation happening in the arts sector as inhibiting various different conditions and formats. What is of special importance in this respect is the arena's 'openness to experimentation; to collaboration – which means experiencing new ways of seeing, new ways of understanding; and to sharing – which again means demonstrating mutual respect and recognition' (2010, p.2). Donnelly's (2010) inquiry and research of Creative Writing pedagogy, especially with reference to the workshop, has likewise revealed the enormous momentum that more and more teachers in recent times have gained in their exploration of new innovations within the traditional paradigm. This has consequently ignited their surge of experimentation with a kind of 'openness and re-envisioning of the workshop model' of instruction. Donnelly therefore believes instructors might be able to gain a lot by 'flexing the elasticity of the workshop model', especially in the face of their present need for 'further pedagogical inquiry' for the same (2010, p.2).

Examining the line of investigation adopted by Nigel McLoughlin and Nat Hardy, Harper & Kroll (2008) reflect on the two contrasting approaches revealed by the former duo to teaching Creative Writing in the university. The pedagogical approaches are based on the 'structured' and the 'unstructured' forms of learning, respectively (2008, p. xiii; Doherty, 2008, p.33). However, as the following evidence further supports, there is no reason for the research community to disregard the feasibility of alternative teaching approaches being assimilated together for academic gains. Thus, as McLoughlin (2008) and Webb (2008) note, there is a visible presence of various ways in which more than a couple of pedagogical practices, theories and methodologies interact within the discipline, giving rise to a pedagogy based on collaborative teaching practice. Tourette (2008) holds the variation in students' social context and diverse experiences as factors responsible for this form of instruction in the Creative Writing classroom.

As art based practitioners, Griffin (2005) and Monteith & Miles (1992) reflect how we are surrounded today by a variety of pedagogical models, a huge majority being inspired by social sciences, that seem to fit all too well with the overall objectives of creative arts subjects. Thus as Moxley (1989, p.xi) informs us in his *Preface*:

. . . there is evidence that our discipline is preparing to undergo a paradigm shift, a period of self-reflexiveness in which we question our theories and practices.

What instructors need to do, amidst this all, is inspire and ‘produce work according to the logic of the field of creative production’: work that fits the nature of creative management and motivation, or is more akin to the conventions of this unique subject (Webb & Brien, 2008). The present research suggests motivational training can be achieved by a triangulation of the following instruction methods in the Creative Writing workshop.

#### **3.4.3.1        *Direct Model of Instruction***

The transmission model relies on the teacher dependent instruction, where the teacher is the active container trying to diffuse the confusions faced by students, which render them less capable of gaining proper insight (University of Roehampton, 2011). However, as validated conclusions of a large body of research depict, especially when it comes to enhancing the reading skills of students, the direct method can more than help in producing the desired impact on students comprehensive proficiency. See, for instance, Biancarosa & Snow (2006), National Reading Panel (2000), and Torgesen et al. (2007). Lindsay (2012) suggests a commendable impact of direct and explicit teaching on the development of particular skills or strategies necessary for students to improve their reading proficiency. Other than this, such instruction is especially effective in building students’ comprehension capabilities centered around their reading material (Nokes & Dole, 2004; Gersten & Keating, 1987).

The academic teaching of Creative Writing at undergraduate level relies mostly on more 'taught' workshop, enabling the students establish a basic understanding of Creative Writing process by working with exercises as a means 'to encourage them to generate text for workshops' (Bell, 2001b, p.293; Vanderslice, 2010). Bell believes the taught element of the pedagogical process is applied by instructors to bring about a comfort zone for students 'who have little or no previous writing experience and is designed to ease students gently into the practice of Creative Writing' (2001b, p.295). Vanderslice critically supports the taught element in a Creative Writing course since she thinks the workshop for beginning or undergraduate writers must comprise of content 'that enhances skill building and craft' (2010, p.33). Additionally, direct instruction method is sometimes needed as it ensures a common knowledge base that helps students work together (Aust et al., 2005). However, the same cannot possibly be used for motivating student learning or evaluative assessments, since the purpose of this model is to determine the effectiveness with which a body of knowledge has been communicated by the teacher to the student, and is hardly effective in establishing the learning pedigree of learners (Lai, 2006). In the world of Creative Writing, however, the learner is at the crux of educational interaction.

The kind of effort that a creative practitioner puts into their work, says Wills (2010), is 'complex, intellectually demanding, exploratory, revelatory, and challenging' (2010, p.3). It is driven by a hidden skill that lodges the practice of creation in such a manner which leads to 'new work, and new types of work' that challenge the contemporary art of teaching and learning experience (Devlin, 2010). Creative thinkers have their own way of looking at things, which is not the same as literature students. Research shows that the understanding and knowledge at play among English as opposed to Creative Writing students is different and varied (Harper, 2008). There is a great possibility that a literature student's ability to comprehend and undergo the Creative Writing process, which is a process in progress, may not be as fruitful as his critical ideology of responding to 'completed' English texts (Harper, 2008). This renders the utilization of direct method of instruction ineffective as in a direct classroom environment Creative

Writing, especially of the imaginative kind, can be misunderstood (Zancanella, 1988). Learners may never be able to gauge their instructor's concept of teaching fiction writing, as it may be controlled (Zancanella, 1988; Domina, 1994).

#### **3.4.3.2            *The Constructivist Model of Instruction***

Haven (1999) believes Creative Writing is not as dependent upon 'rules' as much as it is on 'laws.' Rules can be taught but laws cannot. They can be adopted but never strictly, and that too only if the learners wish to adopt them (1999, p.1). This is what will take us over to the constructivist model, which sees students as vessels that use their own personal learning strategies acquired by them to make sense of the information they have received, in their own way (Tetzlaff, 2009).

While there are multiple interpretations of constructivism (Dewey, 1956; Piaget, 1973; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969; in Falk, 1994), 'educators generally refer to constructivism in terms of cognitive and social or cultural constructivism' (Chizek, 2008). The first perspective relies on the way learners as entities acquire and refine knowledge, whereas the second centres on knowledge developed through group collaboration, in a social and communal environment, amidst certain activities (Steffe & Gale, 1995). As a Creative Writing teacher, Chizek (2008) has observed a connectivity between 'constructivist pedagogy and the writing' component that students undertake (2008, p.37). She associates social constructivism with certain fundamental principles such as 'community, collaboration, group negotiation, and language development', and in turn affiliates this constructivism with her teaching pedagogy (p.36). She argues that a student's comprehensive capability centered around language and development of learning skills in a Creative Writing class depends on their acquisition of knowledge 'created through (collective) social processes instead of individual activities,' and is only strengthened when 'collaborative learning takes place between students and students and teacher' (Warschauer, 1997, p.471; Windschitl, 2002; cited in Chizek, 2008, p.36). The role of Creative Writing teachers is therefore to 'create a social context' and utilize the course in 'a place' where such an atmosphere of

collaborative learning, coupled with collective effort aimed at promoting a 'higher-order' intellect could be established (p.36). Graves (2004) and Langer (2002) suggest instructors can reduce the rate of student's lack of understanding and intellectual prowess during the course if they combine the explicit and direct method of teaching approaches with other strategies. Such approaches, the researchers (ibid) claim, should ensure students are provided with rich course material, are encouraged to actively participate in the class, and engage in writing tasks, using their own capabilities and resources, therefore establishing themselves at the centre of the learning process. This atmosphere of constructivism is highly favourable for developing creative learning and writing skills (Rodgers, 2009; Westhaver, 2011). The CLPM (2007) proceeds further to suggest a six-set constructivist rationale, proposed by Driver & Bell (1986), through which creative-writer teachers can foster active learning within their instruction setup:

*First, the learning outcomes are conditioned to a large extent by the context, environment and existing knowledge of learners.*

The accretion of norms, expectations, theories, principles, beliefs, philosophies, motivations, and prior knowledge that students bring to a study environment is directly proportional to the nature, quality and extent of learning that takes place. The narratives or imaginative products of Creative Writing students are influenced by whatever they know about language comprehension, composition and learning skills, and their own personal experiences. This naturally implies that the selection of activities to be utilized within a Creative Writing workshop should be authentic, realistic and based upon students' context. Instructors must be considerate towards 'the variety of language use that exists within the social and ethnic cultures of their societal environment' as well.

*Second, learning does not always involve intentional construction of meanings by students based on what they already know, have seen or heard alone.*

Creative Writing learners often focus on the writing process, structures, genres and usage of language by reflecting on conventions, information and experiences that had been discovered earlier. Yet a major part of the creative process involves the use of imagination, which is what provokes learners to construct new meanings. Given the same, instructors must provide learners with experiences that challenge their existing concepts and allow them to investigate their newly created meanings or innovative ideas interactively, through discourse in groups.

*Third, the construction of meaning is iterative in nature.*

The conceptualization of new ideas and meaning is a continuous and progressive process. Such ideas change and transform according to the students' level of comprehension within a creative learning environment. This is why writing students should be encouraged to be more productive and responsive in their engagement with Creative Writing tasks, activities and assignments. And a perfect way to achieve the same would be through having them analyze, predict, justify and defend their ideas, explore and discover their own writing methods, and eventually generate a harmonious connection between their imaginative perceptions and cognitive impressions.

*Newly constructed meanings are examined by students, but their acceptance or rejection by them is relative.*

Through meaningful writing activities, students construct their own ideas, perspectives and understandings about the various aspects of the world. Each student inquiries into and challenges the other student's "way of knowing." Creative writing instructors should realize that due to time limitations, it would be improper to label one interpretation as meaningful or successful over another.

*And finally, learners are responsible for their own learning.*

Central to an effective creative training is the constructivist view that students have the final responsibility over their learning. Students should be made to realize that their ownership of their individual ideas, intellectual identity, autonomous initiatives, independent thinking, and self-evaluation or validation of their creative artefacts will be accepted, respected, appreciated and encouraged by instructors.

This account implies that the principles of constructivism are imperative to developing and enhancing writing skills of students in a creative learning environment, and the same could help instructors establishing effective programmes.

#### **3.4.3.3            *The Learning Generation Model of Instruction***

The Learning Generation model is inherently linked with the constructivist approach, one key aspect of which is the need for all to participate in the learning process (Aust et al., 2005). A vital feature of the Learning Generation model is its opportunity it gives for mentoring and reverse mentoring, as propounded by Cotugna and Vickery (1998) cited in Aust, et al. (2005). The idea of a faculty member as a co-learner is consistent to the extent of information creation and discovery, which is such that no educationalist can stay current without being a full-time learner. Every teacher is a good instructor and scholar if he is a learner (Boyer, 1990). Additionally, good teaching practice includes high levels of student and faculty contact as well as cooperation and active learning (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).

The writing workshop is what Jon Cook has referred to as ‘a collective activity.’ Although how the process is framed and whom it is framed by will vary from one context to another, speaking in terms of generalizations, what happens in a workshop is going to involve an active participation by one and all (Cook, 2001,

pp.299-300). During the study, therefore, the researcher could reflect on the cohorts as Creative Writing audience experts, taking advantage of their output, energy and reaction to the researcher's sample of creative work which will help the researcher learn new aspects of their own subject effectively (ibid). 'This kind of flexibility ensures that the Learning Generation process creates a facilitative environment' through which the researcher can learn new Creative Writing skills, from and with participating students, while developing the means to integrate relevant and appropriate techniques in Creative Writing content, teaching practices, as well as in creating compositions (Aust et al., 2005). Much of this is also in accord with the idea fostered by Webb & Williams (2007) and Kroll (2008), who view creative arts research as incorporating a connection between the particular research practice with the writer's own creative practice. Various creative arts practitioners likewise endorse the important element of vitality in a writing workshop, which is its double nature as a place of instruction and a process of interactive discovery for all involved (Cook, 2001, p.302).

Additionally, the current study has been set up with the view to contextually utilize a content-validated 'sample' Creative Writing course module as a central component of the research mechanism. In modular method of instruction, Ali (2005) and Behlol (2010) see the instructor as a guide and a facilitator that 'influences the learner and is influenced by him in the learning process' (Behlol, p.6). This naturally situates the writer as a researcher on an equal footing with the participants in his own research context. Any productivity in creative research will therefore depend on the quality of the researcher's own creative output, which can only be evaluated in a workshop based environment in the presence of an audience (Gureghian, 2010; James, 2009; Vanderslice, 2006). This also suggests that a creative arts researcher is a potential consumer of their own research, which is normally the case' (Biggs, 2004, p.11).

#### **3.4.4 *Group dynamics in a Creative Writing workshop***

For a creative writer-teacher, the workshop is at the crux of their pedagogy (Mac, 2011). Yet the whole system must be carefully devised, formed and managed, to be deemed successful, especially with reference to the number of cohorts in the workshop population (Cook, 2001).

Numerous research inquiries, across varying disciplines, have been conducted in the past studying the correlation between group size and the overall set of accomplishments of the participating members of a group for training purposes. In fact, as Romano & Nunamaker (2001) inform us ‘questions about the effects of group size on performance have been of interest to researchers since the first experimental studies of groups in the late 1890s and early 1900s’ (2001, p.6). Thus, for instance, James (1951) discovered smaller groups to be comparatively more stable than larger ones. Bales & Strodtbeck (1951), Carter et al. (1951), Dawe (1934), and Gibb (1951) concluded groups with larger number of students ‘inhibit individual participation and have more difficulties in communication than smaller groups’ (Romano & Nunamaker, 2001, p.6). Still others discovered less intensity of the stress factor in participants of a small group than those of larger ones (Rice, 1951). South (1927) and Watson (1928) established a different conclusion that centered on a higher success rate of larger groups than smaller groups, in case of particular skills due to the presence of a greater variety of diverse skilful individuals. This is also an exceptional contrast to the studies conducted by Hare (1952), Taylor & Faust (1952), and Marriot (1949), who found that ‘large groups are less efficient or productive at many other tasks,’ with other inquiries contriving to estimate ‘five participants to be the optimum group size’ for effective workshop training sessions in creative subjects (Bales, 1954; Slater, 1958: also cited in Romano & Nunamaker, 2001, p.6).

Moving to the present context, Mac (2011) believes a large number of students can be dangerous to the instructor’s aims and intended learning outcomes for the students. ‘More students means fewer opportunities for each to workshop their

texts during the term' (2011, p.224). There are ways through which instructors can get around the problem of creating a collaborative learning environment in large classes. One option, for instance, is to divide the class into smaller groups (Mac, 2011). Yet mostly instructors have a scarcity of teaching assistants, and hence there is no way of knowing 'who will lead the groups that the creative-writer teacher is not with,' or how the learners will be kept on 'topic and focused' (Mac, 2011, p.224). Bell & Magrs (2001) likewise see a small group of learners in a Creative Writing seminar as highly favourable to the over-all participatory environment. There is always a possibility that a few students may pair-up during the course of the workshop and may run the risk of splitting into factions and becoming too personally driven (Bell & Magrs, 2001). This can be restrained if group size is small.

Generally speaking, though not necessarily pertaining to the Creative Writing study environment alone, Michaelsen et al. (2002) suggests in-depth learning can take place if the group-size is between five to seven students only. Their rationale for the same is to foster active interaction and advanced productivity in the group atmosphere, which may not be possible otherwise. However, Mac (2011) views the sample of seven students as slightly large, with five students being manageable enough for the workshop instructor to produce 'brilliant results,' and 'marked improvement in students' writing as well' (2011, p.231). FILMG (2012), on the other hand, establish the ideal group size for arts workshops as ten students, allowing up to a maximum of fifteen. Any number of students larger than this population may make the learning experience more difficult to manage, especially if the workshop lasts for a short time. Likewise, according to the CCDSA (2010), the ideal workshop size in a creative learning group dynamic should be ten participants. The organization does not imply that larger groups are not possible; just that larger groups would require a different format than the usual workshop (APH, 2012). Miles (1992) also believes the Creative Writing seminar with its sense of a shared participation and subjective output requires an appropriate environment wherein participants can flourish. Unfortunately such 'requisite

bonding' fails to occur in 'groups larger than about twelve,' with 'eight to ten being the ideal size' (1992, p.40).

In light of his understanding of the research study drawn by Romano and Nunamaker (2001), Davis (2012) recommends that a cluster of seven to fifteen participants is ideal for creative productivity. Given that groups that hold more than five to seven individuals are susceptible to complexities in themselves, those larger than the ideal limit, or over fifteen, would entail more structure, effective management and facilitation requirements. At the same time, a group with less than seven members may not be able to present a considerable number of viewpoints, whereas one with less than five participants will lack in scope, depth, and range of expertise required for coverage of tasks. In both scenarios, participants will neither be able to produce quality output, nor will they be able to generate a critical outlook required for successful creative problem-solving. The impact factor achieved by a larger group with seven to fifteen individuals will be comparatively better. This size ensures an active involvement of all participants, and provides them with an equal opportunity to communicate their thoughts in a spontaneous, informal, interactive and collaborative manner (Davis, 2012). The *National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE)* also advocate the optimum group size for an effective Creative Writing undergraduate workshop as incorporating not more than fifteen participants (NAWE Higher Education Committee, 2008, p.8). The same has earlier been endorsed by *The AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) Directors' Handbook* (2003, p.5; cited in Earnshaw, 2007), which additionally suggests a workshop group with twelve individuals being the ideal size, despite one with eleven to twenty being the norm to foster creativity (Earnshaw, 2007, p.14).

### **3.5 Conclusion**

The conceptual framework for developing teaching methods for this research recognizes that knowledge is discovered, developed, structured and extended by Creative Writing learners as they interact with their environment. The instruction

process is an important component of the learning process in so far as it generates conditions and situations that enable students to construct innovative meaning. As has been elaborated in much detail, there have been several attempts to produce an integrated framework for understanding creative thinking and learning (Bransford & Schwartz, 1999; Doherty, 2008; Lenning et al., 2013; Moseley et al., 2005a; 2005b). Numerous other research studies dating as far back as the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century reveal ‘collaborative or cooperative learning,’ as opposed to ‘competitive or individualistic learning,’ as a means that allow learners achieve ‘a long-term retention of material, deep-rooted motivation, higher-level reasoning, academic and social support for all students, social development, and self-esteem’ (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1994; cited by Stewart & Wilkerson, 1999 , p.2). Additionally, some other inquiries equivalently show that effective learning takes place when students generate new knowledge by ‘building on past experience,’ connect ‘what they are learning to things that are relevant to them,’ engage in ‘direct "hands-on" experience,’ create ‘their own knowledge in collaboration with other students and faculty, and communicate their results effectively’ (Anthony et al., 1998; in Stewart & Wilkerson, p.2). And finally, by integrating inquiry-based field work ‘into the context of problem solving,’ students are able to uncover several principles underlying rich, active and successful learning (Stewart & Wilkerson, 1999 , p.2). Not so surprisingly, all aforementioned factors serve as the grounding frame for developing creativity.

Stewart and Wilkerson mirror Ali (2005), Atkinson T S (2003), Behlol (2010), Emotin-Bucjan (2011) and Rashidi (2011) in their belief that course modules encourage students to design their learning themselves, research on their own, and convey their results accordingly (1999. P.2). This contrasts with the unenthusiastic and non-dynamic learning environment of the traditionally structured classroom, where acts of thinking and practical work are often sidelined (ibid).

This chapter also advocates that there is a concrete connection between the flexible modular approach to developing Creative Writing skills of learners and

the workshop format, which has been explored in some depth by Atkinson T S (2003), Cole, et al. (1999), Harper & Kroll (2008), James (2009), and Sharpe & Richards (2008). All aforementioned inquiries make a distinction between ‘supportive’ and ‘non-supportive’ approaches to teaching, and suggest that learners are more likely to compose innovative creative work if it has been stimulated in an accommodating way; i.e. their peers are critical yet not biased in their feedback, and teachers are thorough but not rigid in their assessment. Creative Writing learners’ ‘retention and progression,’ is only possible if university academia could improve the ‘flexibility and versatility of the learning tools and resource material,’ and facilitate a ‘reflexive’ yet supportive and stimulating assessment platform, thereby providing ‘the independence and versatility students require’ (Sharpe & Richards, 2008, p.14). Unfortunately, due to their ‘weak expression and grammar,’ the majority of second language learners in Pakistan end up developing a ‘crisis in language skills,’ which hinders them from achieving ‘any sort of notable advancement in their writing capabilities’ (Mansoor, 2010, p.204). Being faced with issues of low sense of self-esteem, disappointed attitude and reticence in creative writing students to write, the writing practitioners teaching in Pakistani universities have a major task before them. They have to investigate techniques that can help learners develop creative skills necessary to restrain them from viewing the area as an obstacle (ibid). In order to explore these research issues, an appropriate methodology was thoughtfully selected, which has been presented in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The research problem presented within this study emphasized a need to investigate ways in which Creative Writing practice may be instilled in Sindh University learners in Pakistan. In chapter 1, the outlay of this problem was presented. Chapter 2 examined and extended the body of knowledge dealing with Creative Writing practice, research and pedagogy in contemporary academia. A theoretical framework to promote creative practice by making use of modular and workshop methods of instruction was developed in chapter 3. This chapter aims to discuss the research mechanism adopted in this study, and subsequent data presentation methods and evaluation procedures that have been used to observe the quality of learning achieved following the project.

As stated earlier, the rationale for this research was to design and develop a Creative Writing training program and then to observe the impact of this program on a sample of students from the target population. The aim of the project was therefore to study whether a course module on composing fiction may be utilized effectively in a writing workshop to establish and further a culture of creative practice among students from Non-English language backgrounds. The objectives were to explore the Institute of English Language and Literature's second-year

students' post-module and workshop learning experiences concerning fiction writing. Data for this study was collected by presenting post-workshop portfolios of participants' creative work; whereas feedback questionnaires were designed to record the training impact on the research sample, with a view to validate the research process. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the research procedure was documented under the guidance of my supervisory team. The setup of pre- and post-portfolio assessment items and analysis constructs were adapted from validated sources and aligned with the context of this study.

Details outlining the methodological approach undertaken to address the problem, and achieve the principle aim and objectives of this research study are presented in the following areas: Section 4.2 grounds the research methodology in a philosophical paradigm. Section 4.3 describes the design of the present study. Section 4.4 gives an account of the research strategy utilized. Section 4.5 discusses the stage-by-stage procedure and techniques used for data creation. Section 4.6 concludes with a consideration of the sources of error and shortcomings.

## **4.2 Philosophical paradigm**

Just as a conceptual framework grounds the research practice, a philosophical paradigm functions as the basic belief system, providing a set of boundaries, within which an investigator works (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 105). Essentially, therefore, the selection of research methods and design is influenced by the nature of the phenomenon under study, and the researcher's philosophical stance (Chandio, 2011, p.86). This stance is shaped by a particular take on life, and the way aspects related to reality are seen and understood (Mills, 1990). The view, in turn, gives rise to an underlying basis, or a collection of assumptions, concepts, and propositions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p.30), which researchers use to construct their investigations (Krauss, 2005, p.760). This study builds on the same.

#### 4.2.1 *Specific Social Work and Creative Arts research paradigms*

Most researchers approach their discipline by making assumptions about the nature of the world and the way different aspects are explored therein to inform their practice (Franz, 2000, p.3; McLaughlin, 2009, p.114). Such assumptions incorporate ‘the very nature or essence of the phenomenon under study’ (*ontology*); ‘the grounds, foundations, scope and validity of knowledge being researched’ (*epistemology*); ‘common perspectives that link human beings as a singular entity to be studied’ (*human nature*); and ‘the way in which one attempts to investigate and obtain knowledge about the real world’ (*methodology*). See, for instance, Guba & Lincoln (1994), Burrell & Morgan (1979), Chandio (2011) and Hassard (2009, p. 276) in this regard.

In addition to the consideration of aforementioned characteristics commonly associated with research, Allison (1996) and Gray & Pirie (1995) identify a fifth component, i.e. ‘the speculative formulation of a conceptual framework or device grounded in lived experience or tacit knowledge, that serves to guide the solution of the problem under investigation and leads to discoveries’ (*heuristics*); while Heron & Reason (1997, p. 287), Webb & Brien (2008, p.2), and Webb (2013) consider ‘the nature of ethics and value, capturing the morality based question of “what matters” or “what is intrinsically worthwhile,” to be worth knowing or worth testing (*axiology*), as the sixth identifying factor of an inquiry paradigm.

Taken together, all aforementioned investigative assumptions have been utilized in especially the ‘qualitative, naturalistic, hermeneutic/ heuristic, or phenomenological methodologies favoured in much social work research’ (Gray & Schubert, 2009, p. 83). Yet the same can possibly be extended to creative arts research nevertheless (Schubert, 2006; Gray & Schubert, 2009). As opposed to the scientific, positivist or quantitative tradition that infers the generalizability of a phenomena under investigation, Allison believes phenomenological approaches encompassing the above assumptions recognize that each phenomenon is unique in itself and open to hermeneutic or explanatory interpretation, which makes them

a suitable medium to explore practical subjects such as education or social sciences (Allison, 1996). Coincidentally, they are part of a research approach that has much to offer the creative disciplines, which likewise focus on both the creative process and the innovative outcome (Gray & Schubert, 2009, p. 83).

Gray and Schubert have observed common 'values, concerns, skills, communication, context, and history' shared by creative art and social science research (p.83). Both disciplines are compatible in that each 'recognizes the importance of practical, experience-based, individual or subjective knowledge and practice-oriented participatory action and intervention research' (p.82). The areas also consider it central for 'researchers to produce socially relevant, accountable, transferable, and useful knowledge,' aiming to generate 'new knowledge or the testing of prior hypotheses and findings' (p.85). This knowledge is useful as it informs action oriented practice and problem-based learning (Gray & Schubert, p.82). It also correlates more concretely to such disciplines 'which draw crucially on everyday tacit understanding and peoples' lived experience' (ibid), and view art as housing 'ideas and practices oriented toward process, relationship and community' (Schubert, 2006; cited in Gray & Schubert, 2009, p.82). This implies the participation of a community-based sample in both social and creative arts research necessary, which comprises of individuals who engage in varied and democratic learning processes in terms of organization and understanding of ideas, engagement with action-plans, and support of means to execute them (Schubert, 2006).

Several other researchers, artists and theorists have similarly located commonalities across the two disciplines. Bourriaud (2002), Gablik (1991), Kaprow (1993) and Kester (2004) list them as aesthetics, social work and art as a link between the self and mental dialogue, human life as mirrored in equal measure by social occurrences and artwork, practice and experimentation giving rise to novel genres, and finally 'art and social research as placing increasing emphasis on space, place, time, and community' (Kwon, 2004; Lippard, 1997; Massey, 1995; cited in Gray & Schubert, 2009, p.82). Given the same, various art

researchers have been found to use paradigms similar to social work approaches, while social work practitioners view their research as incorporating artistic or creative means (2009, p.83).

Table 4.1 classifies the philosophical paradigms frequently utilized both within the Social Work and Creative Arts research domains. Each paradigm comprises of different ontological and epistemological frames of reference, which present divergent assumptions of the way reality is viewed. Deciding on which of the following paradigms the study will fall, raises significant methodological implications and hence implies certain data collection methods as well.

TABLE 4.1	Specific Social Sciences and Creative Arts Research Paradigms
Agonistic Paradigm  (Webb & Brien, 2008)	<p>Philosophical view that resembles scepticism; places knowledge of certain beliefs or claims in the experiential domain; truth is seen as unknown or unknowable since it is grounded in subjectivity of personal experience; there is no such thing as absolute knowledge; constructivism leads to solutions for intellectual problems, but research outputs are still neither completely knowable nor certain.</p> <p>From this perspective in creative arts, for instance, notions of originality, innovation, quality, appropriation, strategy, production, artistic responses, aesthetic experience, authorship, expressivity and interest continue to remain paradoxical, inconsistent, contestable, pluralistic and unresolved (Lowry, 2005)</p>
Knowledge Spiral Paradigm  (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995)  (Harper, 2012, pp.103-15)	<p>Views knowledge creation as having a spiral ontological and epistemological direction: knowledge generation is based upon a conversion from <u>tacit</u> or subjective knowledge (information processing on individual level) to <u>explicit</u>, objective, rational or transferable knowledge (knowledge creation on organization level); which passes through a cycle of 4 integrated processes: internalization, combination, externalization and socialization.</p> <p>Creative art begins with the individual, whose knowledge is <u>tacit</u> (based upon personal craft skills, internalized conventions, subjective norms, or a <i>poesies</i> rooted in personal experience); next, this <i>poesies</i> is combined with their <i>process</i> (development of acts or actions after reaching an understanding of the craft and elements of study domain); later, <i>praxis</i> is established (the newly attained knowledge gets combined with individual practice, leading to new choices, and their impact is viewed to decide how to modify/alter previous choices and revise existing work); finally, knowledge spirals upward when individual vision is made <u>explicit</u> (resulting output is observed / documented, leading to new theories, understandings or critical research insights to the discipline or research field).</p>
Functionalist Paradigm  (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, pp.25-26; Drazin et al., 1999)	<p>Conventional approach in most academia: Ontologically, phenomenon is external to individuals. Epistemologically, knowledge must be acquired via hypothesis testing and scientific method of inquiry. Methodologically, since objective reality and logic are inherent in every situation, observation can only be rational, unbiased, systematic and supported by empirical evidence; whereas only such relationships should be researched that can be pragmatically identified / measured.</p> <p>Creative act is viewed here as ability to produce innovative ideas based on divergent thinking; ‘imagination’ becomes a ‘process of becoming sensitive to problems, deficiencies, gaps in knowledge, missing elements, disharmonies, identifying the difficulty; searching for solutions, making guesses, or formulating hypotheses about the deficiencies: testing and retesting these hypotheses and possibly modifying and retesting them; and finally communicating the results’ (Torrance, 1974, p.8; in Taylor &amp; Callahan, 2005, p.805).</p>
Radical Humanist Paradigm  (ibid, p.32)	<p>Mirrors the Interpretive paradigm. Views human potential as unlimited and disagrees with all phenomena that restrict human development and separate people from their "true selves." Within this paradigm, creative practice, and thinking, are seen as spontaneous, ‘inherently rebellious, non-conventional, and free of constraint’ (Taylor &amp; Callahan, 2005, p.806).</p>
Radical Structuralist Paradigm –  (Ardalan, 2009; Burrell & Morgan, 1979, pp.33-34)	<p>Covers objective, positivist, and determinist epistemological stance (knowledge has to be acquired); realistic ontology (reality is independent, objective, and external to the individual); methodologically uses nomothetic or deductive approaches to research and includes systematized research strategies that are subject to replication and control, and generate quantitative data.</p> <p>Within this, creative practice becomes an innovative action or the novel blend, compilation and reproduction of ideas and routines that exist externally to individuals; a set of procedures or rules can be devised to examine how practice can have a broad scope, extensive range of meanings and several conflicting ambiguities in its nature (Taylor &amp; Callahan, 2005, p.807).</p>

#### **4.2.2      *Research approach adopted in this study***

Within the Creative Arts disciplines, researchers have increasingly recognised the direct contribution of experiential knowledge to shape creative practice (Barrett, 2007; Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Imani, 2007; Jarvis, 2007; Sutherland & Acord, 2007; cited in Gray & Schubert, 2009, p.88; Niedderer & Reilly, 2007). Given that such a form of knowledge draws heavily on the interpretative viewpoint (Yee, 2009), the methodology for this study emphasising creative practice is centred on the interpretivist research paradigm, ‘derived philosophically from hermeneutics and phenomenology’ (Yee, p.192).

Phenomenology refers to a philosophical doctrine based upon human understanding of events and environment not as they are but as they are perceived by individuals, whether truthfully or mistakenly (Storkerson, 2009, p.148). It aims to ‘bring into conscious awareness that which we already in a sense know, and that which resides in our background understanding’ (McLaughlin, 2009, p. 117). Within phenomenological studies, subjective experiences of research participants are studied, and their understanding of a specific phenomenon is analysed, through the process of reflexivity (Yee, 2009, p. 193). The hermeneutic or heuristic component, of such research, generates a course of action wherein participants:

- a) Use intuitive/experiential knowledge to arrive at conclusions, without knowing or witnessing how such knowledge was arrived at;
- b) Develop impulsive feeling of knowing accompanied by an impulse to do something, like critical analysis, contextual assessment or consciously created self-reports speculating on possibilities of what led to learning;
- c) Reason via non-complicated but probabilistic cognitive methods based on experiential likelihood and not flawless indicators; and

- d) Act creatively but produce valid, reliable, effective and actionable judgments, despite the open-ended and ambiguous situations (Storkerson, 2009, pp. 150-151).

The philosophical basis for the present inquiry is phenomenological, and hermeneutic, in the sense that it aims to examine creative practice as a phenomenon construed by the research participants (Davies, 2000), via ‘an exploration of the structures of consciousness in human experiences’ (Husserl, 1931; Polkinghorne, 1989), for development purposes within the context of fiction writing (Cresswell, 1998). The objective of this research was to study individual students’ learning experiences as determined through their samples of creative work and contextual analysis. To validate the claims of this study, open-ended post-module feedback questionnaires were also utilized. Both means attempted to enable respondents to interpret and reflect their understanding of a phenomenon like fiction writing ‘resulting in responses that made explicit their values, interpretations, and judgements’ (Davies, 2000). And since this study was concerned with ‘the phenomenological “science of essential being” dealing with “essences,” not “facts” relating to the individual constructs around which individuals build their worlds’ (ibid), it lies within the interpretivist paradigm.

This is presented in Table 4.2 as follows:

**TABLE 4.2**  
**Research philosophy in this project**

<i>Interpretivist Paradigm</i>	<i>This Study</i>
Reality lies within the individual, but each person is subjectively involved in his or her experiences	The generation of students' artefacts stemmed from individual cognition; each participant was subjectively involved in the art making process
Research in this paradigm focuses on observing the participant in action	I observed the students within their Creative Writing workshop learning environment
Attempts to understand how humans make sense of their surroundings	The objective of this study was to analyse the participants' learning, while simultaneously understanding how they made sense of their experiences
The need to see and understand the world as it appears to be is the core of this paradigm	I needed to see and understand the literature students as they were before and after the project
The research context provides a hermeneutic/heuristic setup by allowing subjects to use participatory, action and problem oriented research phenomenologically (human sense of knowing; perceptual cognition as opposed to objective reality)	Heuristics were presented to the participants by helping them to a) reflect critically on their learning experiences; b) interpret their work themselves; c) identify the already-existent solutions in the form of experiential knowledge and prior learning experiences; d) incorporate their lived experience within innovative creative artefacts, discover relevant findings based on both tacit and factual knowledge, and blend these broader research-based results with experiential knowledge via contextual analysis of their work
The sample size is small;  Subjective research devices such as phenomenology and hermeneutics emphasise the researcher's active involvement in the problem domain, and require them to adopt a creative or speculative stance rather than act as an observer	A total of 13 students participated in this study; 14 (including myself, as the Learning Generation or reverse mentoring model utilized in this project stipulated the researcher be actively involved in the workshop seminars, get their work criticised, and be on an equal footing with the rest of the participants)
Collected data is subjective or interpretative;  Research is concerned with developing new theories, generating and subsequent testing of new ideas; information obtained can be extended to another setting	Students' views pertaining to their learning experiences were tacit, and imply a learning theory to enhance creative writing skills of non-English speakers in native (national) & non-native (international) contexts

**Cited from Chandio (2011, pp.73-74), Gray & Schubert (2009, pp. 88-89), and Storkerson (2009, pp. 147- 164).**

The “ontological” position that most comfortably aligns with this paradigm might be described as “perspectival realism” (McLaughlin, 2009, p.114), which claims that reality is created by individual mind (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.28), and it is seen from different points of view (Bitbol, 1991). The ontology, in turn, is linked to the constructivist “epistemology,” which affirms that knowledge acquisition is grounded in human experience (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.28). Additionally, the presence of wide-ranging ‘realities and ways of doing and understanding are co-constructed in human interactions and activities and are contextually dependent, eliciting multiple participant meanings’ (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2009). Individuals with varied interests construct multiple meanings and realities, and idiosyncratic knowledge, which lie within internal cognition and not in elements external to the individual (Krauss, 2005, p.760). Methodologically, Interpretivism rejects the validity of scientific enquiry and relies on human interpretation (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.28). All three assumptions refute the existence of objective reality, and correlate with an “axiological” stance, which posits that value of research depends upon collaborative involvement of study participants (Heron & Reason, 1997). According to it, the human flourishing process is guided more vigorously in a social setup that fosters ‘participatory decision-making,’ rooted in the balance ‘within and between people, of autonomy and co-operation’ (Hills & Mullett, 2000). Creative act, within this paradigm, is subsequently viewed as a personal and anti-positivist activity (Taylor & Callahan, 2005, p.806).

The research design appropriate to and consistent with this axiology, ontology and epistemology should ideally relate to some form of ‘practice theory’ (McLaughlin, 2009, p.113). This theory suggests that individual practices including ‘tacit knowledge, insight and the emergence of new artefacts’ (ibid) are performed experientially, and are therefore open to wide-ranging observation (p.114). Procedurally, a practice-oriented research design is compatible with this philosophy (Franz, 2000), because it functions as an ‘interpretative, non-dualist activity reflecting, implicitly for most, the dialectic nature of human experience and experiencing’ (p.1). Franz additionally believes unless researchers who view

‘practice as a legitimate form of research’ clearly acknowledge this fact, creative arts problems cannot be solved (Franz, p.1).

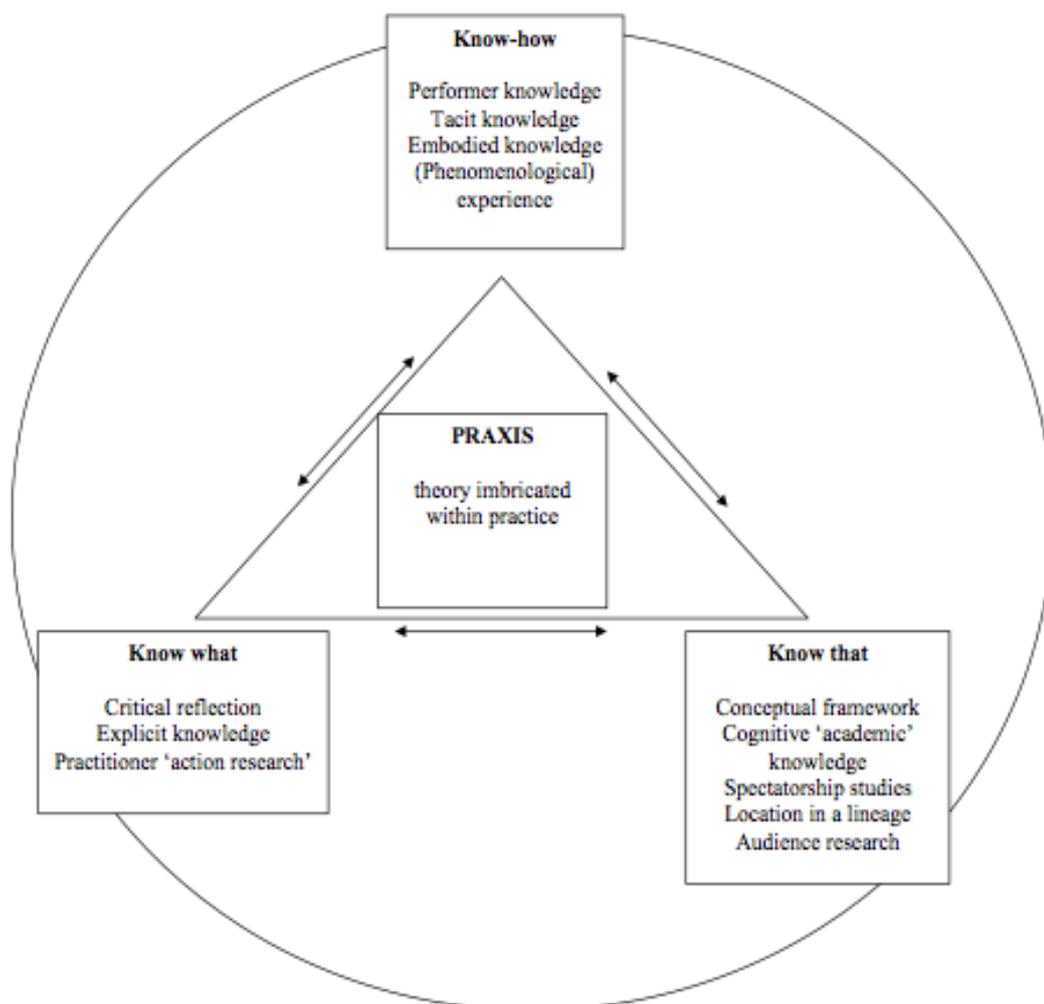
### **4.3 The Practice-Oriented Research designs**

Since the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, much research associated with creative arts disciplines has progressively correlated with the academic research (Nimkulrat, 2012). According to the Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences (2014), within artistic research, practitioners combine the art of creative production with reflective research skills to gather knowledge about artistic practices, and use interventions while conducting academic research into their art. Tools and knowledge of materials are also supplied by artistic research, ‘which in turn benefits the creative process, in the making of art – a composition or a performance’ (Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences, 2014). Borgdorff (2006) refers to this as research in the service of an artistic practice, and suggests this is where new art and practical knowledge about the creation of such art stem from. Additionally, such investigations do yield reliable and valid “replicability” of findings, which can be utilized by other artists researching their specific domain as well (ibid).

With regards to the context of such research, Devlin (2010) distinguishes between two variant setups, wherein artistic research may either not ‘sit comfortably in a formal academic environment’ or ‘academic requirements can have an inhibiting effect on artists’ (p.6). In both cases, the investigative focus lies on ‘developments in the art world, to the art discourse and to other research in the arts’ (Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences, 2014). The research phenomenon is inspired by and questions are centered around professional practice of creation (ibid); where researchers tend to explore how they could ‘access and encourage skills and the culture of innovation’ (Devlin, 2010, p.16).

Generally speaking, most studies investigating creative or artistic practice tend to follow a specific model of research. This model, as has been represented by

Nelson (2010)<sup>1</sup> in Figure 4.1, emphasises examining ‘the academic knowledge within the chosen conceptual framework of a particular creative field, and critically reflecting on the practitioner’s subjective or tacit as well as their explicit knowledge’ (Batzoglou, 2012, p. 13). Practice-led and practice-based researches are closely aligned to the same (Candy, 2006).



**Figure 4.1 – The practice-oriented research design model**

<sup>1</sup> The model was presented during a lecture at Central School of Speech and Drama (15 February 2010) but according to Batzoglou (2012, p.13), it can also be found in Allegue, L. et al. (2009) Practice as Research in Performance and Screen.

A rather recent research development has been reported to have occurred in the aforementioned practice-oriented research domain, specifically within the higher education context of creative arts in various parts of the world. This is the conceptualization of a tri-dimensional study design, purposefully aimed at connecting the various threads of influence of creative praxis. See, for instance, Barrett & Bolt (2007), Boyd (2009), Dawson (1999a), Harper & Kroll (2008), Smith & Dean (2009), and Nelson (2008), in this regard. This praxis connects the principles of creativity or creative learning with the development and embedding of creative skills in students, underpinned by various ontological dimensions dealing with academic teaching, academic research and practice of Creative Writing in the higher education context (Smith & Dean, 2009, p.2; Webb & Brien, 2008, p.2). One dimension of this matrix extends from creative practice or the creative work itself being considered ‘as a form of research’ to the suggestion that creative practice can ‘lead to specialized research insights,’ adding something new to the existing repertoire of knowledge regarding the nature of that practice (Boyd, 2009; and Candy, 2006; Smith & Dean, 2009, pp.5, 7). Leading to this formulation of a creative artefact, or an understanding of creative practice, is an intersecting dimension of scholarly research, which supports these two ends of the matrix (2009, pp.5, 7). These patterns of activity existing in the university environment are now often referred to as “practice-based research,” “practice-led research” and “research-led practice” respectively (Smith & Dean, 2009, pp.2, 5, 7). It is further believed that these designs are not separate but interconnected, complementary, and roughly corresponding to a “cyclic web” (2009, p.8). All three are as important to the generation of knowledge as the ‘more conventional trajectories of qualitative, quantitative, and conceptual research’ (ibid).

The rationale behind both *Practice-Based* and *Practice-Led* Research is to encourage praxis or discipline reflection among the practitioners of the related field (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p. 10). They are carried out by ‘practitioners, such as artists, designers, curators, writers, musicians, teachers, etc.’ (Candy, 2006, p.2). The central focus of each mode of inquiry is on the nature of creative practice, which can be associated with developing a teaching

pedagogy or the generation process of an art form (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.6). In either case, creative practice plays a lead role in the research procedure; interventions are employed to investigate problems related to such practice, and experiments are conducted to study how practice can be enhanced or improved (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p. 10). Research findings ‘make a direct contribution to, or are of direct relevance for, the advancement of practice, while practice informs theory building within research to gain new insights, knowledge or understanding’ (ibid). However, there are some particularities giving ‘rise to new concepts and methods in the generation of original knowledge,’ which set both research domains apart (Candy, 2006, p.2).

#### **4.3.1 Practice-Led Research**

In order to pursue new knowledge regarding creative arts, several British, Australian and American universities have long been housing a great deal of research activity (Harper and Kroll, 2008, p.6). Among the most cited of inquiries that have been fully recognized within institutes, a vast majority has been “practice-led” (ibid). In comprehensive terms, as Harper and Kroll further elaborate, institutes today utilize numerous subjects, ‘which are supported by a range of practice-led activities informed by theoretical positions, and hold a place within modern universities based on being well regarded as a mode of engagement with the world’ (p.6).

According to Candy (2006), *Practice-led Research*, unlike the *Practice-Based* methodology, does not solely view the creation of an artefact as the source of new knowledge (p.1). On the contrary, any study phenomenon, including research focusing on the creation process of an artistic product, that deals with the nature of the creative practice, generates new understandings about a particular aspect of that practice, and results in practical implications that could lead to further development of such practice, which might be ‘documented, theorised and generalised’ is considered practice-led (Candy, 2006, p.1; Baker, 2011, P.18). Plainly speaking, within this methodological framework practitioner/researchers

investigate their own creative practice or pedagogy, view either or both ‘as a basis for theoretical questions and as a place for undertaking artistic, cultural, and scholarly studies,’ and utilize a research process relying on “data creation” as opposed to the “data collection” (Sullivan, 2009, p. 62; cited in Nimkulrat, 2012). Nimkulrat sees the creation of artefacts as the driving force behind the generation of certain ideas that ground this research. Researchers associated with this method, despite producing and drawing on concrete measurements and observations, base their work on an idea and tend to refute the positivist tradition or classical empiricism (Webb, 2013). Rather than trying to gauge understandings of a generalizable truth, or being concerned with causes and effects, they primarily observe the way individuals ‘construct the world through ideas, images, narratives and philosophies’ (2013). Findings associated with this research comprise of knowledge within, or about, practice; and can be presented textually without including a creative piece with the written thesis (Candy, 2006, p.3). Whereas the research strategy associated with this form of inquiry emerges as ‘performative’ research (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.10). However, given that the practice-led research has often been proven to not necessarily consider the complete facts of the writing practice, some researchers refrain from using it as the sole mode of their creative study (2008, p.10).

#### **4.3.2 Practice-Based Research**

Research within the Creative Arts, claim Webb & Brien (2008), generally tends to be practice-based at some level (p.2). That is to say that it serves as an original investigation that relies on, and incorporates, a creative artefact as the basis of the contribution to new knowledge (Candy, 2006, p.1). Webb & Brien (2008, p.10) report this knowledge is gained by means of researcher’s creative practice and through its outcomes, established by exegeses, prefaces or companion essays focusing on the making of the artefact. In this approach the researcher simultaneously acts as an artist, executes the creative process and pursues the production of artefacts, viewing them as the object of research or reflection (Nimkulrat, 2012). However, as Dawson (2008) and Nelson (2008) articulate,

other than the writing practice, it is “pedagogy” that could be an object of practice-based research in an area of Creative Arts.

Citing Rust (2007, p.75), Nimkulrat additionally elaborates that the practice-based research process demonstrates, in sequential stages: (1) the rationale or research problem; (2) an understanding of the research context; (3) the acquisition and consolidation of research methods in a way that they appear explicit, concrete and visible; (4) authenticated research outcomes, while studying generated creative artefact(s) alongside. Social science methods – ‘case study, participant-observation, interviews, questionnaires, and surveys for seeking the opinions of others, etc.’ – can, however, be utilized to complement the creative research process (Gray & Malins, 2004, p.30).

#### **4.3.3 *Design of the study***

Structurally, the thesis has followed a practice-based plan by identifying a research problem in the initial stages, which was fully addressed in the course of the research. Later, it defined research objectives intending to enhance knowledge and understanding relating to the problem that was addressed; specified the research context for the problem and emphasised the importance of addressing it; discussed other research that is being or has been conducted in this area; and finally rationalized appropriate research methods to address the problem, the outcomes following which pointed out ‘the particular contribution this project has made to the advancement of creativity, insights, knowledge and understanding in this area’ (Candy, 2006, p.2). Figure 4.2 depicts the stated research design.

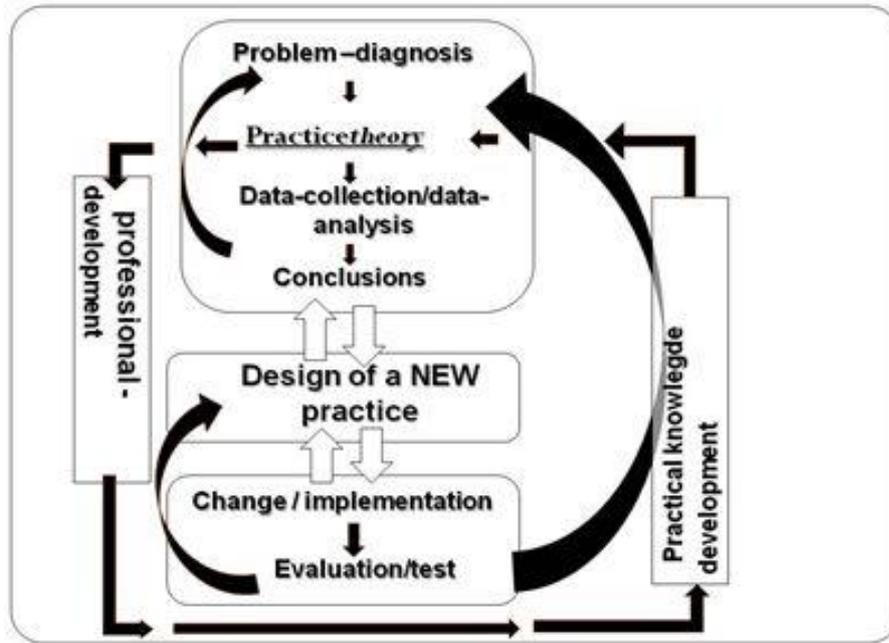


Figure 4.2 – The practice-based research design model presented by Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences (2014)

As can be viewed above, following the initial ‘problem identification and analysis’ phase, the project moved on to the design phase. During this stage, a blueprint was made concrete, by developing a teaching method. The method was then ‘implemented (executed, applied) and the effects were evaluated’ during the subsequent phase (Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences, 2014). Readjustments such as the designing of an alternative form of teaching practice, which focused on some changes in the teaching material of certain workshop sessions and a questionnaire designed for evaluation of the project by participants, were allowed throughout the process, depending on the teaching conditions and learning context (ibid). The pedagogic practice undertaken as a part of this project was accompanied by documentation of the research process; whereas the creative output produced by the study participants was validated by their contextual explanations or critical reflections to support the originality of their composition (Candy, 2006, p.2). Finally, to evaluate the module creation and implementation efficacy, participants’ opinions were collected in questionnaires (Gray & Malins, 2004, p.30).

The project aimed to develop creative writing skills of students. In this correlation the study has likewise been practice-based, as it emphasizes the role of the researcher's practice as a writer-teacher along with the production of a novel and a creative writing course module that will 'form the basis of contribution to knowledge' (Candy, 2006; Creativity and Cognition Studios, 2011). However, the function of the narrative artefact has solely been to generate and enhance the researcher's understandings about the creative process. It neither serves as an inherent component of the thesis, nor offers an explanation of processes that occurred during the art-making routine. The project has been framed, module developed, and fiction portfolios generated by project participants, by using the insight that resulted from creative processes embodied in the researcher's artefact. But the study cannot be completely understood by referring to and observing the fiction composition(s) alone. It is in this correlation that the procedure deviates from the practice-based methodology and leans towards the practice-led study, wherein artistic practice becomes the very subject or vehicle for a theoretical investigation (Nimkulrat, 2012, p.1), which 'may be fully described in text form without the inclusion of a creative work' (Candy, 2006, p.1).

Within the practice-led dimension of this study, the process of composing fiction has been positioned in a research context, which facilitated 'the reflection and articulation of knowledge generated from within the researcher-practitioner's artistic experience, so that the knowledge becomes explicit as a written text' (Nimkulrat, 2012, p.1). Understandings pertaining to the act of writing creatively, gained throughout the project, not only informed me about ways of producing creative artefacts, but also theoretically informed my teaching practice 'so that the practice could develop the practitioner's aesthetic intelligence,' the outcomes of which are creative short stories produced by project participants (ibid).

The research has more comprehensively extended to practice-led inquiry in six specific ways. First, this study was initiated in Creative Writing practice, by focusing on a challenge as per the needs of that practice (Gray, 1996, p.3).

Second, this project has sought to establish creative practice in an institute for the first time. As such, it is a starting point to see whatever emerges (Haseman, 2006, pp.4-5). Third, the conduct of this research has generated ‘detectable’ learning outcomes, and led to theoretical and technical ‘research insights’ (Creativity and Cognition Studios, 2011; Smith & Dean, 2009, p.5). This has been done by drawing on conventional practice-led procedures suggested by Gray (1996, p.17) and Webb (2013): archival research (reading, observing); field research (participant observation, survey questionnaires); and reviewing participant-led methodologies of practice (story writing; self-reflection). Fifth, the received insights have subsequently been ‘documented, and theorized’ (Smith & Dean, 2009, p.7), and strategies suggested, ‘which the current and next generations can apply and critically inhabit’ to promote their pedagogic practice (Gray, 1996, p.25). And finally, given that the focus of this study has been to advance knowledge within and about the Creative Writing practice, the creative outcomes of this research have been described textually and performatively (Green, 2007, p.1).

Details of the “performative research” strategy and the documentation process are described in sections 4.4 and 4.5 respectively.

#### **4.4 Data creation and analysis strategy for this research**

An inevitable project obligation that every researcher must come to terms with before proceeding with their study is to make the choice of an adequate research method or technique that fits the nature and purpose of their study. The term ‘method’ has been defined by The Macquarie Dictionary 2<sup>nd</sup> edition as:

1. *A mode of procedure, esp. an orderly or systematic mode: a method of instruction.*
2. *A way of doing something, esp. in accordance with a definite plan.*
3. *Order or system in doing anything: to work with method.*

These definitions have been widely accessed by creative writing practitioners in terms of their research, as it seems to offer a place to the establishment of

systematic mode of instruction, planning and designing, or production of a creative piece of work, leading to its evaluation in accordance to its epistemology (Boyd, 2009, p.3). The current project is embedded with a practice-led, practice-based and research-led epistemological stance. And the method used for creating data and analysis of research outcomes that coexists with this kind of inquiry has been visualized by Haseman (2006) as “performative research.”

The term “performance,” suggest Alexander et al. (2004), has long been interpreted in multiple formats. While on the one hand Haseman (2006) has used it in the context of conducting and processing practice-led research, other academics have referred to it as the ‘process of excavating, cultivating, and illuminating even newer ways of seeing the potency of performance as a theoretical lens in education’ (Alexander et al., 2004, p.1). Still others, like for instance members associated with the Tate research project, opine that “performance” and “performativity” are intertwined research strategies. The two often get linked for their use of “performance-based” actions that lead to decision-making in practices ‘involving artists, museum professionals and colleagues across the academy (art historians, sociologists, cultural theorists, theatre and performance scholars and educationalists) ... and relational pedagogies’ (Tate Learning and Research , 2011).

Clearly being contested, the utilization of performative research as a strategy in this study likewise ranges from the kinaesthetic act of creating fiction and teaching others to compose the same, ‘with the intent of knowing through doing and showing,’ to its use ‘as a mechanism for measuring outcomes and their effectiveness’ (Alexander et al., 2004, pp.1-2).

#### **4.4.1 *Performative Research as the pedagogical act of doing and showing***

In the pedagogical practice, implies Pineau (2004), the act of teaching itself is considered to be an act of “performance,” or “performativity” (p.15). This is because creative pedagogy tends to investigate: contexts where the performance

of “learning” occurs; the dialogic review of artefacts through which performance as “production” takes place; the conceptual, philosophical, and socio-political ideologies phrased by those performing as “participants” in a study; the responses and resistances of those who are being informed by the “performance” of teaching; and finally, ‘interactions among students, instructional practices, reform edicts and their implementation,’ with a view to explore ‘new and innovative work being done in the performance arts community’ (McLaren, 2004, pp.xvii-xviii).

Other than abiding by the aforementioned context, my “performative research strategy” can be viewed as a theatrical technique as well: I struggled “scripting” a workshop session; chose my “characters” on the basis of their creative “portfolios”; drafted what I would do and how my participating “audience” would do it; which never actually happened the way as I intended, since “actors” have this intrinsic habit of improvising their “script.” Viewed this way, almost all research based on pedagogical interactions becomes “performative” (Alexander, 2004, p.41).

Another approach to establishing performativity is that through this study I have attempted to create a course module for undergraduate learners, aiming to encourage them to perform and exhibit their artistic work (Haseman, 2006, p.100). In doing so, I set about creating an artefact of my own, and reflected on the over-all artistic and research process that went into its making (ibid), so that my individual learning experience could help me generate effaceable instruction strategies to enable others to create their own work.

#### **4.4.2 *Performative Research as a mechanism for measuring outcomes***

When this strategy is used to exhibit research findings, performative research tends to differ from both the traditional qualitative/quantitative species of research methods, while surprisingly stemming from the qualitative tradition. This is

because most researchers associated with performative research engage in slightly renovated qualitative strategies of the following:

Reflective practice, participant observation, ethnography, biographical or the autobiographical narrative inquiry, and the inquiry cycle from action research' (Haseman, 2006, p.105). The corresponding findings in performative research are not conveyed through quantifiable numbers, but rather through a 'self-generated commentary,' with 'artistic expression becoming the research (outcome) itself (Haseman, 2006, p.103; cited in Smith, 2009, p-6).

Unlike the “quantitative” scientific, deductive, and hypothetical testing of research questions against empirical evidence, where phenomena are constructed and measured with respect to frequency, and data is statistically analysed in order to calculate its cause and effect, “qualitative” research approaches tend to be inductive, and aim to understand the implication of human action, be it the individual perspective of the researcher, or the behaviours and responses of their participants (Boyd, 2009, pp.2-3). That being said, when it comes to dealing with the generation of art-based data, or the interpretation and analysis of creative artefacts, while qualitative research has been shown to “work best,” it still lacks a mechanism whereby research findings could be adequately expressed (Haseman, 2006, p.99), or outcomes produced (Kroll, 2008, p.7). Key areas of difference between the three alternate research approaches have been devised by Haseman (2006, p.103) as follows:

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research	Performative Research
“The activity or operation of expressing something as a quantity or amount – for example, in numbers, graphs, or formulas” (Schwandt, 2001: 215).	Refers to “all forms of social inquiry that rely primarily on qualitative data...i.e., nonnumeric data in the form of words” (Schwandt, 2001: 213).	Expressed in nonnumeric data, but in forms of symbolic data other than words in discursive text. These include material forms of practice, of still and moving images, of music and sound, of live action and digital code.
The scientific method	Multi-method	Multi-method led by Practice

**Figure 4.3: Research Paradigms. Extracted from Baker (2011, p.19)**

While qualitative researchers view artistic practice solely as ‘an object of study,’ performative researchers establish practice as the principal research activity or as ‘a method of research’ (Haseman, 2006, p.119). In this context, all forms of artistic expression, including narrative artefacts and their critical components, symbolical paintings, even musical pieces, not only guide the research process but in fact become the research outcomes, themselves (Baker, 2011, p.19).

Numerous other academics and creative arts-based practitioners likewise place practice at the centre of all Creative and Fine Arts research and therefore establish the same as ‘the discipline’s central methodology’ (Boyd, 2009, p.2). The notion is strongly justified by Kroll (2008) who grounds practice ‘as a mode of investigation, and a mode informed by individual and cultural circumstance; and as an act of acquisition and exchange, which is informed by critical understanding of a specific kind related to creative achievement...’ (Harper & Kroll, 2008, p.6; in Kroll, 2008, p.2).

Additionally, performative research can itself be thought of as a medium that explores ‘the notion of self and subjectivity through the creative arts; in effect, demonstrating the ways that creative artefacts constitute and deploy subjectivities,’ through research (Baker, 2011, p.20). Green (2007) believes by distinguishing this rather new technique of inquiry from the quantitative and the qualitative research methods, Haseman has inferred a unique acknowledgement of features particular to this research, such as ‘the experiential nature of practice, and the relevance of the experience of the art work – or other practice-led outputs – to the evaluation of the practice-led elements of the research endeavour’ (2007, p.4). Yet it is still the qualitative research tradition that creative arts practitioners are most comfortable with (Boyd, 2009, p.3), to the effect that the association of performative research with the qualitative research approach can sometimes not be undermined (Denzin, 2003).

Like all performative practitioners who believe that the ‘research reporting in this paradigm occurs via rich, presentational (art) forms’ or the material form of

practice (Haseman, p.102), I have preferred establishing my research outcome(s) through a presentation of short-narrative artefacts, which exhibit my participants' individual writing practice. In doing so, I have been the least interested in trying to decipher my findings and analyse understandings of fostering this practice in my project participants either through quantitative numbers or qualitative words. An exception to this has been the process of documentation or presenting a summary of my own understanding of my participants' fiction samples. This was another way I could attain the kind of "performativity" that Baker (2011); Colbert (2009, p3); and Barrett (2007, p.135), Goddard (2007, p.113), Haseman (2007, p.152), Marshall (2001, p.433), Reason & Torbert (in Marshall & Mead, 2005), and Stewart (2003, p.1); cited in Colbert (2009, p.3) talk about. This is the researcher's heuristic voice, which can be produced through both 'the performative act of writing or producing art,' and through 'reflexivity' on other art forms (Baker, 2011, p.24). But, as will be elaborated in *Chapter Five* of this thesis, much of my interpretation is indirect, non-linear, and open-ended. This has been solely on account of my being a practice-oriented researcher, one who is 'less committed to linearity and logic, and more committed to the analogical; to "going around" a problem' (Webb & Brien, 2008, pp.6-7). Additionally, since performative research mostly recognizes qualitative data collection tools that situate research within a particular social, and cultural context (Denzin, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), the data for this study has been created, or research outcomes generated, via techniques mainly used in qualitative and descriptive research. I have used, for instance, reflective evidence documenting the research process, as extracted from my field notes; and narratives, and critical commentaries generated by the participants. The selected means have already been employed for similar purposes by Atkinson T S (2003), Aust, et al. (2005), Bell & Magrs (2001), Burroway (2003), Haven (1999), Khan (2011; 2012; 2013), Mansoor (2010; 2011; 2012) and Monteith & Miles (1992) in their Creative Writing pedagogical inquiries. Furthermore, though feedback questionnaires comprising of open-ended responses have been employed, their purpose has only been to validate the modular instruction and establish the efficacy of workshopping to develop my participants' creative writing skills.

To validate the claims of this study, a complete documentation of the research procedure has been described next.

#### **4.5 Recording the research process**

According to a definition presented by The Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC):

Creative output can be produced, or creative practice undertaken, as an integral part of a research process ... The Council would expect, however, this practice to be accompanied by some form of documentation of the research process ... to support its position and to demonstrate critical reflection.

This classification seems to emphasise the requirement for creative practice – whether it be the production of an art form or the utilization of pedagogy as a means to generate creative artefacts – to be substantiated as research through a written record, followed by a reflection on it (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.13). Nimkulrat likewise considers a documentation of the artistic research process an integral part of the practice-led inquiry, without which the credibility of the research claim cannot be established (2007, p.5). The interplay between the writing/teaching practice of an individual, their artistic work in process, and their creative research agenda can be recorded sequentially; the resulting information can become data; which can then be used as their “research material” (2007, pp.1,3). Ledger et al. (2011) believe this to be the case in practice-based research as well, where ‘documentation does much to sustain aspects of the practice it captures’ (p.163). It articulates practioners’ questions and processes of working. And by connecting this ‘live nature of practice’ to ‘a recording of the process,’ documentaion acts as an interactive link ‘between the practice, its audience and written critiques’ (ibid). Whether it is in the form of audio-visuals, photography or written reviews, the primary role of documentation strategies ‘is to provide records of artistic performance outcomes’ (Ledger et al., 2011, p.164); which is what this study attempts to do as well.

#### **4.5.1 *Pre-project reflection***

Prior to conducting a module-based workshop at the study site, I perceived my investigation as a three-way process: (a) reviewing literature, (b) creative writing workshop participation, and (c) undergoing creative writing pedagogical training.

To record the post-literature survey documentation, I used an informal reflective diary. Recording the studying and teaching reflections, while writing fiction, has indeed created ‘self-awareness of the evolving thoughts, intentions, and decisions, leading to an appreciation of the whole process’ (Harrison, 2002; cited in Nimkulrat, 2007, p.5). Given that insights attained following the research process cannot be communicated concretely through a single medium alone (ibid), fiction artefacts composed by a representative sample of the study participants were necessary to be included along with my interpretation of the same. However, the pieces still function as means rather than the end of this research. This will be further discussed in light of my study experience, which is elaborated in the next sections.

##### **4.5.1.1 *Training as a workshop participant***

As a researcher, I initiated my work by participating in training workshops arranged for Level One Creative Writing students belonging to the Department of Journalism and Communications in the Research Institute for Media, Art and Performance at the University of Bedfordshire. These were designed to acquaint a newly practicing writer with the art of creating fiction through hands-on practice-oriented activities and writing exercises. Through this experience I wanted to adopt the “research direction of an artist,” who must first demonstrate that they possess sufficient knowledge to justify their action and choices, prior to utilizing and articulating or disseminating that knowledge to others in/through their research (Coumans, 2003, pp. 55-56). Haseman (2006) suggests that performative researchers ‘who wish to evaluate their research outcomes, need to experience them directly’ (p.101). Nimkulrat (2007) reinforces this notion by aligning

‘interpretive engagement with artistic production and experience’ (p.3). Accordingly, a writer’s practice and their reflections stimulate each other and, by doing so, feed their research (ibid).

Being a creative writing practitioner, I knew I could only teach that which I firmly empathised with or believed in. And since I was a beginner in the field, it was important for me to witness the writing experience first-hand; hence my participation in the workshops. During this training I was able to reflect on varied subjective, emotional, experiential and intellectual facets of the artistic process. My intention thenceforth became to observe if my writing practice and my individual outlook of its processes could somehow be placed objectively within a field of inquiry. This demanded a planned journaling of not just my individual self-reflections on the writing process but also, as Marshall (2001, p.433) phrases it, a literal move from my inner to the outer sweeps of the learning space. I had to monitor what my fellow writers and instructors thought; and the already existent notions that they questioned. Recording this information, which was paralleling my prevalent readings specific to my research path, led to a deeper understanding of specific creative processes and philosophies that had already begun to shape my writing practice and pedagogical techniques. I was surprised to know that my learning had actually taken the form of a cycle: I was moving between tacit learning and explicit knowledge frames to practicing as a writer, the reflection on which would throw me back to my inner circle of existing knowledge, and lead to an inevitable refurbishment of it. I understood then that this was what Reason & Torbert (in Marshall & Mead, 2005) had meant by “reflecting-in-action” and “reflecting-on-action”. I was also able to figure exactly what it was that I had wanted to do; though it was still going to take a little longer for me to visualize the actual structure of my inquiry.

The writing workshops therefore offered me an opportunity to explore my project obligations, and track the experience of composing narratives from a student’s, researcher’s and a writer’s perspective. Given that I was studying with British students who came from a culture already saturated with English fiction, and who

possessed prior experience as practicing narrative writers, critical discussions with them contributed significantly to my own fiction-based perspectives for this research. It was due as much to my experience as a workshop participant as to my practice as a creative writer that I was able to conduct a writing experiment in IELL at the USJP as a part of my research. The insight received as a consequence of my multiple role of student/writer/researcher formed the critical nature of my coordination with my project participants in Pakistan. The sessions that I participated in likewise grounded the conduct of similar sessions in the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, as has been sketched in *Appendix D*. However, as an allegiance to the vulnerability of the indigenous project context, some teaching expertise was required. My perspective on the art of fiction composition as a teacher came into focus as I started conducting Level One workshops at the same institute the following year.

#### **4.5.1.2            *Training as a workshop coordinator***

Some Creative Writers tend to postulate the notion that ultimately it is the best writers who make the best teachers; the criterion of leading a workshop relying on a professionally acclaimed ‘published writer of critical bend of mind,’ who is more experienced than the rather less experienced participants, thus acquainting them with their limits and potentials (Bell & Magrs, 2001, p.298; Mayers, 2009). Modern academia’s contra-outlook however suggests that the only qualification that a writer-teacher actually requires is the possession of a thorough base in ‘experience, training, and continual reflection’ (Mayers, 2009). Additionally, some practitioners also acknowledge that what makes a good teacher is not methods, courses and evaluations, it’s a continuing dialogue with the writing and teaching process (Evans, 2009). Consequently, having finished my training as a beginner level student-writer, to practice as a workshop instructor seemed the logical next step.

As a researcher setting out to investigate and enhance my USJP students’ creative writing skills, my work was not merely to put together a report, accumulate

enough information on the writing craft in order to return to the project site, create a sample fiction artefact, complete preliminary research and design a creative writing training module to generate data for this study. Given that the sample population selected for this project belonged to an environment where critical and theoretical writing alone was what they were aware of, this study unveiled several important aspects necessary for the investigation beyond collection of bookish information. It required an actual practice as a creative writer-teacher itself. Rather than collecting and supplying information or a list of dos and don'ts pertaining to composing fiction, my subjects and I were about to embark on the process through which those compositions were to be located within an educational environment for the first time. Cultivating the creative talent of native student writers required me, as a researcher, to conceive knowledge about the nature of a novel practice in an indigenous context. This was a decidedly subjective act. The artefacts produced as a consequence were to become physical manifestations of a writing practice unprecedented and not experienced in a pronounced fashion before. On the one hand it was really important to make it work in a place without betraying the nativity of its context or its population to whom the researcher was connected. On the other, since I was working with information that belonged to contexts with established precedents in fiction writing, the responsibility of doing justice to the native and the non-native by creating a harmony between the two came hand-in-hand. Some teaching experience was therefore required in an international study environment prior to concretising pedagogy. During the same, various issues were uncovered, and some factors disclosed. Notions such as a parallel verbal discourse, and excessive or non-friendly critical feedback may function as a linguistic barrier that could impede clear communication necessary for creative writing training, etc., were learnt. This suggested the importance of allowing every native participant a pre-determined turn to talk. The idea was to ensure making clear observations, without interrupting peers' perspectives, and responding to each other's' intended meaning only after having listened to it completely. Notwithstanding that, broaching a topic, stating individual opinions, or selecting specific aspects of a topic and taking it to an individual direction were allowed.

The teaching experience garnered at the University of Bedfordshire revealed harmonious communication to be a perceived aim and an actively important aspect of Creative Writing instruction. Consequently, a document drafted for maintaining some etiquettes of workshopping was composed and can be seen in *Appendix C*.

#### **4.5.1.3            *The role of the creative artefact(s)***

The development of a creative piece of work was also discovered to be an essential preliminary component of the research practice. This project was embarked upon so as to encourage IELL literature students to produce fiction artefacts that could help the researcher establish the writing practice within the institute. Helping participants create short-fiction narratives required me to identify and concretize varied aspects of the writing process.

While this research has been practice-based, it is imperative to elucidate that the fiction artefact I created during the project does not form a part of the thesis or give rise to the creative outcomes generated by this research. Instead, the fiction sample embodies important aspects of knowledge deemed relevant and necessary for the materialisation and instantiation of propositional knowledge for the entire project. This is because in practice-based creative arts inquiry, certain cases have been documented ‘where professional practice was necessary for the progress of the research’; whereas ‘the research tool itself had to be experimented (first hand) in order to facilitate its validation’ (Evans, 2009, p.75). Within this scenario, researcher’s practice does not directly correlate to the data collection process but merely acts as a means to ensure a progression of research outcomes to validation (ibid). Also see, for instance, similar practice-led inquiries conducted by Haslem (2011) and Tonkinwise (2008; cited by Haslem) in this regard.

Marchand and Walker (2009; cited in Hansen, 2009, p.98) view all practice-oriented research paradigms as either being concerned with the tradition of

“applied research” or “fundamental research”. If oriented towards the former, the final creative artefact acts ‘as, and represents, an *end*’; while the latter mode implies its function ‘as a *means* and a design approach to fundamental knowledge development.’ Viewed this way, my creative artefact becomes ‘the means rather than the end’ (Haslem, 2011), and comprises of ‘reflecting and responding measures for pushing the research process forward to clarify what is possible and how, regarding the research questions’ (Hansen, 2009, p.98). This piece of fiction composed during the research process led to a practical understanding of approaches involved in producing a creative work. Without a proper awareness of certain intricacies involved in the same, the researcher may not have been able to convey rationalities regarding creativity and the creative practice to the project participants holistically. Additionally, to place the researcher and their participants on an equal footing, as discussed in *Section 3.4.3.3* of this thesis, the creative artefact was used as a sample in one of the project workshop sessions and was subjected to participant scrutiny.

The concerns of this study do not lie with the production of creative artefacts but with the practice of and the process leading to the production of that work. The work I produced during my research, as has been presented as *Appendix J*, is “not final.” Rather ‘it is a process, with the final piece being an instantiation of that ongoing process’ (Haslem, 2011). The novel chapters that have been produced during the process allowed both me and my participants to move on to further amendments, which triggered further responses. And it can only be the resulting products created by the participants towards the end of this study, which serve as the outcome of this research.

#### **4.5.2 *Project reflection***

My next task, that being the planning of a training program to develop creative writing skills of Level 2 Literature students enrolled at the IELL, was guided by a number of different theories that inform effective instruction process. These had been referred to by Ali (2005), Atkinson T S (2003), Behlol (2010), Birol, et al.

(2006), Emotin-Bucjan (2010) and Donnelly & Fitzmaurice (2005) in their research based upon the validation of courses for their respective participants. The theories are closely underpinned by several key factors such as:

- Teaching ‘to elicit a positive response from students; assessing in a way that encourages a positive working atmosphere, so students can make mistakes and learn from them; and encouraging depth of learning by using assessment methods that support explicit objectives of the course (Biggs, 2007, p.25; emphasised by Atkinson T S, 2003).
- A flexible learning environment in which instruction is to be implemented, as proposed by Ali (2005);
- The deep learning formula for students as mentioned by Atherton (2011) and utilized by Donnelly & Fitzmaurice (2005), by establishing an ‘appropriate formative and summative assessment strategy.’
- Issues related to students’ active participation during the course and their consequent satisfaction with the instruction process involved, as suggested by Birol, et al. (2006);
- Instructor’s close affinity with students via feedback, as claimed by Behlol (2010); and,
- Ensuring easy access, convenience, adequacy, and usefulness of reading material provided for students, as endorsed by Emotin-Bucjan (2011).

Prior to designing academic courses, researchers consider it important for practitioners to be aware of all relevant psychological dynamics and instructional assumptions that underpin the nature of learning (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2005). I was now required to search for models that could provide me with valid steps to ‘best design instruction’ to ensure that effective learning complying with the above frameworks actually took place (Smith, 2009; cited in Emotin-Bucjan, 2011, p.68). The survey of literature helped me discover what I thought to be a commendable model for designing my Creative Writing course module on composing fiction. This has been documented next.

#### 4.5.2.1 Phase I - designing the module

A preliminary course structure for the present study (Table 4.3) was conceived during the ‘design phase’ of the module formation process, following the initial review of literature. This structure of the module was based on Johnson’s (1998) model of Writing Skills Development (Emotin-Bucjan, 2011), and the modular course format identified by Atkinson T S (2003) for their research on developing Creative Writing skills of undergraduate learners.

**TABLE 4.3**  
**Preliminary instructional module structure of Creative Writing I**

<i>Module Stages</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Design Overview</i>	The module structure was designed to facilitate creative learning by containing the following: 1) Introduction / Brief description; 2) Aims or Objectives; 3) Content; 4) Study Material - Set Text / Relevant Reading; and 5) Learning Outcomes. No ‘Unit Description’ was included.
<i>Development Phase</i>	Preliminary hand-outs were developed that included information on suggested readings about the topic. The Reading material comprised of: 1) Quick guide sheets, book chapters and web-based articles; 2) Additional fiction & non-fiction e-text readings; and 3) Any other documents relevant to the topic.
<i>Field Try-out Procedure</i>	The module was to be implemented in the 30 day Creative Writing workshop, but without using a step-by-step description of the module or detailed directions to take the learner through the writing process. Students were to be informed about the project verbally, and about the requirements of the module in writing.
<i>Evaluation or Assessment</i>	Evaluation using a grading format in the form of a checklist or rubric, along with assessment comments. This did not include a finalized post-module feedback questionnaire, asking participants to reflect on what they had learnt.

While the aforementioned module design had worked quite well for developing composition and creative writing skills of undergraduate learners (Atkinson T S, 2003; Emotin-Bucjan, 2011), an advance review of literature conducted for the present project led me to identify several contextual restraints of Pakistani learners nevertheless. Research findings exhibited by Behlol (2010), Chandio, et al. (2013), Karim & Shaikh (2012), Haider (2012a, 2012b), Khan (2011),

Mansoor (2009), Mansoor (2010, 2011, 2012), Memon & Badger (2007), Nadeem (2007), Shah (2011) and Siddiqui S (2007), brought native students' inability to comprehend complex language patterns, and their varied learning capabilities, into focus. A more elaborated, detailed and clearer version of the module was sought to help provide students with better guidance from both the purpose of the training and learning outcomes.

The ICARE model was consequently adapted, given its 'flexible system of development,' which 'was needed to account for the many types of instruction' that could be offered within a creative, innovative or practice-oriented learning context (Byrum, 2013, p.4). The ICARE method of designing instructional material had also been discovered to be particularly helpful for those students who were novice learners 'working on their first project' (ibid). At the same time, since the models utilized by Ali (2005), Behlol (2010) and Rashidi (2011), that were similar to the module matrix theory propounded by Henne and Kelly (2009), produced effective results in the Pakistani Higher Education context, and T. S. Atkinson's (2003) and Johnson's (1998) models were specifically relevant for developing writing skills of students, I sought to incorporate additional elements in the sample Creative Writing module's design.

Table 4.4 presents the revised design elements using the modified version of Hoffman & Ritchie's (1998) ICARE Model, along with T. S. Atkinson's (2003) model for developing creative writing skills, Johnson's (1998) model for developing writing skills, Henne and Kelly's Module Matrix (2009), and UNESCO Regional office for education in Asia and Oceania model (1987); cited in Behlol (2010) and Rashidi (2011). The model comprises of stages that can be used successively, iteratively or different overlapping stages can be employed as the context requires (Mojab & Huyck, 2001).

**TABLE 4.4**  
**Revised module structure using the ICARE Model**

<i>ICARE Model</i>	<i>ICARE Suggested Items</i>	<i>Module's Restructured / Borrowed Features</i>
<b><i>I – Introduction</i></b>	<p>Introduction/Overview/Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background discussing how this module fits within the course</li> <li>• Brief description on what the module offers for the learner</li> </ul> <p>Aims &amp; Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant opportunity for participants for creative thinking and problem solving</li> <li>• Relevant opportunity for participants for writing creatively</li> </ul> <p>Learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide basis for selecting or designing useful learning activities</li> <li>• Assessing accomplishment</li> <li>• Focus on learners' creative and critical output</li> </ul> <p>Essential reading / other orientation materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Reading Extracts (a) Creative; (b) Critical</li> </ul>	<p>Learning and teaching strategy *HK (See Appendix B)</p> <p>Unit breakup *BR (See Appendix B)</p> <p>Detailed workshop overview, schedule and activity itinerary *A (See Appendices C-E)</p> <p>Pre-portfolio and post-project portfolio format hand-outs *A (See Appendices F-G)</p> <p>Portfolio assessment form *A (See Appendix H)</p> <p>Module evaluation questionnaire *A &amp; *B (See Appendix I)</p> <p>Pre-module assessment via creative portfolio was incorporated to select participants for the study and view their level of expertise prior to initiating the module and related activities *A *B *BR *HK</p>
<b><i>C – Connect</i></b>	<p>Connect prior knowledge of literature/fiction elements with new practice-based knowledge</p> <p>Contextualize activities / exercises with real-world examples (fiction samples based within learners' native context)</p>	<p>A step-by-step schedule of the workshop comprised of detailed directions to guide learners through the writing skills development process *BR *HK *A</p> <p>The workshop hand-out was provided as part of the module package *A (See Appendices C-D)</p>

<p><b><i>A – Apply</i></b></p>	<p>Practice further by using the new information/ideas/skills acquired</p> <p>Workshop context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write</li> <li>• Create</li> <li>• Discuss</li> <li>• Formatively assess</li> </ul>	<p>Hand-out generation of the activity list / writing assignments / learning tasks *HK *BR *A</p> <p>This stage was implicit within the module itemiser, but utilized explicitly via the workshop method *A (See Appendix E)</p>
<p><b><i>R – Reflect</i></b></p>	<p>Articulate new understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentally re-process</li> <li>• Organize thinking</li> <li>• Build schema</li> </ul> <p>Reflective activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-reading samples presenting questions to think about</li> <li>• Post activity discussion</li> <li>• Fiction samples’ analysis</li> </ul> <p>Reflection items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarize experience</li> <li>• Analyse</li> <li>• Discuss possible uses and/or problems, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>This stage was implicit within the module itemiser, but utilized explicitly via the workshop method *A</p> <p>The workshop hand-out containing areas deemed suitable for discussion or reflection was provided as part of the module package *A (See Appendix D)</p>
<p><b><i>E – Extend</i></b></p>	<p>Enrichment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources for those who want more</li> </ul> <p>Remediation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recourse for those who are struggling</li> </ul> <p>Student evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did they achieve the outcomes?</li> </ul> <p>Program evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the module work?</li> </ul> <p>BY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing Extra Resources for extended learning</li> <li>• Arranging Troubleshooting or help resources</li> <li>• Summatively assessing the post-module creative piece and contextual study drafted by the participants, designed for their current or proposed study setting.</li> </ul>	<p>Following were additionally utilized for the stated purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-project portfolio format hand-out *A (See Appendices G)</li> <li>• Portfolio assessment form *A (See Appendix H)</li> <li>• Module evaluation questionnaire *A &amp; *B (See Appendix I)</li> </ul>

The ICARE Model was utilized to ground the formation of my course module titled '*Creative Writing I*,' which comprised of approximately 29 sessions, meant to be utilized in 72-75 hours. The components of the module are *Background, Brief description, Aims and objectives, Creative practice outcomes, Practical criticism outcomes, Learning and teaching strategy, and Content* (further subdivided into *Units, Standard rationale or concepts, Objectives, Assessment protocol, Suggested critical reading samples, and Suggested creative reading extracts*). For the sake of conceptual clarity and reliability of the project, the above-mentioned strands and sub-strands were adapted from similar creative writing courses designed by Atkinson T S (2003), Azerbaijan University of Languages and UNESCO (2010), and Khan (2002). The choice of components was therefore rooted in literature review protocol informed by creative writing pedagogy, and opinions of my supervisory team were obtained for the sake of further clarity to design the contents of the module leading to its execution at the research site.

To develop the project content and its reading material, I attempted reviewing:

- a) Various books and reading material on the constituting elements of the fiction form, which had already served as instruments for developing and enhancing creative writing skills, techniques and concepts in higher education learners around the world.
- b) Convergent and similar approaches to creating fiction, incorporating a mechanism tested by several creative writer-teachers / practitioners across an array of workshops and classes, mostly producing favorable results.

After a careful study and evaluation of the different electronic and print based textual material, the module comprising of three units was carefully developed. (See *Appendix B* for a full Module description and for the breakup of Module into Units; and *Appendix E* for correlating activities).

#### 4.5.2.2 *Phase II – course content: the validation*

According to an account presented by Candy (2006, p.3) and the *Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences* (2014), practice-led as well as practice-based research frequently tend to include ‘characteristics of action research’ in their processes. Whether the researchers attempt this to investigate their individual artistic practice, or to explore their participants’ work, their intention is always to improve upon their strategy utilized (Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences, 2014). Within this format, analysis of the research problem is followed by the formulation of an “improvement plan,” its implementation, and the subsequent generation of the research outcome (ibid). Other than understanding “what is,” or “what causes what,” practice-oriented researchers are also ‘interested in knowing about action’ and ‘how to better achieve some end’ (Candy, 2006, p.3). Despite this knowledge being ‘tacit’ in nature, reliability of such action-based perception must still be taken into account (2006, p.6). To do this, scientific measures can prove to be of some help (Hanze Research University of Applied Sciences, 2014).

With this information serving as background, I set out to explore how “an improvement plan” could be achieved, without betraying the practice-oriented nature of my research. There were some very appealing results I was able to uncover during the process, most of which dealt with establishment of ‘objectivity, validity, and reliability’ as measures of artistic research. This has been discussed in *Section 4.5.3.1* of this thesis.

My action-improvement plan for this study was subsequently launched to observe how a ‘valid’ approach fostering an original writing practice, effective instruction, and learning could be utilized for my participants. Upon discovering that the “improvement-plan” would have to be grounded in achieving reliability and validity of my module and teaching strategy, I set about to survey additional information on the same. This is when I found out that the measurement of

reliability in research was based upon the degree of ‘credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness’ of the research catalyst (Bashir et al., 2008, p.38). But since validity equates to reliability, therefore ‘a demonstration of the validity was sufficient to establish the reliability’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.316).

The majority of design processes that I had researched thus far suggested finalized instruction material to be verified through three phases, as deemed plausible by Ali (2005), Anagnostopoulo (2002), Atkinson T S (2003), Behlol (2010), Birol et al. (2006), Byrum (2013), Davis (2013), Dick et al. (2005), Emotin-Bucjan (2011) and Ruzzaman (2012) in their similar research. This was decided upon as follows:

*a) Step one: content analysis*

Validation of the module was initially checked by ‘determining it’s effectiveness’ in terms of it’s course content, during the module design stage and after the module development stage, prior to it being administered at the project site. This referred to the twin stages of formative and summative evaluation of the module respectively (Dick & Carey, 1996).

Seels & Glasgow (1990) had suggested that the formative review of the module could be executed by a single person or a team of experts. Additionally, the designers could be specialists in correlation to the content contained within the module, it’s instructional design, experienced educationalists, or even disparate teachers (Smith & Ragan, 1999). However, as Smith and Ragan contended, a much better option would always be to rely on educationalists who had expertise in the specific content or subject matter of the course module, so that they could review it in light of the most recent research and educational developments in the particular subject area. It was the later that Behlol (2010) adopted with reference to the summative evaluation of his sample course module.

The summative review of the module, usually occurring ‘once the design phase was completed’ and the modular ‘material had been produced’ (Ali, 2005, p. 82),

was to be an on-going process (Smith & Ragan, 1999). The latter believed this to be specially the case if the course module was meant to be utilized for a prolonged period of time, which might have suggested several changes taking place in the particular learning environment for which it was being designed. Any development that took place pertaining to the skills of learners, or with respect to resources, equipment, or social context of the learning environment therefore necessitated a constant amendment of the course material during the entire time (Smith & Ragan, 1999).

My validation of the instruction plan, with reference to the two stated stages of review process, was consequently established through a grant of approval of all course items by two established Creative Writing practitioners, or “experts”, supervising this study (Behlol, 2010; Mopera, 2011). The choice of components was rooted in literature review protocol informed by Creative Writing pedagogy. For the sake of conceptual clarity and reliability of the project, I decided to adapt the contents of my module from similar writing courses designed by Atkinson T S (2003), Azerbaijan University of Languages (2010), and Khan (2002). The learning tasks of the module were taken from, and included activities developed and implemented by, numerous creative practitioners highlighted in Bell & Magrs (2001), Burroway (2003), Corbett (2007), Khan (2002), Mansoor (2011; 2012), Monteith & Miles (1992), and Steele, et al. (2003), to name a few.

An initial set of opinions of the supervisors was obtained for the sake of further clarity to design the contents of the module leading to its execution at the research site. Upon completion of the module, in accord with the supervisors’ opinions and suggestions, a few items of the module were altered, modified, replaced or deleted altogether, as they were considered irrelevant to my research agenda. The material in all units was structured to be flexible. Since the module was intended to be utilized over an extended timeframe of three months, in correspondence with the aforementioned team of experts’ views, I often decided to omit one or more activities during the implementation of the module; or if the material was too difficult or easy, depending on the context (Birol, et al., 2006). See also Ali

(2005); Behlol (2010); Smith & Ragan (1999). Given that some learning outcomes of the course were also not in accordance with the aims or objectives of the subject area, I decided to alter my assessment methodology like Rumpus (2009), and evaluated my students' work in an alternate way. This has been described in *Section 4.5.3.3* in detail. With this ended the first stage of validating my "improvement-plan."

***b) Step two: efficacy analysis***

Upon the execution of this course module against the workshop setting, the overall impact of the learning material was also required to be checked by 'determining its effectiveness' in terms of its execution in the learning environment. This was to be done through the design and analysis of students' feedback response to a module evaluation questionnaire (Mopera, 2011). I was required to formulate the survey to ensure whether my constructed material and teaching strategies achieved success by 'promoting independent learning habits in the learners, providing them opportunity to proceed at their own pace, ensured active participation, useful for slow as well as for bright students, enabled the students to comprehend difficult concepts, and kept them on the track' (Behlol, 2010). The feedback questionnaire was, however, supposed to be content validated from the team of writing experts, i.e. my Head of Study and co-supervisor (Emotin-Bucjan, 2011). It was also to be administered towards the end of the writing workshop, after reading material had been implemented (Atkinson T S, 2003; Mopera, 2011).

Drawing on the survey-documentation technique employed by Baughin, Brod and Page (2000; cited in Smith, 2008), to 'address the problem of measuring tutorial participation' (p.37), and on a similar survey implemented by Atkinson T S (2003) to validate her creative writing module and workshopping format, I designed and submitted a questionnaire draft to my research supervisors for their approval. The entire Creative Writing training analysis survey (*Appendix D*) comprised of questions, wherein participants were asked to mention anything they

found interesting in the course; any aspect they thought needed improving; their perspectives about workshopping processes, teaching strategies, assessment protocol, etc. utilized. All items were rendered open-ended, as I wanted to assess the effectiveness of my Creative Writing pedagogical practice by using a methodology that could generate students' individual yet rich perception of their participation as well as mine.

The items of the survey were later reviewed, following which I eliminated irrelevant questions and modified terminology for the sake of clarity for respondents. Despite utilizing open-ended questions, the feedback received from the participants was neither analyzed qualitatively, nor quantitatively, but rather "Heuristically," which I have detailed in *Section 4.5.3.2*.

***c) Step three: overall performance analysis***

The validation of the creative writing training was thirdly to be carried out by 'determining its overall effectiveness' or by 'studying its impact on the performance of participants of the research' (Ali, 2005, Behlol, 2010; Mopera, 2011). For this, I relied on the attainment of formative assessment results of the students' in-project writing samples, and summative evaluation of post-project creative writing portfolios, accompanied by a critical essay detailing the genesis of their creative artifact. This is a standardized method of evaluation of the final creative output of students, and to ascertain if the various given learning outcomes have been achieved. See for instance Atkinson T S (2003), Bell & Magrs (2001), Bishop (1990), Columbia University (2011), Gureghian (2010) and Monteith & Miles (1992).

On a formative level, assessment was on-going and was established in a number of ways: short narratives; my critical analysis of their written work; peer assessment of seminar work; critical discussion using a variety of types of set questions; etc. (Leask, 1994, p. 4). Many of the aforementioned methods may have been used for summative assessment purposes as well (Donnelly &

Fitzmaurice, 2005), but I chose to work instead using the classic pre-module and post-module assessment technique, and compared the two towards the end of the project to determine the module’s impact on student learning (Ali, 2005; Behlol, 2010). This was worked upon through a “post-assessment form”, which I designed on the guidelines provided by Cole et al. (1999) and Dobson (2008), specifically to evaluate creative pieces. While the summative assessment of participants’ final creative writing pieces was executed through my comments, the artefacts as ‘outcomes’ for this research have been analyzed “performatively.”

#### **4.5.2.3 Phase III – planning the writing workshop**

While the ICARE model was utilized to plan the modular instruction framework by combining design elements from T S Atkinson’s (2003) model for developing creative writing skills, Johnson’s (1998) model for developing writing skills, Henne and Kelly’s Module Matrix (2009), and the UNESCO Regional office for education in Asia and Oceania model (1987); cited in Behlol (2010) and Rashidi (2011), Ali’s (2005) IPO model (discussed in *Section 3.3.1.1, p.110* of this thesis) was employed in the form of the writing workshop.

The IPO process was utilized to create an interactive learning experience within the workshop environment. While focusing on a particular topic, the following elements of the cycle can be outlined:

INPUT (DAY 1)	Interactive discussion of (e.g.) the ‘plot’ element of fiction
PROCESSING	Identifying major characteristics of the given element, with the help of theoretical extracts and writing samples Initial phase of activity performance (in-class session) Critical discussion on performed activity (optional, restricted to some participants, in-class session)
OUTPUT	Final creative artefact resulting from the given activity (this component does not necessarily have to be an in-class performance)

CONTACT TIME	Two hours, thirty minutes
INPUT (DAY 2)	Reading out the resulting product of ‘plot’ activity by participants
PROCESSING	Critical discussion on the resulting product of ‘plot’ activity by participants
OUTPUT	Final creative artefact after implementing changes proposed in the workshop (this component does not necessarily have to be an in-class performance).
CONTACT TIME	Two hours, thirty minutes

In the initial phase, learners were to be provided with key aspects of the guiding information on (e.g.) the plot element. During the information-processing phase, students were to be motivated to write their own personal answers or discuss ideas, research more on the topic, identify more characteristics, perform a writing activity, or revise to see if they needed to delete, add or modify something. They were then to determine what aspects facilitated or interfered with the reading/writing/presenting process, and the last phase often included individual reflection or whole team-discussion on the same.

Each of the three stages of the Input-Processing-Output method also corresponded to the tri-instructional models discussed in *Section 3.4.3* of this thesis – Direct instruction, Constructivist instruction, and Learning-generation model of instruction respectively. Further details pertaining to the same can be viewed in *Appendix C - Workshop Overview* and *Appendix D - Workshop Schedule*.

#### **4.5.2.4 Phase IV – management of ethical issues**

This research sought to develop creative writing skills of level 2 undergraduate students undertaking literature courses at the Institute of English Language and Literature, in University of Sindh (Jamshoro) in Pakistan. The situation therefore entailed involvement of human participants, and consequently required a

measured consideration of various significant ethical issues in the research process.

To address the primary ethical issue concerning the permission to work at the IELL in the USJP, I was allowed to initiate this project in September 2013 by the head of this department. With the help of the timetable in-charge at IELL, I was able to get a schedule arranged to manage the ‘contact hours’ for my prospective research participants. All level 2 students were allowed to opt for the said study, provided they could cope with the addition of an extra two-class hour course, and if the over-all impact on their routine course management could be maintained. Their participation was completely non-mandatory.

A document aiming to ensure ‘informed consent’ of the participants, especially with reference to establishing ‘confidentiality, voluntary participation, and their safeguard,’ had already been drafted and approved by *University of Bedfordshire Research Degree Committee*, following the approval of RS-1. The form had been composed in accordance with SRA (2003), SERA (2005), and BERA (2011) policies on ‘Research Ethics’ and was utilized at the project site prior to the initiation of the research study. The participants were informed of all important details of the study, including the project title, its aims and objectives, expected duration of the program, and the background or rationale for conducting the study in the same form. Upon securing their written consent, the researcher next wrote a letter requesting the head of department to allow her access to the Seminar Room at IELL to conduct the study during the allotted time.

#### **4.5.2.5**            *Phase V – selection of the study participants*

The key participants for the research were level 2 undergraduate students undertaking literature courses in the Institute of English Language and Literature, University of Sindh in Jamshoro, Pakistan. The target population was chosen in accordance with Burroway’s assumption, which claims arts colleges, universities or institutes usually offer Creative Writing courses at the ‘beginner level’ if they

do not have ‘the funds or faculty for a full-scale writing program’ (Burroway, 2003, p.xv). ‘Practice-based learning at masters level,’ further elaborates Evans (2009), ‘requires a significant taught input by competent practitioners’ (p.75). Conventional academics who lack a practitioner background, i.e. who do not possess a valid Creative Writing research degree or prior experience in the field, despite enjoying an ‘academic career that is based on teaching and research,’ may not be able to develop their students’ practice-oriented writing skills (ibid). Hence students from graduate or post-graduate levels were not selected.

Bell (2001b) claims that for practicing creative writing more seriously, it is usually required that students have already established themselves as practicing writers, or who have already produced some body of work. This rendered the selection of level I unsuitable, since they were beginning to comprehend their studies.

With respect to the population size for this study, I chose to limit my number of cohorts to a smaller group – not more than ten or fifteen students – to accommodate the workshop sessions. My decision was made in light of recent research, which showed that an extensive number of students might become an impediment to supporting collaborative and reflective learning, to achieving the overall learning outcomes and course objectives, not to mention restrictive in receiving better reflective and critical attention. See, in this regard, AWP (2003); Bell & Magrs (2001); Mac (2011); Michaelson et al. (2002); Miles (1992); Munden (2013); NAWA Higher Education Committee (2008); and Romano & Nunamaker (2001). A total of 13 students participated voluntarily.

In their discussion on the Creative Writing workshop, Cook (2001, pp.299-300) and Atkinson T S (2003, p.2) suggest the importance of a pre-project assessment of some sort administered on the students prior to the beginning, or even planning of a workshop, to get a rough idea of what level of expertise the students are at, and so the particular activities should be formulated accordingly. This is what

aligns with what module developers call “pre-test” process (Ali, 2005; Behlol, 2010). The same also proved helpful in selecting the population for this study.

Participant sampling for this research was justified according to a selection criterion of the practitioner Creative Arts disciplines, which often include subjects on the basis of sample portfolios of their creative work (Atkinson T S, 2003; Bell, 2001b; Cook, 2001; Donnelly, 2010; Donnelly, 2012). Purposive “judgement” sampling was subsequently utilized, which refers to ‘a method in which a researcher chooses a particular group of individuals or events to be studied based on the specific purpose of the study,’ using his judgement (McNeill and Chapman, 2005; Christopher and Kristen, 2003; cited in Proyrungroj, 2011). In this technique, the researcher selects participants ‘whose qualifications and experiences yield a great deal of valuable insight and information about the research questions’ (Proyrungroj, 2011). Naturally, only those students from the selected population were included in the sample whose creative writing portfolios collected prior to the initiation of the project depicted an “epistemological disposition” toward creating a piece of fiction, and a “critical responsive understanding” of the creative processes involved in this disposition (Harper, 2008). The study focused on those students who volunteered for the project simply because they felt enlivened by creative writing, and wished to participate in the study to acquire creative writing skills. This was established on the basis of a creative writing portfolio of 500 – 1,500 words, accompanied by a critical essay of 500 – 1,000 words incorporating the rationale for their choice of participation in the study. Appendix “F” was created comprising of information about the pre-workshop portfolio details.

#### **4.5.2.6 Phase VI – modular workshop exploration**

*Creative Writing I* was launched a month after the participants began their academic semester in August 2013, and was completed in November 2013. The module spanned a period of ten weeks and included only 3 units to be administered in workshops for the research project, as listed below. This was due

to limited time schedule and the onslaught of regular academic courses scheduled to take place within the institute.

- Getting Started - using writing activities to simply create and perform
- Craft and Technique - emphasizing the elements of fiction
- The Novel and the Short Story - with emphasis on Portfolio Mapping and Contextual Analysis

The writing assignments in each unit, similar to the overall methodology for this research, were grounded in the Practice-based, Research-led, and Practice-led frameworks. All instruction focusing on elements for composing fiction was “based” on my own practice as a writer and a teacher. The material throughout was structured to be flexible. Often, and only after receiving complaints from the participants, I ended omitting one or more activities since I found the nature of that exercise incompatible to my learners’ mind-sets. My head of studies also suggested amendments to certain items if they did not seem to be fitting the overall objectives of the course; or if the material was too difficult or easy. Furthermore, there was room for choice. The selection of activities in the module was made following my “research” on successful application of such exercises by numerous creative practitioners highlighted in Bell & Magrs (2001), Burroway (2003), Corbett (2007), Khan (2002), Mansoor (2011;2012) and Monteith & Miles (1992). Third, the goal of this study was to explore participants’ actual writing acts and actions that would ultimately contribute to the development of various elements pertaining to the creative writing process. And even though this study was not concerned with approaches that might be taken more widely across the idea of a “final” creative writing product, or the publishing market realities of the fiction form, yet the practice still “led” to creative output by students. Artistic forms were still produced, that did consequently generate new research insights, impacting the arena of Creative Writing pedagogy in Pakistan.

The module was originally planned in accordance with the calculated assumption by Burroway (2003) and the official SU Catalogued time schedule, which

suggested that the university semester was about three months long, and that three to four weeks would be lost to holidays, mid-term exams, etc., so that teaching material for approximately eight to ten weeks would be required. The participants were supposed to set up for the workshop three days a week, the first three days being reserved for majority of their core credit courses. This way, students were to have their normal balance of regular courses throughout the week, with the single extension of 1-2 hours during the last three days of the week. For the first two weeks, the course was set up to cover the area of ‘gathering’ or ‘getting started’ technique. Then it was to gradually progress towards the ‘shaping the craft and technique’ that would include more informed activities dealing with characterization, point of view, setting, dialogues, etc. The project would then encompass vital information on how to create a ‘portfolio’ and conclude with interactive learning sessions on “contextual analysis.” Inevitably, however, faced with numerous social issues, such as feuds between native political factions and affiliated student boycotts, etc., I was forced to skip certain days and often resumed the course on the remaining days of the week. This also led to a timetable rift in the over-all module schedule, which was adjusted via a division of the course into morning and afternoon shifts.

Notwithstanding the changes introduced to the module during this implementation stage, the creative writing skills of second year students of the Institute of English Language and Literature, University of Sindh, Jamshoro were determined by their self-composed activity oriented creative writing samples, and their critical narratives. Formative assessment of the project was based upon daily in-class exercises, and critical peer feedback. Summative assessment focused on an independent creative writing project along with its contextual study.

As for my instruction plan to implement the module, my workshop pedagogy comprised of various approaches to developing creative writing skills, and was informed by successful practices employed during several creative writing workshops, by renowned indigenous and international authors. See, for instance, Atkinson T S (2003), Bell & Magrs (2001), Burroway (2003), Cole et al. (1999),

Dawson (2005), Donnelly (2010), Green (2008), Gureghian (2010), Harper (2010b), James (2009), Khan (2002), Khan (2012), and Mansoor (2011), to name a few. The multiplicity of the practices and approaches, not to mention the diverse resources, was also in accord with current investigations conducted in the field of creative arts. Within this area, it was difficult to label any ‘one theory rather than the other of the theoretic component’ that an artist might take up as the correct one (Glass, 1958). Even with the best of structures in place, as suggested by Lauridsen (2008), I may not necessarily have been able to see an increase in the degree of student learning without motivation, which can sometimes only follow from a utilization of multiple approaches in the classroom. My method to achieve this was ‘to bring together artefacts from successful practice and disseminate them in a manner to propagate learning motivation’ (2008, p.27), thereby enabling students to focus on their creative writing skills in a befitting manner. Variation in approaches is also an important source of learning since ‘writers learn to write by trying out things they see others trying out’ (Corbett, 2007 ).

#### **4.5.3 *Post-project reflection***

Documentation of the post-workshop process brought several issues into focus. Most of such problems that I encountered arose in relation to the assessment of the module and analysis of my research outcomes. This can be observed next.

##### **4.5.3.1 *The validity and reliability debate***

In the traditional quantitative and qualitative divides of research, “objectivity,” “validity,” and “reliability” are considered as key measures that support a thorough investigation of the research problem, establishment of its context, conduct of its method, and dissemination of resulting outcomes (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.11). Practice-oriented researches tend to clash with both approaches. Not only do they ‘encourage the production of forms of knowledge that may not be available using traditional and scientific methods,’ but also utilize the voice and individual reflections of the practitioner-researcher as the “research

subject,” and their personal creative work as “the object of research” (Colbert, 2009, p.2). But as Colbert explores throughout her investigation, issues of objectivity, validity and reliability do nevertheless appear common to all methodologies. Citing Miles & Huberman (1994, p.278-279), Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes (pp.11-12) explain the terms as follows:

- a. Objectivity implies the researcher be openly vocal about “any assumptions and personal bias” underlying their study, as a means to facilitate the “replicability” of their investigation procedure and insight by other researchers.
- b. Reliability epitomizes whether or not a specific research process is stable or consistent in providing reasonably uniform results, despite being conducted by other researchers via varying means.
- c. Validity points to the credibility of a research process and outcomes of that study. This can be established either by observing “the internal coherence of any research” (the selection protocol of specific methods to solve the research problem, correlating the conceptual framework with the data collected, etc.); or by recording its “external coherence” (methods and results can be deemed “generalizable and transferable” in a broader research context.

This description subsequently raises the question if a creative arts practice-oriented research can be measured the same way? And if yes, then by what criteria?

Franz (2000) and Haslem (2011) view both practice-based and practice-led as subjective, interpretative and situation-specific research methods. Given that each deals with individual human experiences, wherein researchers either investigate their own practice or reflect on other individuals’ situation phenomenologically, an analysis, synthesis and communication of all research data is provided by their subjective understandings or insights (Haslem, 2011). This integration of experiential, personal, or tacit knowledge within research is usually related to areas emphasising professional training or development of practice-based skills,

and evades the clear-cut or verbally explicit articulation of “propositional knowledge” prioritized by conventional research (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.11). ‘Irrationality and sublime rapture’ are seen as ‘primary driving forces in artistic work’ (Andersson, 2009, p.1). Consequently, unlike traditional scientific research method(s), the research underpinning such work can neither be specified, nor aim ‘to produce objective, independently verifiable research results’ (Archer 1995, p. 12; cited in Haslem, 2011). Thus, because it eludes verification, this format of research is ‘widely regarded as distinct from academic research’ (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.11).

Despite being the least concerned about ‘notions of credibility, accountability and knowledge transfer,’ Kroll (2008, p.8) claims art researchers still need to look into issues dealing with ‘verification, authentication, and validation’ while processing their work. While these questions tend to be tangled, particularly in Creative Writing projects, they need to be explored to establish the quality of, and testify to, the research outcomes generated (ibid). This is because tacit knowledge-based strategies, despite being unconventional, are employed even within traditional inquiries to some extent (Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes, 2007, p.11). Without their inclusion as a means ‘to execute and understand certain research tasks (skill associated with expertise) as well as to make discriminatory judgments (skill associated with connoisseurship),’ the research impact cannot possibly be understood, communicated, or even achieved (ibid). This suggests that tacit knowledge can indeed be justified, verified and communicated successfully; though to establish *objectivity*, *validity*, and *reliability* of practice-oriented research, “different” criteria fitting the nature of practice may nevertheless be required (2007, p.12).

To prove the same, Niedderer & Roworth-Stokes (2007, p.15) have designed a matrix, which aligns the nature of “artistic practice” to its incorporation of “tacit knowledge” frames. Table 4.5 presents my research in light of the matrix as follows:

<b>Table 4.5: Measuring Practice in this Research with regard to...</b>	<b>objectivity (replicability)</b>	<b>reliability (quality)</b>	<b>validity (credibility, generalizability and transferability)</b>
<i>Research Problem/Question</i>  (Practice posing a question or problem for investigation)	This study embodies explicit research questions; though instead of achieving objectivity via direct responses, my underlying assumption has been to attempt the contrary (as has been justified in Section 5.2.3 of this thesis).	N/A	All questions were posed to address the practice-oriented research problem of this investigation.
<i>Research Context</i>  (Practice in context or as a context)	To ensure that my study can be placed alongside similar research inquiries existing in the arena of ‘Creative Writing Studies,’ all information concerned with my practice as a creative writer-teacher-learner-researcher has been documented. The insight supported by my documentation may be able to situate another study dealing with creative practice on similar grounds.	I have presented the resulting knowledge, produced by creative artefacts generated during this study, in a way that the broader audience (practitioners, scholars, students, colleagues in other areas, institutional and governmental authorities, and mere readers who wish to experience a piece aesthetically) can visualize and benefit from it in their respective contexts.	To do this, something else has accompanied the creative work (outcome) generated by myself and my research sample – a background survey exploring the need to investigate Creative Writing as a discipline in the Pakistani higher education context; and my critical reflection on participants’ artistic work, interpenetrating it, so as to explore its relation to existing inquiries in the field.
<i>Research Method</i>  (Practice as method and way of investigation to gain new knowledge and understanding)	I have been explicit about my ontological and epistemological reasons for selecting “practice-oriented” forms of research as the basic paradigms; and ‘performative research’ as the key method for generating and analysing research outcomes, for this study, from the start.	My selection of “practice-based,” “practice-led,” and “research-led” methodology was informed by a review of literature; their successful utilization has been reported by several practitioners working with Creative Writing skill development in the university and non-academic contexts.	My view of modular teaching and workshop instruction as reliable teaching methods to develop participants’ writing skills was based upon “learning theories” contained in <i>developmental, cognitive</i> and <i>instructional</i> taxonomies identified by Moseley et al. (2005a, 2005b) & Lenning et al. (2013) to solve similar problems.
<i>Research Outcome</i>  (Practice as providing demonstrative evidence to underpin any claims & findings)	I have attempted to convey my research findings via reflections on my own practice as a writer and a teacher; and my “transparent” interpretation of participants’ work.	My evaluation of participants’ creative artefacts is based upon survey of literature, a logically articulated and justified rationale, and results from the “consistent” documentation of the entire research process.	I have attempted to communicate research insights that align with similar outputs in an existing information bank dealing with Creative Writing as practice, research and pedagogy.

Thus the traditional way of measuring inquiries ‘is not what we are likely to do in creative research’; yet there are aspects of the approach that can be effectively utilized to aid in contextualizing resulting insights (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.8). As an inherent part of this process, that has been already outlined in table 4.5, art-researchers need to apply “reflexivity” to their investigation (Kroll, 2008, pp.11-12). Practice-oriented research methodologies can be verified by stating a “clearly established problem”; a visibly “articulated method”; evidently locating “the study within its field of inquiry”; an honest “reporting of the findings”; and a presentation of the findings in a way that make them available for “peer review” (Haseman, 2007, pp.5-9; cited in Colbert, 2009, p.3). However, the entire process can only be possible if researchers ‘negotiate the singularity of creative practice and objectify the personal by way of the reflective processes’ (ibid). They need ‘to turn the analytical gaze on the self’; to investigate and interpret the researcher implicit within their project process and its outcomes; to question their choices and approaches and precisely discuss ‘the limitations on the knowledge they produce’ (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.8). This is something that can not only lead to attaining objectivity, reliability and validity of research insights, but can also strengthen them (Green, 2007, p.2).

The rationale that underpins art-related research recording is that ‘research should not only be done, it should be seen to be done: and should also be shown to be done’ (Green, 2007, p.2). The usual qualitative/quantitative “mixed-method” measurement approach that surprisingly correlates to this form of documentation is frequently called “triangulation” (Coyne, 2006, p.1). This refers to the validation or confirmation of the strength of research findings through an adoption of multiple data collection or analysis methods to gather evidence pertaining to a single issue (ibid). This process of triangulation is similar to the manner whereby practice-led research outcomes are generated, where the researcher themselves undertakes a creative activity, documents its process, and subjects it to personal or interpersonal critique (Coyne, 2006, p.2). Furthermore, it has been this very process that I have attempted in my study; even with respect to analysing questionnaires utilized to document the efficacy of my modular-workshopping.

#### **4.5.3.2      *Exploring student feedback to appraise the Creative Writing training***

This study focusing on ‘creative writing skill development’ was conducted with 13 participants. Towards the end of project, students completed a questionnaire (*Appendix I*) to present their views regarding the training process. The three key features of their responses dealt with modular material; lectures and workshop seminars; and learning outcomes. Through a ‘heuristic’ analysis of my students’ feedback, which I presented on basis of commonalities in responses, I was able to explore the efficacy of my workshop.

Heuristics is a data generation practice that thrives on the way participants’ experience directs the research. Individuals launch a process of self-discovery and internal search; and by reporting this, researchers discover ‘the nature and meaning of experience and develop methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis’ (Moustakas, 1990, p.9). This method embraces notions of ‘reflexivity, introspection and instinctive practice,’ and supports research insight ‘that is linked, in the thesis, not only to the internal experience and development of the researcher but also that of the participants’ (Batzoglou, 2012, p. 60). As Batzoglou further informs us, the ‘self-reflexivity and introspection of the participants,’ has to be reported through their words and not necessarily our understanding of them (ibid). Eventually, this was how she was able to explore how her ‘actions and behaviours as a facilitator influenced the participants of her actor-training workshops’ (p.60).

My utilization of this method of analysing self-reflected perspectives reported by other individuals has been influenced by several sources (Moustakas 1990; Tedlock 2000; West 1994; cited in Meekums, 2007, p.6). Andersson (2009, p.7), for another instance, tells us that ‘there is no logical reason why artistic research could not be performed while adhering to the principle of transparency and openness as regards methods and values.’ His explanation stems from the fact that an art researcher can justify his “methodological choices” just like other learners

do. Despite the varied nature of such choices, giving priority to one technique ‘among methods different from those of other research,’ describing concretely why and how those choices were made is still rationally achievable (p.7). The one exception would be that, since practice-oriented “action” research feeds on ‘its need for responsiveness and change,’ therefore divergent concepts of validity would be required to understand the world, and such concepts would be conditioned by the research context and its intended outcomes (Dick & Swepson, 1994). Especially in arts-based research context, the gathered account would have to be deciphered by ‘hermeneutic or psychological methods rather than qualitative-analytical methods such as regression or discourse analysis’ (Andersson, 2009, p.7).

Following the same paradigm, Webb & Brien (2008) suggest that creative research insights become more visible by applying the heuristic approach. The general presentation of that knowledge, without specifications, is something that can be rendered as research; but to make it more transparent, it must be established in a justified context (p.7). That was why I decided to base my ‘heuristic analysis’ on grounds established by Meekums (2007).

Meekums’ research on *Dance Movement Therapy in Britain* complemented my own art-based investigation. She focuses primarily on collecting DMT performers’ responses, as a means to generating outcomes for her practice-based research. Meekums viewed DMT as a recent and complex phenomenon in the UK, when the same had been validatedly established in the USA for a long time, It was due to the novel and intricate nature of this practice that she viewed it important to discover what made British practitioners’ individual approach creative against their own setting (my emphasis being the Pakistani context).

Identical to Meekum’s (2007) rationale in deciding on analysis means for the survey, ‘it seemed vital to compile as comprehensive a picture as possible; gather rich information, rather than close down fruitful areas of inquiry’; avoid any technique that would result in a ‘low response rate ... resulting in some significant

information being left out'; and be 'pro-active in enabling each individual to contribute information their own way' (2007, p.10). The choice of using open-ended questions and analysing them "heuristically," rather than using quantitative means, was also necessary due to the small number of participants in the study, which would have precluded 'the appearance of statistically significant differences' (Yalvac, et al., 2006, p. 72). The resulting findings in this study were to be validated by analysing participant responses for 'links, commonalties, differences and themes' (Meekums, 2007, p.11), which have been summarized below.

1. According to their feedback, while some participants found the module guidelines helpful, convenient, or easy to understand (Irfan; Rabia; Abdul; Yasir; Sarah), others viewed the module and/or workshop content to be somewhat technical (Taimoor; Ahmed; Amir; Rubab; Misbah; Amjad; Yasir; Shazia). However, students did find the course information comparatively more understandable and/or clear as they progressed through their training (Irfan; Ahmed; Amir; Dildar; Amjad; Shazia).
2. Students were also asked about factors which hindered their active participation during module-based workshops. The most common responses focused on "*extensive workload*" (Taimoor; Irfan; Ahmed; Rabia; Amir; Abdul; Misbah; Amjad; Shazia; Sarah), "*shortage of time*" (Irfan; Rabia; Amir; Misbah; Amjad; Shazia; Sarah), "*negative feedback*" (Ahmed; Abdul; Amjad; Yasir), "*lack of confidence / feeling awkward while sharing work*" (Amir; Abdul; Rubab; Misbah; Dildar; Yasir), "*fear of making a mistake*" (Amir; Abdul; Rubab), "*controlling attitude of the instructor*" (Irfan; Ahmed; Amir; Amjad; Yasir), and difficulty while dealing with complexities inherent in "*contextual analysis*" (Taimoor; Ahmed; Dildar; Yasir).
3. Most students regarded their experience and/or participation in critical discussions as being reasonably good (Taimoor, Irfan; Rabia; Rubab; Misbah; Dildar; Amjad; Shazia; Sarah). And despite a few exceptions that resulted

from difficulties while experiencing something new, or utilizing English as a linguistic medium in written communication (Abdul; Rubab; Amjad; Yasir; Shazia), the majority of participants expressed gains over their modular training (Taimoor; Irfan; Ahmed; Rabia; Misbah; Dildar; Sarah). Their responses suggest that their overall abilities to undertake creative work and meet the learning outcomes were enhanced through a studying experience informed by the workshop (Irfan; Ahmed; Rabia; Misbah; Abdul; Dildar), though maybe not extensively (Taimoor; Sarah).

4. Notwithstanding contrary perspectives (Irfan; Ahmed; Abdul; Yasir; Shazia), most students found the workshop environment to be interactive, supportive and creative, which triggered some encouraging remarks (Rabia; Amir; Misbah; Dildar, Amjad; Sarah). Due to / despite assessment and group criticism, some students became more pro-active (Taimoor; Irfan; Rabia; Misbah; Dildar; Amjad; Shazia; Sarah), while others felt inferior and disinterested in creative composition process or activities (Ahmed; Amir; Abdul; Rubab; Yasir).
5. Participants also found the evaluation of their work both thought-provoking and interesting. They welcomed the formative feedback loop occurring throughout the workshop (Taimoor; Irfan; Rabia; Amir; Misbah; Dildar; Shazia; Sarah). Furthermore, they appreciated the idea of using comments to summatively assess their work, which they figured would be more considerate of their privacy (Irfan; Rabia; Amir; Rubab; Misbah; Amjad; Sarah). However, a few were not satisfied with either one form of assessment or both (Ahmed; Abdul; Rubab; Dildar; Amjad; Yasir).
6. Towards the end of the study, some students were able to build a knowledge base that they could use as a basis for understanding specific principles of creative composition, or gained a beginner level understanding of certain elements of fiction (Taimoor; Irfan; Ahmed; Rabia; Misbah; Dildar). Some others felt there was no visible difference in their existing writing skills

(Amir; Abdul; Rubab; Amjad; Yasir; Shazia; Sarah). To bring improvements to their work, they suggested a need to undertake additional reading/writing practice and/or further Creative Writing module/workshop training (Ahmed; Amir; Dildar; Amjad; Yasir; Shazia; Sarah).

From my perspective, all research participants in the study were novice writers, who lacked a considerable *fiction* writing experience. Yet there were significant differences between each second year undergraduate's level of understanding of mechanics or skills pertaining to the craft of writing fiction. However, towards the end of this study, all students were able to beget some interesting pieces of creative fiction, while their critical samples surprisingly turned out to be well framed, logically justified their choice of narrative techniques, and seemed coherent and argumentative.

Problems arose when I began evaluating their work.

#### **4.5.3.3        *Setting up the assessment protocol***

For the successful completion of this training module, my participants were required to submit a 2,000 – 2,500 word portfolio of creative writing, along with a 1,500 – 2,000 word prose commentary detailing their means of drafting the final piece of creative writing. I had already handed them appendices “F” and “G” comprising of information about the pre and post-workshop portfolio details respectively. The students were also informed about the learning outcomes for this study. They were going to be assessed mainly on their degree of:

1. Demonstrating an awareness of the many formal techniques available for composing fiction;
2. Exhibiting a beginner level ability at using the elements of craft (e.g. character, conflict, dialogue, plot, point of view, etc.) to produce original pieces of work.

Before finalizing their assessment plan, however, an uncertainty surfaced in view of my module objective: ‘the main purpose of these exercises is not to write a brilliant, or close to brilliant piece, but to complement critical inquiry with some creative experiment, and to understand the fiction form in terms of craft and technique.’ This implied students were *not* expected to “prove” that the training had affected their writing output; merely that their experiment had endowed them with some understanding of the fiction craft. The assessment of their work in a contrary manner seemed to go against “the teaching for effective learning framework,” as discussed in *Section 4.5.2* (p. 165) specifically on the following grounds:

- Teaching ‘to elicit a positive response from students’;
- Encouraging depth of learning by using assessment methods that support explicit objectives of the course (Biggs, 2007, p.25; emphasised by Atkinson T S, 2003).

This framework was what had led me to choose ICARE as a basic module model to begin with. Naturally, instead of sticking to a structured portfolio assessment form, by which I mean an assessment plan that was aligned to the module learning outcomes, I chose to support the objective(s) of this course, which may not necessarily be in accordance to the learning outcomes, especially in Creative Arts subjects (Dobson, 2008).

Dobson (*ibid*) observes in this regard how students prefer a non-didactic teaching style of a ‘teacher,’ as opposed to the ‘lecturer.’ Instead of fostering a ‘lifeless’ creative training session in an equally lifeless class, with lifeless students, who resemble ‘empty vessels’ being taught by a lifeless teacher, Dobson concludes that learners tend to act more creatively if granted the freedom of the unstructured assessment (p.25). Contrary to the ‘structured teaching approach,’ where students aim to analyse ‘published literature’ in a manner that could satisfy learning outcomes, learners feel ‘an unstructured approach’ used to stimulate writing without hard and fast assessment criteria ‘allows for much more “individual”,

“creative” input’ (ibid). And it is not only the Creative Writing students who feel this way.

In a study to investigate the way Creative Writing is generally taught at undergraduate levels in higher education institutions within Britain, that included colleges or former polytechnics, Dobson (2008) attempted to explore eight lecturers’ outlook of the relationship between creativity development and a proper pedagogy. Despite possessing varied professional experiences and personal context, most of those lecturers exhibited a resistance to the utilization of ‘learning outcomes in the teaching of creative writing’ (p.27)

This does not, however, suggest that ‘learning outcomes’ should not be implied at all. There is some value attached to the same in that ‘the learning outcomes could be useful for the teacher in terms of planning courses’ (Dobson, p.26). At the same time, when it comes to using learning outcomes as ‘a useful point of reference’ to justify or determine ‘an assignment mark,’ many Creative Writing instructors believe the same could demotivate learners, in that ‘strict didacticism could be counterproductive,’ assessment via ‘learning outcomes could lead to an artificial commodification of learning,’ thereby placing the entire creative training process ‘at odds with creative writing where learning is gradual, subliminal, by osmosis’ (ibid). This is primarily because in most cases, students’ learning is guided by some sort of intended training outcomes (Harper, 2006). If the basic aim followed by students, for instance, involves learning about the essential components of any literary form alone, then once they achieve such an outcome, this could lead them to believe they are in a position to write creatively. This is why Dobson (2008, p.27) suggests ‘a highly controlled, outcome-driven teaching could lead students to a fundamentally flawed belief.’ Ultimately, the process may end skewing ‘the essence of the craft,’ that is mostly a ‘matter of adventure, experimentation, risk or chance’ (Munden, 2013, p.26). To foster a supportive creative learning environment, Cole, et al. (1999) imply a “de-emphasis” of such a form of “standardization,” which focuses on a set performance criteria alone, to the extent of ‘reducing students’ desire to take the risks necessary for creativity’

(ibid). On the contrary, non-standardized methods of assessment neither act as a hindrance to creative learning, nor are unfavourable to any type of learning that requires risk-taking (Cole et al., 1999, p.13). By utilizing merely four factors to determine students' creative prowess, learning can be easily converted into an on-going and 'intrinsic rather than extrinsic' motivational process, conferring personal satisfaction purely for creative purposes, which can additionally maintain 'an amiable attitude of the projects created by the students,' and make them respond positively and more comfortably 'in expressing creative ideas' (1999, p.14). Generally, Creative Writing students can be assessed as follows:

1. Whether or not the student selected appropriate material to offer a 'creative solution to the problem';
2. Whether the student's work showed evidence of their understanding of project/module/course objectives which is hinted by 'how well the student executed the solution';
3. Whether their portfolio showed evidence that the student completed assignments, or showed 'how much work the student put into the assignment';
4. How well has the student executed a 'written analysis of their creative processes';  
(Whether the portfolio showed evidence of student's pride in their own work and commitment to writing projects/experiences)  
(Whether their portfolio showed evidence of student's understanding of the process of developing and organizing ideas).

Cited from Cole et al. (1999, p.13), my slightly unconventional assessment strategy was conditioned by these notions. This is apparent in *Appendix H*.

## 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to discuss methodological conventions that were utilized within the present study. The nature of practice-based, practice-led, and research-led practice as methodological research paradigms was explored in some depth. Details pertaining to their utilization, along with my choice of performative research as the principle investigative strategy, were discussed with reference to their being influenced by ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions propounded by “Interpretivism” as a philosophical research paradigm. Thus far, this philosophy has mostly been found restricted to Social Science disciplines. However, as has been justified in comprehensive terms, there is no reason to assume why practitioner-researchers belonging to the Creative Arts cannot apply the same to their inquiries.

This chapter also attempted to document the progression of my study in three stages: pre-training, training, and post participant training procedures. Instead of following one-point perspective along traditional lines, the report was militated by a presentation of original practice, first-hand individual experiences, and theory. In so doing, the inquiry method achieved credibility as a “triangulated” and validated process of research.

Notwithstanding the similarities of approaches in both disciplines, it has been proven that fundamental differences between arts-based research and social science research persistently remain. And despite following conventional procedures of educational-action research – designing a module, implementing it, collecting feedback responses to questionnaires, evaluating them, while measuring the whole process in terms of “objectivity,” “validity,” and “reliability,” etc. – the actual outcomes of social science research, and its related forms of meaning production, cannot compare on an equal footing with art-based research outcomes. ‘The products work with and relate to their audiences in completely different ways, and therefore ... cannot be critiqued and assessed according to the same criteria’ (Andersson, 2009, p.8). This research has been no different.

In keeping with the previously validated survey approach adopted by Atkinson T S (2003) in their study on developing undergraduate learners' Creative Writing skills, an open-ended survey was utilized to attain a rich and in-depth feedback from participants of this research. A portfolio assessment form was also developed to evaluate their learning. Yet as a Creative Writing research project, principles of individual prowess and original interpretation or self-reflection, and non-empirical or "heuristic" philosophical outlook have affected the study in terms of its procedure and analysis frames from beginning to end. The training had been evaluated, and the students' work assessed; yet none of those have been counted as the outcome of this research. This is another manner whereby the present research project deviates from other means of non-artistic inquiries. 'Artists produce works of art, and scientists produce knowledge' (Andersson, 2009, p.8). And in this case, artists can help produce works of art as outcomes as well.

The next chapter is an attempt to discover how the creative output gathered from the project participants can be interpreted as findings of this study, and will aim to discuss important criteria and establish the credibility of such evidence.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Project Outcomes and Result**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This thesis has endorsed the view that a workshop-based setting can offer a rich environment for supporting the implementation of a course module on English fiction. This can be utilized to foster creativity in students from a non-English language background. However, given that creative practice as pedagogy is not usually acknowledged as correlating to artistic praxis or research (Nelson, 2008; Webb & Krauth, 2005), it became pertinent to scrutinize valid arts-based theories or philosophies that could shape, inform and place writing instruction on an equal threshold as methods dealing with production of creative artefacts. One theory unearthed during the process dealt with “project documentation” as a means to connect ‘practice with the world of research,’ by rendering ‘the implicit artistic experience accessible and discussable in the context of disciplined inquiry’ (Nimkulrat, 2012, pp.5-6). This is one manner of “*analysing*” pedagogic procedures or creative processes relevant to both artistic production and research (p.6). Another means of “*interpreting*” artistic research insight or outcomes was by drawing on “heuristics,” as has already been explicated in the previous chapter. Especially with respect to practitioners’ involvement in any form of creative practice, heuristics is often seen as an ideal method of interpretation that is ‘almost perfectly designed for creative work’ (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.7). This is mainly because it possesses rather informal undertones as compared to other evaluating approaches in creative research. As Webb and Brien further elaborate, it tends to be ‘based on rules of thumb, and educated guesses or trial and error’

(p.7). While applying it to analyse findings, researchers are more concerned with trying to solve a problem by ‘drawing analogies in order to see something more clearly,’ than they are with trying to make straightforward sense of it by translating outcomes into research insight (ibid). As effective as the two modes of meaning may seem, evidence aside, neither can be absolutely relied on to establish a correct reading of the perspectives, ideals, principles, beliefs, or mind-sets of those involved in the art making process. Compared to the “performative” approach, mere “analysis” or “interpretation” of outcomes seem limited and conditional in the Creative Writing pedagogic research domain, as will be elucidated within this chapter.

This part of the thesis presents the findings that have resulted from this study, and is divided into six sections. Section 5.2 examines contemporary debates encompassing the nature of research in creative arts disciplines, with a view to finalizing a credible outcome format for the present inquiry. Sections 5.2.1 through 5.2.3 justify the presentation of participants’ writing portfolios along with the researcher’s understanding of such pieces as the collective research outcomes of this study. Section 5.3 presents details of the artefacts submitted by the research participants. Section 5.4 exhibits a sample of narrative portfolios themselves. Section 5.5 contains the researcher’s reflection on the narrative artefacts created. Section 5.6 sums up the core content presented within this chapter.

## **5.2 Establishing the credibility of research findings**

‘University academics in Creative Arts disciplines have long been seeking to have creative works acknowledged as research outputs’ (Haseman & Mafe 2009, Marshall & Newton 2000, Smith & Dean 2009; also cited in Baker, 2011, p.17). But as Haseman (2007) additionally suggests, not all investigators exploring their “practice” imply the same. This is because those researching in Science and Humanities tend to articulate a clear “analytical” or “theoretical landscape” as they deem it relevant to their procedures and fact finding inquiries (Andersson, 2009, p.4). But arts students, especially those practitioners who deal with the

production of creative work, view their results ‘as a source of artistic inspiration and zest, rather than as an analytical tool’ (2009, p.4). Naturally, each area of studies is ruled by a specific mechanism. And since words are spoken to get the point across, it is far better to review the nature and context of creative arts research before finalizing its outcome format (Brewster, 2009).

### **5.2.1 *Reporting research outcomes performatively***

A rather unusual scenario emerges when we observe the possible aftermath of utilizing orthodox inquiry methods to investigate ‘practice in the creative arts, media and design’ (Haseman, 2007). Professional practice within these disciplines presents itself in undefined, volatile, unpredictable and unique situations. To investigate such intricacy, it would neither be plausible to “count” and “measure” the phenomenon of practice; nor would a sufficient course of action be to explore it descriptively and theoretically, albeit somewhat reflectively (Haseman, 2007). Redmond (2004) notes, in this regard, the non-beneficial impact of utilizing the aforementioned strategies to investigate a discipline such as Creative Writing, when it utilizes a mechanism that has nothing in common with either (p.104). The rationale behind writing research is not just to explore knowledge enrichment or possibilities but to actually help produce new creative material (ibid). Haseman (2007) distinctly supports Redmond in his opinions of reporting creative arts research findings through means other than propositional words (qualitative); or graphs, numbers, formulas (quantitative). There is an assortment of products that result from art works, such as musical work, paintings, creatively written texts, etc. Each of these ‘work through intuition, feeling and sensuality, which cannot be literally translated’ (ibid). Just as music requires to be understood via an investigation of “sound effects” and ‘poetic meaning requires poetic forms of thought,’ every form of artistic creation involves a machinery specific to its context (Haseman, 2007). Words used to discuss something in general cannot be used to understand a particular art form. It is in this connection that Brewster (2009, p.129) supports the division between ‘discursive (analytical) and non-discursive (creative) writing.’ While the first mode can be explored using

qualitative research, the latter generates outputs that can only be presented “performatively” (p.129). This means that resulting research outcomes must emerge as a material form particular to one’s own practice in order to understand it better (Haseman, 2006, p.101). A fiction writer will therefore have to report their research findings in the form of a novel, short story or a drama script (ibid). Compared to the quantitative and qualitative research methods, Bauman (2003, p.451; cited in Haseman, pp.103-104) further sees the performative approach ‘as a way of enabling scholars to provide an integrated account of social structure and a wider sense of cultural context as they focus on personal narrative as situated practice.’ This is another reason why in case of this study, being a writer-teacher from Pakistan, my insight took the shape of creative and critical writing samples produced by myself and the participants of this study.

Despite many researchers having serious misgivings about the “performance” method for data generation and analysis, which in some ways is similar to the unorthodox strategies that were looked down upon on account of their rendering qualitative tradition subservient to the quantitative one, or vice-versa (Flick, 1998, p.206; Snow & Morril, 1995, p.226; cited in Haseman, 2006, p.102), I have found the emergence of this ‘performance’ technique of supporting the creative research insight to my advantage. Thus far, capturing research outcomes through a “qualitative” discourse analysis or “quantitatively” analysed numeric data have been long-held fundamental approaches to research. Research shows the move away from them is partly because of the role “practice” plays in a practice-led or practice-based research, and partly due to the unlikelihood of capturing the richness, multiple shades and intricacies of individual behaviour inherent in practice or artistic forms due to the quantitative constraints imposed on “data-analysis length” or the qualitatively discussed process of research (Gergen & Gergen, 2003; also referred to by Haseman, 2006). While qualitative researchers view artistic practice solely as ‘an object of study,’ performative researchers establish practice as the principal research activity or as ‘a method of research’ (Baker, 2011). Accordingly, though still considered as a much favoured form utilized to interpret the creative-arts data, Haseman (p.100) observes the impatient

response of various arts researchers to the qualitative approach, who believe the method's 'emphasis on written outcomes distorts the communication of the actual practice (or artistic form) itself.'

Like Haseman (2006), Baker (2011), and Colbert (2009, p.3), I believe the range of human expression in the arts-based subjects is neither conclusive, nor requires a wordy description revolving around artefacts without presenting an actual form itself. It cannot be predicted whether an artistic product qualifies as being good or bad, rich or lacking in something; nor can it be quantified numerically. Rather, the creative presentation or communicated outcome is absolutely erratic and changeable; and therefore open to relative judgements. As academics we can interpret the needs or requirements of a piece, but cannot represent our claims to knowledge as being genuine or otherwise. For that, an artefact needs to be presented the way it is, itself. Gergen & Gergen, (2003, pp.582-583) would support a similar conclusion since, on the basis of their analysis of further trends in qualitative research, they believe that 'in moving towards performance, the investigator avoids the mystifying claims of truth and simultaneously expands the range of communities in which the work can stimulate dialogue.' Haseman (2006) would second the same in that 'when a presentational form is used to report research, it can be argued that it is in fact a "text"... an outcome of research ...' whose 'function is communicative' (p.102). There may not be a need to report a definite creative research outcome, which is 'intrinsically experiential and comes to the fore when the researcher creates new artistic forms for performance and exhibition, or designs user-led, online games or builds an online counselling service for young people' (Haseman, p.100). Novels, poems, short stories or designs just have to be exhibited to be reviewed or to communicate their contribution to knowledge (Andersson, 2009). The only infrastructure that these forms require is a platform that allows them to be criticised, and enables 'other artists to interact and exchange views and interpretations on artworks' (Haseman, 2007). The same form has been made explicit through this research, and has been exemplified by articulating my understanding of my participants' work as well. This has been elaborated in the following section.

### 5.2.2 *Visualizing the research outcomes*

In her study on *(Re)inventing Artists' Research*, Stewart argues that eminence and credible standing of findings rest on a researcher's skill to get concrete images across to the readers, to help them visualize results (2003). This implies that research outcomes should aim to establish an impact on a broad scale. In comprehensive terms, the research outlook extends to and must appear visible to "ourselves" as investigators trying to solve a problem, "the field" comprising of participants and related practitioners, "and the discipline" encompassing practice-oriented subjects at large (Stewart, 2003, p.7). However, to ensure that this account merges our research procedures and artistic outcomes in a believable manner, Stewart furthers that it must be enriched, exemplified and personified in a way in 'which the reader can associate as compatible with their own experiences.' And while at it, 'we might consider whether we have provided a new lens or perspective for studying aspects of our field and understanding our practice' (ibid).

Reflecting on the issue through this "new" lens, Nelson (2008) puts forward a refurbished concept of efficient artistic research. She views Stephen Muecke's move away from "production" and "assemblage" of our own "texts" to an "appreciation or analysis" of others' creative work as a more "productive" way of revealing insights on grounds of the "experiential/experimental focus" of the writer writing (production), and "experience" of the reader reading (reception). Muecke (2007) presents his concern about all that gets produced 'as research "outcomes" in our area' in that it 'rarely takes the form of commentary, critical or otherwise, on others' creative work' (cited in Nelson, 2008). Nelson states that attempting the contrary can better attract audiences by helping them identify with art on holistic levels. A multi-dimensional understanding will only be possible if practice-based researchers consider their subjects 'differently,' explore 'new areas of experiential knowledge,' and attempt to work out the meaning implied by artefacts 'from the ground of objective production,' and not just individual

outlook of creation that we can attain from students' exegesis. This is because there is a slight chance that writers may not be completely clear about 'the directions of research, the practice, and the preoccupations of the writer involved' (Wittig 2007, p.550; in Nelson). In situating a work within its culture, or in elaborating 'the potential knowledges, or interventions in knowledge, to which the work gives rise,' the advantages of exegetical components can never be ignored. Yet a writerly study of 'the processes of writing and reading, production and reception' acts as a definite plus point (Nelson, 2008). However, the process does come with a few loopholes attached.

At this stage, a few queries that often arise are associated with the nature of practice-based research in creative arts. Biggs (2004), for instance, suggests that within this approach, as writers, designers and practitioners, we are more concerned with "experiential content" (p.7). We are interested to investigate how our 'aesthetic judgements are made in relation to sensory objects' (pp.8-9). The process starts when we identify the initial problem, review it, 'conduct it through experimentation,' investigate the issue more, and somewhere along the process we get 'confronted with these judgements' (p.9). Clearly, the "judgements" stem from 'the realm of experience rather than that of cognition' (ibid). Viewed this way, creative research becomes something that does not require making "holistic sense"; that would contrast with its nature. However, another dimension appears at this point. As practice-based practitioners, we can either choose to observe the role that experience has in our research (p.9), or explore the nature of feelings that result from a specific experience, 'which are private to the experiencing individual' (p.10). If it is the former, then that implies that we are also 'interested in the meaning of that experience, of the experiential content, and how that might be related to the content of our shared context' (pp.9-10). This is when the "non-linguistic mode of expression" of one individual can be explored in light of the "linguistic mode of cognition" of another (Biggs, 2004, p.10). How far we are able to reflect on the experience without corrupting the "individual experiential content" is another "key question" (ibid).

Biggs (p.10) additionally suggests that the resulting knowledge conveyed by an art form can be explored and framed into words; experiential feelings, content and outcomes can indeed be “represented” by both the individual practitioner and other entities as well. And though ‘maintaining the phenomenological "authenticity" is extremely difficult’ (Biggs, p.10), researchers suggest that it is an act that is not completely impossible. And a good way to achieve this is by being precise and selective in deciding for “perspectives” that artists and researchers could bring to their interpretation of creative work (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.8).

### **5.2.3      *Answering research questions by interpreting the resulting insight***

In his chapter titled ‘Performative, Non-representational, and Affect-Based Research: Seven Injunctions,’ Dewsbury (2009, pp.326-327) tells us that it is “observant participation” and not “participant observation” which is one of the most artistic modes of participation and practice relevant to answering questions in Performative Research. One way of attempting this is by means of direct exhibition of one’s research outcome: which is the creative artefact (ibid). Another way of participating observantly is by doing what Webb and Brien (2008) refer to as the philosophy of borrowing certain external disciplinary techniques, and using them to “interpret” works to solve research problems, but without using this tool of interpretation in a thoroughly clear-cut, judgemental, or conscientious manner (pp.7-8). As they explain it further, a researcher’s method of applying certain approaches to interpret their outcomes comes with both benefits and harms (p.8). The advantages deal with possible solutions of research problems. However, they will only outweigh possible damages if techniques from other disciplines are not imported in their original form or entirety, but are actually altered to suit the nature of creative arts research. Thus, for instance, ‘literary studies, offers a number of valuable (critical) approaches to texts that can be applied by artist researchers’ (ibid). But it has nothing in common with ‘practice-oriented research.’ This is because it does not focus on the “practice” aspect of research, but on ‘the meaning of a particular work, the social location of the author, the investment of readers and so on - all useful in delimiting the work

itself, but all focused on the literary or aesthetic elements of the work' (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.8). Instead, to suit our discipline, similar approaches could be utilized by someone who is not looking at the creative outcomes to answer their research questions through the eyes of a distant literary "critic", but as a non-censorious practice-based "writer-researcher" (p.9). Such researchers should be able to present their "interpretations" in a contra 'theological, scientific or objective' manner (ibid), and use them to solve research problems non-critically, non-directly and analogically (Rust et al. 2007; Webb & Brien, 2008, p.5). And as a performative practice-led researcher, Haseman (2007) mirrors a similar thought.

Most practice-led researchers, suggests Haseman, are not driven by an urge to answer research questions or solve a problem (2007). Rather it is "an enthusiasm of practice" which motivates them to investigate a phenomenon. Research is undertaken with the intent of studying something 'exciting, unruly, unmanageable or mysterious,' some aspect of an art form that might be considered as a novel development in contemporary arts, 'but of which they cannot be certain' (Haseman, 2007). This manner of conducting research, i.e. choosing not to create meaning by directly answering queries, does not imply that the knowledge generated by creative arts, or the insight emerging out of artistic practice, is not credible (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.5). Nor does it suggest that 'researchers' work is without larger agendas or emancipatory aspirations' (Haseman, 2007). All it indicates is that the resulting knowledge that artistic research produces is 'gleaned subsequent to the work' (Webb & Brien, 2008, p.5), and; in arts-based practices, the research process is not about producing a definite answer or an "output" but about "workings" that add to the already existing repertoire of information (Avieson, 2008). Additionally, given that performative research stretches the boundaries of the inquiry process, and strives to experiment in varied ways (Dewsbury, 2009, p.323), researchers sometimes 'eschew the constraints of narrow problem setting and rigid methodological requirements' and use other means to answer questions (Haseman, 2007). The present inquiry has attempted the same.

This research process included the formulation of research questions, but similar to a practice-based study explored by Rust et al. (2007), it avoided making a direct response to them, and chose to challenge the very ‘preconception bound up in the conventional models of inquiry’ – i.e. every question has a conclusive answer (ibid). Ultimately, there are some performative research outcomes that raise more questions than they answer (McLaren, 2004, p.xvi). Yet this is no reason to believe that a practice-based research with an impact brought on by one-way response(s) to questions is better than research without it (Biggs, 2004, p.14). Even within practice-led research, there are cases when ‘interpretation of creative research products initiates a new epistemological landscape, one less committed to linearity and logic, and more committed to the analogical, to "going around" a problem’ (Webb & Brien, 2008, pp.6-7). Likewise, practice-based research conclusions can only be deemed useful if instead of generating answers that are “true,” they encompass information that strike readers as persuasive, satisfactory and something they could identify with, because of sharing a similar context, regardless the manner of presentation of research answers (Biggs, 2004, p.15). This is because of the one key ‘difference between questions in the arts and questions in the sciences’ – the idea that ‘arts questions are capable of having more than one answer’ (Biggs, p.16). This throws us back to the relativist realm, since practice-oriented research conclusions in the arts ‘do not attempt to give absolute answers to factual questions [if there are such things]’ (ibid).

Through this research, the answers to research questions have accordingly been offered by exhibiting the creative artefacts produced, and by presenting the researcher’s understanding of participants’ writing portfolios. Each have been left open for drawing comparisons and serving as a gateway for more fruitful inquiries of a similar kind.

### 5.3 Artefacts submitted by research participants

The purpose of this study was to observe the impact of subjecting literature students to a Creative Writing training program on composing fiction. A course module was subsequently developed and implemented on the sample population against a writing workshop. A total of thirteen students participated in the process. The learners were all beginner writers as they had not yet been subjected to this practice at their Institute of English Language and Literature in the University of Sindh in Jamshoro, Pakistan. Their feedback was also recorded to determine if, under the circumstances when they did not have an extensive prior writing experience, the implementation of the Creative Writing training was a valid undertaking. By employing the “participant-responses-collected-through-the-questionnaires” format, the study incorporated aspects from the well-known analytical models applied in the educational research stream. However, the rationale of the questionnaires was not to analyse the research outcome. It was to validate the means utilized to create such output; and perhaps use it to generate recommendations for further research. Often in their exploration of arts-based inquiries, suggests Andersson (2009), practitioners tend to bring certain conventions related to science into their study (p.3). Andersson views this move “logical” given artists attempting research would attempt to use anything that could help them ground the outcomes of their research. However, ‘what form the (resulting) end point might take is an open question, and its form (once produced) will most likely not be limited to a hypothesis’ (2009, p.3). This study has been no different.

Towards the end of this project, the thirteen participants submitted twenty-three short narratives altogether, accompanied by an equivalent number of contextual analysis pieces. Among them, three students produced singular narrative samples, thereby following “Route A” leading to their final submission. The remaining participants chose “Route B” and submitted a twin-portfolio of creative work; which comprised of a modified version of their pre-workshop narrative, and a final post-workshop piece. Details of both routes have been presented in *Appendix*

G. The idea was to allow them a lenient selection, or a final submission choice. They were to use the format which they felt comfortable in: either compose a 2,000-2,500 word single narrative, or submit a break-up of the same in two smaller stories. The required count for the contextual analysis samples ranged between 1,000-1,500 words for singular submissions, and 1,500-2,500 words for twin-narrative portfolios. Specific information pertaining to all participant artefacts, as quoted from their contextual analysis, is as follows:

**a) Single narrative by Taimoor Younus**

***'A Day at the Post Office'* (2,907 words)**

***Contextual study* (1,016 words)**

*This story encourages one to take a rather brief, yet a meaningful look at parallel acts of money laundering and land theft, contrary to securing one's valid or legitimate shares in property, or pursuing succession, distribution or handover of hereditary assets and acreage through lawful means. The set-up is that of a Pakistani post office, which tends to shed further light on the messy and mismanaged conditions surrounding office indoors and the behaviour of government officials these days, in conjunction with the major plot line.*

**b) Single narrative by Irfan Mirjat**

***'The Kidnapping'* (2,123 words)**

***Contextual study* (1,565 words)**

*'The Kidnapping' is a short story created out of the consolidation of three disparate worlds: a realm that is a product of the author's individual imagination, filled and formatted with genuine and deep-rooted thoughts; a vision inspired by actual or real life events, invested with valid and authentic details of common place acts of human trafficking and abduction; and an idea conceived and concocted in the aftermath of a visual scenario aired on many an Indian and Pakistani plays every now and then.*

**c) Single narrative by Ahmed Faraz**

***'The Meeting'* (2,319 words)**

***Contextual study* (1,505 words)**

*The story tells us about a 'mega Heads meeting' that takes place on a "Monday"; its venue being the "Conference Room" on the "sixth floor," inside the "Baloch Building and Restoration Enterprises" in the city of "Sukkur" in "Sindh Province."*

**d) Twin-narrative portfolio by Rabia Solangi**

***'Another Shaikh Chilli's Story' & 'A Lesson for Life'* (2,872 words)**

***Contextual study* (2,127 words)**

*While the first narrative has been presented within the body of this thesis, the second piece relates the story of a youth called "Waccas" who is extremely competitive as an individual. He can behave in any rowdy manner, even if it means treating his parents rudely or with insolence apparent in his gestures and words, if he believes someone is about to become an impediment in his road to success. Towards the end of the narrative, due to the modest and kind behaviour of Mr and Mrs. Sharif, his parents, and a class presentation given by one of his university batch-fellows on 'Business Ethics,' Waccas develops as a repentant individual.*

**e) Twin- narrative portfolio by Amir Leghari**

***'The Computer World' & 'The Enchanted Bean Cushion'* (2,506 words)**

***Contextual study* (1,796 words)**

*'The Computer World' is a narrative based upon one's dependence on and obsession with electronic media, especially with computers, these days.*

*The second piece titled 'The Enchanted Bean Cushion' is something that has been inspired by an amalgamation of four different plot lines, namely that of; 'Alice in*

*the Wonderland,’ ‘Jack and the Beanstalk,’ ‘The Wizard of Oz,’ and the movie ‘Jumanji.’ The protagonist of the story “Muhid” receives a cushion as his birthday gift, which actually turns out to be a gate-way to a magical world.*

**f) Twin- narrative portfolio by Abdul Rasheed**

**‘Lunch One Day’ & ‘Dinner One Night’ (2,291 words)**

**Contextual study (2,007 words)**

*While the first piece has been exhibited in this thesis, the plot of the second is narrated by “Ali Ahmed,” who relates his reasons for being an ardent admirer of his parents, through his self-witnessed account based on the events that unfolded during a simple dinner with his parents one night.*

**g) Twin- narrative portfolio by Rubab Israr**

**‘The Lollywood Effect’ & ‘The Flying Boy’ (2,007 words)**

**Contextual study (2,099 words)**

*The term “Lollywood” in the first piece stands for the Pakistani film industry. What appears to be a simple narrative about a twenty year old girl, Humaira, who misunderstands a situation, takes the loud noises coming from the television set as sounds being made by ghosts or robbers, mistakes ketchup smeared across a knife for blood, and consequently becomes scared and pale, actually stands for a deeper message. The idea is one should never allow his imagination to run wild.*

*‘The Flying Boy’ is a short story that contains an open-ended companion ‘tale’ within the story, or ‘frame narrative.’ In case of this particular story, the two young characters, Ali and Hassan, are narrated a tale about a boy who thought he could fly, chosen from “The Arabian Nights” by their grandmother.*

**h) Twin- narrative portfolio by Misbah Anum**

***'How I Joined the English Department' & 'The Pea Mess' (2,078 words)***

***Contextual study (2,182 words)***

*The first piece tells us about a young lady, Anita. Despite following her mother's advice, she ends up trailing after her friends and makes constant errors in her choice of undergraduate study courses, and flunks miserably. The plot ends with an explicit message that one should try to establish a balance between friendship, studies, and every other aspect of life.*

*'The Pea Mess' is a humorous story about "Noor-ul-Ain," who is given a simple chore by her mother, that of shelling peas. It recounts how she is unable to attend to the task, due to the mischief caused by her siblings or her own individual desires, till the very end.*

**i) Twin- narrative portfolio by Dildar Bhatti**

***'The Healthy Competition' & 'To the Barber's' (2,006 words)***

***Contextual study (1,523 words)***

*The first sample is a tale of two friends, Beena Aslam and Sana Saeed, who were neighbours, friends, cousins and class fellows. But an unfortunate rift came in their relationship when Sana started getting jealous of Beena's accomplishments and repute as a good student at college. Towards the end, Sana realizes that education is for the grooming of our personality. If it brings out pettiness we lose the meaning of it.*

*The second narrative is set in contemporary society, where children these days highly admire cartoon characters like Mickey or Minnie mouse or dolls like Barbie and Ken, or in this case Ben Ten. It also tells us how parents, despite knowing better, often end up accommodating their kids' wishes and outrageous desires.*

**j) Twin- narrative portfolio by Amjad Abro**

***'The Real Beauty' & 'The Power of a Smile' (1,896 words)***

***Contextual study (1,736 words)***

*The initial artefact tells us about a girl in the prime of her teens, who is highly mesmerized by impressive looking showbiz industry people, and often gets depressed for not possessing a remarkable appearance as theirs. Eventually, "Alisha" realizes that she is lucky to be gifted so much by Allah, such as eyes to see with, voice to speak, ears for listening, normal limbs, arms and legs to move around with, food to eat and some money to spend.*

*The story titled 'The Power of a Smile' is a brief bedtime tale that the writer once overheard as their mother was telling it to their baby sister. The main character is a personification of an abstract virtue i.e. 'Smile.' In fact, the entire story is one big metaphor for opposite and dissimilar aspects of human psychology.*

**k) Twin- narrative portfolio by Yasir Ali**

***'Eid-ul-Fitr Celebrations' & 'Be Happy with What You Have' (2,010 words)***

***Contextual study (1,411 words)***

*The first narrative, as its title suggests, has been set up against the Eid-ul-Fitr occasion, i.e. "festival of breaking of the fast", also called "the Sugar Feast, the Sweet Festival, and the Lesser Eid." It recounts issues conditioned by minute misunderstandings between two brothers and their wives, which get resolved on the Eid day because of the constant meddling of their first born sons in the elders' affairs.*

*'Be Happy with What You Have,' as another story composed for a moral or didactic purpose, questions the motives of all such individuals who have everything they could possibly ask for and yet they have the nerve to say: "It is so unfair! ... I never get what I want! ... I never get anything! ..."*

**l) Twin- narrative portfolio by Shazia Halepoto**

***'The Young Stranger' & 'The Cellular Phone' (2,011 words)***

***Contextual study (1,659 words)***

*While the first contribution has been presented within the body of this thesis, the second narrative revolves around "Sarah". The youth is shown to be obsessed with her mobile phone, after losing which she starts acting impulsive, rash, rude and bratty. In our modern society, once any household article goes missing or gets stolen, the suspicion automatically falls on the maids or servants working in the home and then they get questioned and sometimes directly blamed. This is what she does, though by the end she discovers how it was not the servant who had stolen it, but her own parents who had taken and sold the phone in the market to get a brand new one for her.*

**m) Twin- narrative portfolio by Sarah Qurban**

***'The Picnic' & 'An Eye for Respect' (2,190 words)***

***Contextual study (1,828 words)***

*Both short stories, 'The Picnic' and 'An Eye for Respect', show how important it is for human beings to display an act of compassion for each other, by placing their selfish motives and desires aside. The first piece achieves this message by sketching the event of a university picnic, through the depiction of its two main characters embodying conflicting personality traits (the selfless and the selfish), and the overall portrayal of its protagonist and her benevolent act/acts. The second narrative establishes the same premise through our rather filmy 'lost and found' subplot, and the considerate demeanour of an old gentleman who helps a lost child discover his way home, and sends him off safe and sound.*

As can be clearly observed in the aforementioned account, while only a single narrative sample submitted by *Amjad* contained less than the required length, the three narrative samples handed over by *Taimoor*, *Rabia* and *Amir* exceeded the suggested word count. Likewise, the contextual analysis samples by *Irfan* and

*Ahmed* also exceeded the word count. The remaining narrative samples and their analysis followed the stated limit protocol.

Due to their extensive length, which amounts to a total of 51,670 words, one specific limitation of this study was its inability to exhibit the outcomes in their entirety. Ultimately, without pronouncing an exact judgement, I needed to characterize the quality of work produced and present a limited number of creative-research artefacts. This was similar to what Andersson (2009) did, by selecting a few participants' samples for their art exhibition. The means to achieve this has been discussed next.

#### **5.4 The writing portfolios: A representative sample**

This research was conducted to “observe” the aftermath of a creative writing training, and not to present conclusive “judgements” that could be statistically verified. Primarily carrying out performance check through comments, the post-workshop portfolio-assessment form employed five qualitative criteria (*Appendix H*) to rate the participants' work. Each criterion was valued on a scale of 1 to 4; where ‘1’ implied *To a Great Extent*, ‘2’ meant *Somewhat*, ‘3’ stood for *Very Little*, and ‘4’ suggested *Not at All*. The intention behind using each criterion to categorize students' level of participation on a 4-point Likert scale was not to grade them. Nor was this used as an instrument to measure the research outcomes. This was used as purposive sampling strategy, to select artistic contribution to be included as the research outcome within the body of this thesis, based on an average output of students' work. In cases where two or more participants shared the same average, preference was given to samples which were more indicative of the Pakistani context.

A selection of participants' narratives has been displayed next. Based upon the performance criteria, the portfolios have been arranged in an ascending order.

## **The Young Stranger**

*By Shazia Halepoto*

“Tap, tap; tap, tap.” Erum heard the faint knock at the door. She was alone in the house, doing her homework in the study. Her parents had gone out to work, and her elder brother, Aziz, was at his friend’s house. She continued to write, ignoring the knock. Someone knocked again — this time a little louder — but not loud enough. “Who can it be?” Erum muttered to herself as she rose to her feet and went to the window to catch a glimpse of the knocker. A well-dressed twelve year old boy looked at her, his big dark eyes wide with fear. He motioned her to open the door and let him in.

Erum knew the boy was in trouble. She hurried to open the door and let him come in. “Why didn’t you ring the bell?” she asked him in way of greeting.

“P-please be quiet and h-hide me in your house!” the boy stammered evading Erum’s question. “They’re chasing ... they will harm or ...”

“Who are they? And why will they harm you?” Erum asked as she led him through the hallway.

“I’ll ... I’ll tell you everything; but ... first shut all the doors and windows ... Ah!” he tripped over something and an envelope fell out of his pocket. He quickly scooped it up and put it back out of sight.

“You can trust me.” Erum tried to comfort him. “I won’t let anyone harm you in any way.” She made him sit down on a sofa beside the table where her unfinished homework lay. “You’re safe here; now you can tell me your story,” she said as she took her seat not far from him.

The frightened boy once again looked at the closed windows, and began, “My Mother is recovering from a serious illness; she is still in the hospital. Today we needed money to pay for her medical and hospitalization bills. My father had saved some money and had put it in the bank before he was killed in a road accident. Mother wrote a cheque and asked me to bring it to her quickly. I got the

cheque cashed and left the bank with the money in my pocket. It was getting late so I took a shortcut to reach the hospital. As I turned into a lane..."

"What happened then?" Erum asked.

"I sensed that someone was following me with ill intentions. I swung around. Two men were getting closer to me. The one nearer was in a blue shalwar kameez, with a grey beard and a red turban on his head. He said in a threatening voice, 'Give us the money, or I'll...'"

"What did you do then?" Erum asked impatiently.

"I started running as fast as my legs could carry me," the boy replied. "They ran, too. I turned into various lanes, dodging them, and at last got to your house. But they may come here, too. They are really terrible people and this area is almost deserted."

"There's nothing to worry about," said Erum, trying to comfort him. "You seem to belong to a good family, by the way, what's your name?"

"Zafar Ahmed".

"Well, Zafar, you can stay here as long as you like; or until you think it is safe enough for you to go on your way. You must be hungry! Let me get you something to eat."

"No, thanks," replied Zafar. "My only worry is to get the money to mother soon. Let me see! If they are not around, I will go now."

He got to his feet, opened the study window a crack and looked out. Then, slamming the window shut, he bolted back to the sofa.

"What happened?" Erum asked.

"One of the men is coming here — the bearded one. P-please don't let him in!"

"Never!" Erum made a firm promise.

Just then the quiet house was filled with the ringing of the bell. Erum looked out the window at the caller. The man fitted the description Zafar had given. Erum also didn't like the look of him. Fear began to grip her. What if he gets into the house by breaking one of the windows? There was no house near enough to get help.

The man rang the bell again and again. Erum went to the door but didn't open it. Wwh — who is it?" she stammered.

"A boy came this way," replied the man. "He must still be in the house. I want him; now!"

"There's no boy here; please go away!" Erum heard the man's retreating feet. "He's gone," she whispered to Zafar. "But it's not safe for you to go alone. Wait until my father or brother arrives. He will take you to the hospital."

The bell rang again as Erum returned to her homework. "It must be him!" Zafar was scared half to death. "Please hide me somewhere!" he pleaded.

Erum thought for a while. A roll of new carpet stood in the corner of the next room. She let him hide in it. The bell kept ringing. "What do you want now?" she asked the man as she looked at him from the window.

"Someone just told me the boy went inside this house. Let me in to look for that kid!" The man started beating the door with both his hands.

What should she do now? No one was around! There was no time to call the police either. Then an idea flashed in her mind. She opened the door. The man rushed in. He went from room to room, frantically looking for the boy.

Erum followed him wherever he went. He entered the storeroom. It was long and dark. It took some time for his eyes to adjust. Erum had her chance. Like lightning, she closed the door, shutting him in. "Open it, you wicked girl!" He shouted like a mad man, beating the door violently.

Erum knew what she should do now. She called the police station, telling them there was a kidnapper in the house.

"We'll be there in no time," said the police officer.

However, before the police arrived, her parents came. She excitedly told them the whole story. In the storeroom the man was still shouting angrily. Father decided to open the storeroom door, and as the man came out, he said, "I think I've seen you several times. Aren't you the owner of some buses?"

"Yes I am," replied the man.

Erum and her mother stood puzzled, "My daughter thought you were a kidnapper or something, so she shut you in. Let's hear what you have to say about it."

“Well,” the man said, “I was counting the money at the bus terminal when a boy appeared from nowhere, grabbed the envelope and ran away. It contained five thousand rupees.”

Before father could say anything, the police arrived. “I was just in time to catch this boy,” said the police officer, holding Zafar’s hand in his. “He was trying to run away.”

“Do you know him, Sir?” asked Erum and her father together.

“Of course I do,” said the officer. “He’s gone to jail before for pick pocketing. He’s working for a gang who train and force boys like him to steal money for them.”

“He-he had stolen my five thousand rupees,” stammered the bus owner.

The police officer looked at Zafar questioningly. The boy took the envelope from his pocket and handed it to the bus owner.

“Zafar!” Erum said, “You look like such a nice boy and do such...”

“I-I’m sorry, but I have no parents. One day I fell into the hands of some bad people. they gave me food, clothes and shelter. In return they made me steal money for them. If I fail to get money for them, they don't just make me go without food, but also beat me.”

“Please forgive Zafar this time and let him stay with us,” Erum asked the officer. “We’ll take care of him and educate him.”

She looked at her father questioningly. He nodded with a broad smile.

“I would be glad to,” answered the officer, “but it is the judge’s decision. He can, if he wishes, parole the boy to you’ but we must get hold of the gang, or they will make trouble for you as well as for Zafar.”

Zafar began to smile at the thought of a new and decent life.

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## Contextual Analysis

In the story 'The Young Stranger', readers can clearly catch a preview of the proverb 'don't talk to strangers,' no matter what age group they belong to. Contextually, the narrative points to the rather corrupt contemporary times when young children get abducted, bought and sold at the 'human bazaars', and later trained to perform acts of theft or commit other crimes. Many end up working for gangs, who train and force such kids to pickpocket, snatch bags, and steal money for them, as has been mentioned in one of the dialogues from the story below:

*"I-I'm sorry, but I have no parents. One day I fell into the hands of some bad people. They gave me food, clothes and shelter. In return they made me steal money for them. If I fail to get money for them, they don't just make me go without food, but also beat me."*

The piece, on the whole, narrates the reasons which lead to a budding friendship between Erum and Zafar, through two interrelated narratives. The main plot describes Erum's present circumstances (her being inside the house alone, doing homework in the study room, the parents having gone out to work, an elder brother 'Aziz' being at his friend's house, her hearing someone knocking faintly at first and then more strongly at the door, leading her to step towards the window to catch a glimpse of the knocker, and her consequent decision to invite him inside and help a poor and scared kid out until the end).

The subplot shows what brought Zafar to this point (to Erum's doorsteps, motioning her to open the door and let him in) and Erum to the point of taking him in as a brother. This includes a fake story of how he was being chased after by a couple of thieves, while trying to take some cash (left by an imaginary father who was killed in a road accident), over to his sick mother at the hospital, who happened to be recovering from a serious illness. The money was needed to pay

for her medical and hospitalization bills, but he bumped into a goon on his way to the hospital; and to save his life, Zafar ran over to her house.

The narrative's climax comes when we discover that Zafar was being sought by a bus driver whom *he* had robbed, as he was part of a gang who forced him to pickpocket for them. Erum, despite being dismayed on discovering the truth, still believes Zafar has good in his heart and requests police officers to let him stay at her house to serve for his parole. This brings the story to its optimistic resolution, Zafar's hope for a bright future ahead.

In the sub-plot, Erum's relationship with Zafar is outlined, giving clues to both Erum and Zafar's character. Zafar is shown as a classic 'beginner-thug', nervous and confused, yet somewhat cunning and manipulative, who lies to Erum despite his knowledge of the actual truth. He is described as 'a well-dressed twelve year old boy, his big dark eyes wide with fear', in order to show the reader how innocent and terrified he looks, but under his nice-boy-next-door image, he is someone who had been arrested before, for pick pocketing. On the other hand we have Erum, a typical goody-two-shoe, who doesn't shun Zafar away until the very end. Her sound and secure home environment were responsible for her psyche.

Both characters do, however, have their own struggles to deal with. Erum is aware of the dangers involved in allowing strangers indoors, and also discovers Zafar's secret identity, yet she struggles with her choice to ignore the truth on both occasions. Zafar's conflict throughout the plot concerns his knowledge of the right thing to do versus his fear of his gang leaders, who would beat him if he were to return to them without carrying the money he stole for them.

So far as the time and place of action are concerned, the story has been set in broad daylight, and inside a cosy house. The story is told from the author's point of view (third person omniscient). In spite of having an unclear mention, Zafar would appear to be a dynamic character, in that he changes throughout the narrative from being a liar and scared of his gang, to becoming an individual who

wishes to have a better, cleaner and more secure life. Erum remains a static character – she is a naïve angel from the beginning of the story, and does not change throughout it.

Lastly, though I have implemented all stylistic changes that were suggested during the workshop, the ending of the modified version still has an abruptness about it. I felt that by prolonging the narrative further, I would've had to incorporate a whole new setup about Erum and Zafar's new life, which would have entered into the domain of creating another sub-plot, unattached to the current story. This was how I was able to create an ordered narrative, which relies heavily on coherent beginning, middle and end to work as a logical whole, with the two narratives complementing each other throughout their structuring.

## **Lunch One Day**

*By Abdul Rasheed*

One day, after class, as Qasim Chaudry's batch fellows prepared to leave for the nearby Karim Chacha's canteen (uncle Karim's cafe) and some gathered in a corner to eat the modest food their mothers had packed for them, his friend Shahbaz, too, listlessly walked out from the dingy classroom. His pocket was empty like his stomach, but the later was growling with acute hunger pangs. He had not eaten anything since the night before, as there was hardly any food to eat at home. Poverty is such a curse, he thought as he sat on the footpath pavement, thinking how to prevent himself from starving.

Qasim knew exactly how Shahbaz felt, after having just one quick look at the distraught expression hovering over his buddy's face. In reality, he had not had his breakfast either. But that was not the only thing that the two had in common.

Qasim and Shahbaz, both, belonged to a lower middle class family and lived in the same neighbourhood. Their parents were stamped as being workers from the labour-class. Qasim never liked being mocked as the son of a mother who was employed as a maid in various households situated in the Defence Housing Society in Hyderabad, located on the other side of the road, facing his own shabby and slump like municipality colony, which reeked of burnt junk and the left over garbage piles. Thanks to the university fellowship funds for underprivileged students, he and many other individuals just like himself had been granted an admission in the University of Sindh; Shahbaz also happened to be one of them.

Poor guy, thought Qasim. His friend looked even more miserable than he felt. Obviously he had to do something to help.

"What are you doing out here, sitting all alone, on your own?" Qasim called out.

Shahbaz tilted his head and gave into a brief smile that disappeared almost as soon as it had appeared.

“Forget about me, what are *you* doing here?” inquired Shahbaz as his forehead creased into a quizzical frown, amusement lifting the corners of his lips again. “It is already half past three in the afternoon. Shouldn’t you be on your way to your part time job?”

“Na,” Qasim lifted his hand, gave it a swift wave, and thumped down on the bricks outlining the edge of the university’s main road footpath, right next to his friend, while buses continued breezing past them, the movement of wheels leaving rising dust and vague marks on the road. “I have the evening shift tonight. And since I am supposed to be working overtime, my work will stretch till six in the morning at the bangle factory, I’m afraid.”

“I see.” Shahbaz often felt bad for his friend, who spent his days and nights in tireless efforts to earn barely a handful to support his family. Yet, at the same time, he felt envious of his companion as well. “I am sorry to hear that. But look on the bright side. At least you have a job as your emergency backup. I do not have anything.” He said and jammed a hand inside his empty pant pocket again.

“Which is precisely why your grades are better than mine,” Qasim pointed out with a grin. Sometimes, it was just better to look on the positive side of things than think of the stark realities instead. “And you still haven’t answered my previous question. What are you doing out here, sitting all alone, with a face hanging down, as if your chin is about to touch the ground?”

“Nothing, just trying to cope with my hunger pangs. I have not eaten anything,” Shahbaz Aslam replied sadly.

“Me too, yaar (buddy).” Qasim said, stroking his own flat excuse for a stomach, with his hand. “But we can have some food from Chacha’s cafeteria,” Qasim continued with a smile dancing on his lips.

“And our dear Ustad (boss), who will pay the bill?” Shahbaz snapped sarcastically.

“Come on, we will pay the bill. Do not worry.” Saying this Qasim dragged his friend towards the roadside cafeteria.

“Bring fresh nan with anda channa (bread with egg curry),” Qasim ordered the waiter after the two settled in their seats.

At the mouth-watering sight of food Shahbaz forgot the remorse that had gripped him and began to gobble down the meal until burping made him realize that he had eaten enough.

“What about money? I do not have a single penny with me.” Shahbaz inquired after nibbling the leftover nan.

“Neither do I,” said Qasim, with a matter-of-fact tone basking his voice.

“What! See, that was why I never wanted to come here in the first place. I knew this was going to happen.” Shahbaz whispered forgetting all about the sumptuous delight he’d just had. “What do we do now?”

“For starters, relax, will you?” he said while still munching on the leftover nan. “Trust me, I have it all taken care of?”

“Why? Do you have a plan in mind?”

“Ah ha,” Qasim affirmed. “I hope you feel fresh and energetic?” He asked while gulping down some water.

“Yes, of course,” Shahbaz answered and raised his brows. There was something strange about his friend’s countenance that warned him to be on guard. “Just what exactly do you have in mind?”

“What,” Qasim shrugged his shoulders and heaved a look in his friend’s direction. “Do not tell me you don’t trust me.”

“Of course I do.”

“Then come along, I need you. A bit of your energy, in fact.” Qasim said as he held his hand and sneaked into the back entrance of the canteen. He called out. “Chacha, I have brought my partner.”

“I knew you would,” the grey-haired chacha, who sat on a huge wooden bench under a tree, replied. “Now go and do your job.”

“What partner? What job?” Shahbaz was surprised. “What is this all about, mate?”

“Sorry, I did not tell you this earlier,” Qasim spoke scratching his head. “Actually I had come here earlier to eat but Chacha said that without money I would get no food. I told him that I’d do the dishes; but he said that I won’t be able to do them alone and must bring someone else for a helping hand. I hope you

now understand the whole story,” saying this Qasim bowed his head slightly down, fearing what his friend would do next.

“Though I do not have any experience of dish washing, I hope you will guide me.” Shahbaz said smilingly as he advanced towards the pile of dishes to be washed.

“Does that mean you are not angry?” Qasim asked.

“Of course not. You helped me satisfy my want of food, now I will help you do the dishes.” Shahbaz replied. And the two got busy in the task which had to be finished before the old clock struck five. Once done, smilingly, the two friends left for their last bus, planning for what they would do next.

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## Contextual Analysis

My piece titled '*Lunch One Day*' is a brief narrative that is based on the gathering of a couple of friends and class mates, namely Qasim Chaudry and Shahbaz Aslam, at the Karim Cafeteria or 'Dhaba' (as canteens or local roadside inns are usually referred to in Pakistan), situated just outside their university compound, after they finish up with their class. The plot is extremely simple, and is arranged in a systematic way to give us a logical and coherent beginning, a middle and an end. The theme highlighting 'friendship' is quite clear and all incidents are arranged accordingly.

The chain of events starts off by Shahbaz feeling somewhat dejected at the idea of belonging to a poor family and hence not having enough money to buy some kind of an afternoon snack or arrange a boxed lunch for himself, something which he could enjoy after getting done with his class. To top it off, his family could only afford managing two meals a day (like many families in our nation usually do) and that also in a meagre amount. So the last meal he had was during dinner time. The action picks up when his friend, Qasim, enters the plot and we see a similar conflict in his persona as well, but with a slight twist.

Having descended from similar family origins and sharing analogous poverty ridden circumstances, who could read his friend's glum, despondent, and disheartened facial expressions, that resonated his own battle with penury and scarcity of food and surplus of starvation, better than Qasim himself. But it is his positive outlook of the world around him that brings about the dramatic twist in the main story line.

Thinking that his friend looked even more miserable than he felt, he decides to help him out. After engaging in a brief conversation, Qasim leads Shahbaz to a small canteen where the two end up having a sumptuous meal, with no costs involved. Of course his purpose was not completely selfless, as he hadn't had

anything to eat either and by helping his friend fill up his empty stomach he aimed at getting rid of two birds with the same stone.

Gradually, we are dragged to the climax of the story when Shahbaz discovers that the two will have to make a payment for their meal by doing the dishes at the canteen, a fact that Qasim was already aware of. The conclusion is both ended and deliberately left open-ended suggesting that in face of all trickeries and secrets, their friendship will last for good, yet the aftermath was not the end but a mere beginning of their life of struggles and future hardships.

Morally, the story tends to impart several suggestions. For one thing, true friends never leave their companions feeling sad and deprived or alone. Secondly, the same applies to our colleagues, class fellows, family members or study groups as well. As individual human beings we must foster a relationship of mutual care and trust. The third implication deals with different attitudes of our native population in face of destitute conditions, something that has been further highlighted by the elements of 'dramatic parallelism and contrast' running throughout the narrative.

Thus, on one hand, we have a character like Shahbaz, whose pockets are empty (thus signifying empty hands and his household suffering from a lack of wealth); whose stomach is growling with acute hunger pangs (and thus the realization 'poverty is such a curse') that comes in his mind as he sits on the footpath pavement thinking how to prevent himself from starving. As a character, while he often feels bad for his friend (Qasim) who spends his days and nights in tireless efforts to earn barely a handful to support his family, yet, at the same time, he feels envious of his companion as well, seeing as at least he has a job as an emergency backup, and some money to go by, while he does not even have that. Shahbaz also panics easily and forgets about his previously spent happy moments the minute a worry or some problem comes knocking at his door.

On the other hand we have the personage of Qasim, who also belongs to a lower middle class family and lives in the same neighbourhood, the 'shabby and slump like municipality colony, which reeked of burnt junk and the left over garbage piles' as Shahbaz. While both of his parents are members of the labour-class, the young man is often scorned at and ridiculed for being the son of a house-maid. Despite having parents, both of whom work to earn a living, to afford a better kind of life, Qasim has to study by day and work part-time after getting done with his classes, his afternoon shifts often getting replaced by evening and night shifts at a bangle factory. In actual life, our city of Hyderabad is renowned for exporting the best kind of bangles all over the country, but factory owners are not known to pay healthy wages to workers for investing their blood and sweat into the whole manufacture process. Notwithstanding his strenuous circumstances, he believes in looking on the positive side of things than think of the stark realities instead, and feels grateful for the university fellowship funds for underprivileged students, because of which he and many other individuals just like himself (including Shahbaz) had been granted an admission in the University of Sindh. This is how we see the two characters' lives moving across parallel lines, yet their attitude and stance being a complete contrast of the other.

Structurally, the original narrative was reviewed during the initial stages of the workshop, where it was established that the story should be told with more details to ensure content comprehensiveness, clarity of character motives, and better interest on part of the readers in the basic story line. Sentences were to be contextually devised, keeping in mind both the Pakistani and foreign readership. Since I used my characters' manner of speech by using words from our native Urdu dialect, and as writing in dialect is very hard for the reader to follow, therefore every single language aspect that became a cause for confusions or was creating a lack of coherence between the dialogue was either modified, translated into English, or omitted altogether.

The setting of this third person omniscient POV (multiple exposition) also follows the dramatic unities of time, place and action; the three principles of

dramatic construction derived by French neo-classicists from Aristotle's Poetics, holding that a play should have one unified plot (unity of action) and that all the action should occur within one day (unity of time) and be limited to a single locale (unity of place) according to the Collins Dictionary.

Thus, for instance, the phrases 'dingy classroom,' and '...the bricks outlining the edge of the university's main road footpath, right next to his friend, while buses continued breezing past them, the movement of wheels leaving rising dust and vague marks on the road' depict the action having been set on the university premises (a single place), which in this case is our University of Sindh in Jamshoro. I have also referred to the bangle factory and Defense Housing Society in Hyderabad, 'located on the other side of the road, facing his own shabby and slump like municipality colony, which reeked of burnt junk and the left over garbage piles,' but that is not where the action takes place. The time of action (afternoon) is implied by the story's title 'Lunch One Day' and we have a single action centered story of two friends accompanying each other to feast, and working for their keep, together, as well, thus establishing an example of helping each other in need.

## **Another Shaikh Chilli Story**

*By Rabia Solangi*

Once upon a time, long, long ago, there lived a man named Majid in a small village in Northern Punjab. He hated doing hard work and spent most of his time dawdling and daydreaming.

One morning, after breakfast, Majid sat on a big rock watching the birds gracefully flying in the air. The afternoon sky was shining brightly. A hazy ripple of clouds soared high across the horizon overlooking the endless shimmer of the green fields below.

Majid was lost into space, given to the hurricane of his own world of thoughts. His beautiful world where the skies never turned dark, the ocean always blue, the fields teeming with enumerable colourful flowers, his castle surrounded by dazzling valleys, his hands overflowing with bulky stacks of wealth, where he did not have to worry about his house running out of food, or him trying to hunt a way for employment.

Suddenly his beautiful world of imagination was shattered as soon as he saw his mother coming towards him with a frown on her wrinkled face.

“Majid!” she snapped, “Now you have grown into a young man. So when will you start earning some money? The little farm your father left for us has been sold.” She continued. “As you know, we have consumed all the chickens and have already sold the only two goats that we had. If you are not going to earn money soon, we will be starving in a few days. I am an old woman and sick. There is no way I can do as much work as before.”

“Don’t worry, Maa ji (dear mother),” Majid replied, yawning. “Be patient. I will try to find work.”

“And how exactly do you plan on doing that?” she asked. “By lying in bed all day? By having your food regularly and not moving a muscle? By making your

poor old mother work constantly and not letting her take any rest? By not helping around the house, or by not getting a job at all?”

Majid placed a finger in his ears. He knew his mother was right, but a man could only take so much.

Yet a man had got to do what a man had got to do, he thought.

“Alright, alright, I get your point, alright?” He said and yawned again. “I will go out into the village center right away and get to work. I will try to find some good work to do, to earn some money.”

“Really?” his mother asked, her voice full of hope. “If you can do so, I would be so proud of you my dear son. But remember, we are left with a very meagre saving. Unless you can find more ways to earn money, we might find ourselves out on the streets in less than a couple of weeks.”

“Do not worry at all mother. I will handle everything.”

Majid struggled to his feet and lazily walked toward the outskirts of the village. “Maa ji is right,” he told himself. “I must earn money. But I will not act foolishly, as other visionaries often do. They work very hard and earn very little because they only dream. I will work out a logical plan to become rich and live a happy life. All I need is a bit of effort to turn my dream into reality.”

When he reached the edge of the village, Majid sat down under a tree thinking of several ways to get wealth; but none seemed workable. Maybe he should buy a limited number of stocks and invest them in the share market. For that he knew he would have to go all the way to the city, and he could easily do that. All he needed to do was ask for his friend’s help. And he would offer him a lift.

Unfortunately, there was only one problem. He did not have much money to invest in stocks to begin with.

Then, like a sudden bolt of lightning, it hit him hard and fast.

“Maybe I should request a few of my friends for a joint venture,” he clicked his fingers. “The food business is good these days,” he spoke out loud. “There is nothing like opening up a small restaurant that can bring easy money. And loads of it. And I have just enough amount to go for something like that.”

Unfortunately, there was one other problem. Where would he be able to find friends with the same amount of money? The way he saw it, he needed at least ten people to combine their assets together to go for a joint partnership.

And he only knew five such men.

What else was there to do, he thought.

“I know,” he clapped both hands together. “Why don’t I invest the money on Raja, the village school master’s horse?” he spoke to himself again. “He is the fastest when it comes to the racing tracks. And he has won many races as well.”

No cannot do that either, he thought to himself the hundredth time. It was just last week when the village master had sold the horse to some rich landowner in Thatta city. Buying him back would cost at least one million rupees.

There was then only one thing left to do. He would have to go over to the local village casino, and gamble everything he had on him. Indeed, that was something doable.

Sometime later, he saw brother Sharif trudging along with a pitcher of milk on his head and a large grocery bag in his hand.

“Majid,” the man called as he approached the daydreamer. “I am half dead under these heavy loads. Could you carry the pitcher of milk to the next village? I will pay you two paisas for the job.” (In those days, two paisas were equivalent to two hundred rupees of today.)

“Yes, I’ll do it gladly,” Majid replied quickly.

Sharif was the village baker and the two, being separated by an age gap of but a few years, had practically grown up together.

So the way Majid saw it, there were three reasons for him to comply with his elder brother’s request. First, Sharif was a friend. Secondly, the next village was not very far from where they presently were. And third, and most important of all, it was the first time Majid could earn money by doing a chore.

He could not wait to tell his mother about his worthy escapade. She was going to be so proud of him.

“I do have a quick question though,” said Majid, as a wrinkle began creasing his forehead. “The clay pitcher seems to be so heavy, whereas I happen

to be rather frail and weak.” He added as an afterthought after pointing towards his squashed belly and the bony skeletal excuse for his arms.

“True as that maybe, but you do have that massive, big, creative head of yours.” Sharif said and placed the pitcher of milk on Majid’s head. A short while later, the two started walking heavily.

Majid began to daydream.

The two paisas will be worth a lot to me, he thought.

*I will buy an egg and put it under the neighbour’s hen to hatch. Then I will have a chick, a beautiful one! I will feed it a lot, and it will grow into a big fat hen. She will lay eggs — a lot of them. I will let her sit on a clutch of eggs and there will be many chicks! At last they will all become roosters and hens. I will have plenty of chickens and eggs to sell and earn enough money to buy a pair of baby goats. I will feed the baby goats well and they will grow into big healthy goats. Before long I will have many of them. I will sell them to the butchers and get enough money to buy a buffalo. By selling its milk I will save a lot of money and buy more buffaloes. My dairy farm will be the biggest in the area. I will build a large mansion and will be the lord of the village. I will have many servants, and they will have to obey my orders! If any of them tries to disobey me, I will ... I will kick him.*

Thinking this he kicked his imaginary servant, the pitcher of milk fell to the ground. It broke and the milk spilled all over the place blending with the dust.

“What have you done, stupid man?” Sharif shouted. “All my milk is wasted and the pitcher is broken!”

“I am sorry, but your loss is much less than mine,” said Majid. “My whole beautiful world is shattered!” He started weeping. Between sobs he told Sharif how he would have become the lord of the village.

“Do not build castles in the air!” said Sharif. “If you want success you have to work hard continuously and regularly. And that is the key to a successful life.”

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## **Contextual Analysis**

‘Another Shaikh Chilli Story’ is a piece that is ideal for all age groups and I did not have any target audience in mind while I was composing the narrative. Hence the reason why I have deliberately used simple expressions in it.

The original version of this short story that I had created prior to the workshop, and shown to some of my workshop colleagues, was rather concise and abrupt, and was written in the reported speech paragraph format, with a few dialogues in the main narrative structure only. I just assumed having a certain amount of discourse in the plot to be a wise choice since, technically speaking, there is only so much of conversation that a single individual character can actually hold on its own. Later, I discovered my perspective was not completely reasonable or justified and to straighten up the plot’s loose ends, I decided to explore the character a bit more honestly, with an inclusion of some additional and more holistic psychological details. This intervention was in lieu with a fellow writer’s suggestion to include more dialogue in order to get a sense of the major character’s relations. So for that I settled on utilization of the conversation format of intrapersonal communication strategy where a single character is allowed to speak out loud to his own self, kind of like the Shakespearean soliloquys.

The plot itself is easy to encode given that the sequence of events flow easily with a smooth transition from one incident to the next. The verbal format is likewise uncomplicated and straightforward, and the narrative does not need any further simplification or clarification for the Pakistani audience as it is inspired by the humorous accounts centring on the life and adventures of our favourite comic fiction hero “Shaikh/Sheikh Chilli”; a character notorious for his follies and simplicity, who never cares about laws of nature, builds castles in the air and in his imagination establishes great businesses, empires, etc., but in the end gets ridiculed by people (always).

The plot is based upon a single narrative that does not deal with austere circumstances in a direct fashion. Rather, the sombre and grim reality of the impoverished, the needy, the disadvantaged and the underprivileged humanity is portrayed with slightly humorous undertones that run throughout the account.

The narrative details the story of Majid, whose character is a prototypical representation of two entwined psychological traits, one side of which represents our conventional Pakistani “lazy-bum”, whereas the other typifies the archetypical visionary airhead or more specifically a “space cadet.” The resulting persona is contrasted with the realistic and practical approach of the main character’s mother, who is clearly a no-nonsense person and views things the way they really are.

Though the character of Majid’s mother and a minor character by the name of “Sharif” have been presented with succinct and to the point detail, their personalities and mannerisms that we get through their dialogue are sufficient and adequate to shed further light on the protagonist’s individuality, which stands out against the two juxtaposed personae. As a result, we get the story of Majid who hates doing hard work, spends most of his time daydreaming about useless stuff, without getting a grip on anything that relates to the practical or real world. Enters his mother in the story, who wants her only son to do something, anything, to earn even a meagre amount of money, so long as they could survive in the aftermath of their farm having already been sold off. On the contrary, we have her son who has irrational notions of opting for a kind of employment that could make him rich without working hard or investing time, sweat, and patience into whatever he does. The same also happens to be the struggle that the central character’s conflict is based on; his wish to either stay apart from the real world, and remain immersed in the idealistic “alternative reality,” or accept his responsibility as a prodigal son that forces him to do whatever is humanly possible to bring his family out of the snare of poverty. Sometime later enters our third and final character that helps in bringing about both the climax and conclusion of the story.

The former is reached with the kicking incident, when a kick delivered in Majid's dream sequence, aimed at the imaginary and disobedient servant employed in his mansion, ends up unbalancing the pitcher of milk mounted on his head in the real world, which drops down on the ground. This incident is the turning point in the story seeing as it was this same milk (that gets spilled all over the place blending with the dust) that he was supposed to help carry over to the nearest village and earn a few rupees in the real world and use that money to buy a chick, grow it into a hen, raise its eggs into many more roosters and hens, get plenty of chickens and eggs to sell and earn enough money to buy a pair of baby goats, feed the baby goats well and raise them into big healthy goats, sell them to the butchers and get enough money to buy a buffalo, sell its milk to earn a lot of money and buy more buffaloes, get a dairy farm, and build a massive village in his imaginary world. This incident stretched out to the conclusion, an understanding of the notion that one should not create fantasies that will never be realities and that success follows regular toil and constant hard work.

On a side note, the previously stated thought was not what I was actually trying to convey through my story. What I had in my mind while working on the piece was the idea that we can't use just our imagination to gain something productive in life. We need a significant amount of effort to flourish as human beings. But it does not mean that we should stop dreaming of big things. Just that we should have the power to convert our dreams into reality. Unfortunately, for some technical reason, the thought did not emerge as apparent through the tale, despite my having mentioned it in the following dialogue;

*"I must earn money. But I will not act foolishly, as other visionaries often do. They work very hard and earn very little because they only dream. I will work out a logical plan to become rich and live a happy life. All I need is a bit of effort to turn my dream into reality."*

The story has been set in the countryside terrains of Northern Punjab province, in a time when anecdotes revolving around Shaikh Chilli were extremely popular and widespread. As mentioned earlier, in those days two paisas were equivalent to twenty rupees of today. As for my choice of Northern Punjab, the city of Islamabad is the topography represented by the words:

*‘... the birds gracefully flying in the air. The afternoon sky was shining brightly. A hazy ripple of clouds soared high across the horizon overlooking the endless shimmer of the green fields below... the beautiful world where the skies never turned dark... the fields teeming with enumerable colourful flowers... surrounded by dazzling valleys...’.*

The narration is mostly told than shown as that was the way it formed itself in my mind. I do, however, hope I have done justice to my chosen Point of View, which I hope was a ‘limited third person omniscient’ depicting the perspective of Majid.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 5.5 External reflection on the overall research outcomes

As is clearly evident, therefore, towards the end of this study a variety of short stories were generated, all of which have emerged out of the social climate of Pakistan. The stories are contained within a particular cultural setting, which encourages one to look at the different human dimensions of poverty, indifference to humanity, money grubbing, professional misgivings, and competitive rivalry, amidst growing feelings of respect for friends, parents, and studies prevalent throughout the country; though by no means specific to its populace alone.

The apparent order of the collection comprehensively belongs to a world of shifting social and economic structure, where compassion in the human mind-set has suggested definite possibilities of a progressive change. This is a world where, despite possessing contrary traits, humanitarian acts of benevolence have impacted the twenty-first century sensibility of modern youth. While some of these stories tend to forecast adversities brought about by rare circumstances and by monstrous characters, as is the case with a final submission that deals with *the abduction of a child who is later forced to steal*, or *the harassment of a female office employee*, most depict issues that arise easily and spontaneously out of the actions and characters of common men and women, some of which are essentially a part of all of us. “Characters exhibiting inconsiderateness towards others to satisfy their worldly ambitions and desires,” “individuals like ‘Shaikh Chilli’ striving to think out of the box, but sadly unable to achieve anything big due to impoverished circumstances,” etc.; these are some of the concerns of various other stories which exhibit suffering brought about by situations that could constitute our fate as well, and actions that perhaps even we might be capable of committing under the respective circumstances. Through disparate experiences, each story deals with a particular aspect of human psyche, the conclusion of which proposes a picture that simultaneously reveals the deeper moral values aside from the structures of “worldly” meaning and interpretation that operate within the varied communities of Pakistan. Notwithstanding, each story has not one but a

multiplicity of themes, most of which lead toward an outcome where despite certain conflicts and atrocities, jovial connections are to be found.

The stylistic attributes of the narratives include a rich cultural geographical setting encoding everything from the slumps of Sindh to the mountain areas of Punjab. Constant reference is also made to the contemporary youth of the country and their post-modern notions regarding progress and success. The collection also includes a shifting narrative voice alerting to various characters, each possessing a unique perspective of their own. The stories keep close to common incidents and to such characters as occupy the ordinary walks of life. Each work mixes history and fiction in a concerting manner and all attributes of twenty-first century Pakistan are distributed dramatically among the characters. Social problems of the day enter, but briefly. In doing so, due attention is also given to the kind of events that constitute our inner life and therefore have true reality for all of us. All sorts of introductions and background paintings are included. But direct plunging into the middle of an action is preferred by most contributors, so as to draw the reader into the situation of a particular character and include him within the story instead of keeping him at a safe distance. The genre of the stories, with respect to the substance shared in common by most of them, is more akin to a “chronicle novel” with a double ending. The stories submitted by some participants of this study correlate more to the light and sparkling tone of novels of Jane Austen, that end happily; while others allude to different currents within experience that are marked by intensity and gloom, particularly those stages of development that are liable to confront terrorist acts, such as assault and kidnapping, that are not alien to this part of the world. At the same time efforts have been taken to make sure that this work engages with varied aspects of life and with such diverse issues as subjectivity, the intellect, independence, and responsibility, control and chaos, all of which are important preoccupations of modern fiction.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to present the outcomes of this study. Data was created by the sample population, while “performative research” together with “purposive sampling” techniques were applied to justify a small scale exhibition of their resulting work. Additional means were put into effect to ensure the displayed data appeared credible, so there would be no missing values or lack of holistic insight. This included the exhibition of the writer-researcher’s outlook of participants’ work, which was important to lend the resulting performance a visual depth and to answer the questions raised at the outset of this investigation. Strategies presented by Biggs (2004), Muecke (2007), Neslson (2008), and Stewart (2003) were employed to ensure that a broader audience was able to visualize and associate with the research findings. After reviewing the aforementioned practitioners’ research it was discovered that the meaning conveyed by creative writing artefacts could be enriched further if a non-hypercritical or censorious reflection by another writer accompanies the products. This was suggested to be a rather “productive” way of revealing insights on grounds of the “experiential/experimental focus” of the writer writing (production), and “experience” of the reader reading (reception). Simultaneously following other researchers’ (Biggs, 2004; Dewsbury, 2009; Haseman, 2007; McLaren, 2004; Rust et al. 2007; Webb & Brien, 2008) recommendations, the present investigator’s reflection on contributed research artefacts was presented to answer questions raised in Chapter One of this thesis; the most obvious notion being an evident possibility of training students to be able to create and contextually analyse their work – despite the short period of workshop time. A detailed discussion of the possible impact of present research findings will be presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

It has long been established that old notions, ideas, attitudes and previously institutionalized habits die very hard. The adoption of new concepts is mostly followed by a gap of several generations before it is actually implemented within, and by, the society at large. Yet even this is provisional. The regulation of novel attempts in every field is conditioned by the degree of abiding by them relentlessly, and only if exploration of the established or existing ideology is continuous; otherwise the earlier attempt will lapse. Hence the *raison d'être* of this research.

Creative Writing as an academic practice stands anomalistic within the university sector in Pakistan. The discipline still seems to be in its emerging stages in most parts of the country, if not the world. In the Pakistani context, Creative Writing has surfaced as a form of studies that has given rise to a complicated situation, variant research studies, and contradictory findings. Due to the same, there is a crucial need to conduct in depth investigations so as to ward off misconceived perceptions about the discipline at large. As an academic practitioner of Creative Writing in Pakistan, it seemed essential to explore what the field had to offer contemporary academia, and to discover new aspects in its research mechanism.

This part of the thesis presents details of the same, by delving into the rationale for the current study, and by discussing relevant findings and novel insight imparted by it.

The chapter starts off with a brief discussion on the circumstances that brought about main objectives of this research. The next section builds up on the same against the university context in Pakistan. Section 6.3 presents an overview of key findings; and what they imply. Section 6.4 discusses additional issues that provide understanding of aspects that can be researched further. The conclusion presented in the last section discusses ways in which this study has contributed to the body of knowledge.

## **6.2 Overview of the research context**

Contrary to the longstanding and deep-rooted establishment of literature and linguistic courses within the English departments, some inquiries have been unable to detect a tangible presence of Creative Writing in academic institutes and universities in Pakistan<sup>2</sup>. In a study conducted on higher education students' writing practices in the country, Rustam (2010) notes that within our university sector, M.A English courses are composed of English literary classics; a few additional universities have included courses in linguistics; in certain other departments, English Language Teaching and American Literature are offered as optional courses; whereas some institutes have started mandatory courses in basics of English language as well (p.402). The researcher sadly concludes that learners' work within the academy is entirely concerned with 'writing which is necessary for exams,' and 'no creative writing activity is part of the students writing, neither they are encouraged to do that' (2010, p.458). See also Mustafa (2009, p.1) cited in Khan (2012, p.58).

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<sup>2</sup> This is written with reference to the investigations conducted by Ahmad (2011), Bilal (2013), Chandio et al. (2013), Haider (2012a, 2012b), Imtiaz (2010), Khan (2011, 2012, 2013), Mansoor (2010, 2011, 2012), and Rustam (2010) on Creative Writing Studies involving primary through post-secondary and higher education level students across Pakistan.

While there is by no means a complete lack of writing instruction across Pakistan, as has been detailed with reference to the presence of Creative Writing courses in various national universities (*Sections 1.2.4.2 – 1.2.4.3*), the arena's identity does appear to be slightly questionable in the context of students enrolled at public sector universities in Sindh (see Table 1.2 for details). Loop holes have also been observed in case of Master of Arts in English programs across the country by Khan (2012), who suggests this is where students are required to concentrate on 'literature and reading, not on writing' (2012, p.59). Haider (2012a) explains this further by referring to the "nationally unified syllabus" present in the country, which manages and directs how the teaching of writing should be run and evaluated in schools, and in higher education institutes. Under their aegis, the 'Pakistani English Syllabus highly values correct linguistic forms instead of students' development of creative thought' (2012a, p.215). A natural consequence of the above is even the university-based literature learners can critically appreciate great poetry and other literary and non-literary genres. But when it comes to a writing practice incorporating the same 'they find themselves handicapped' (Haider, 2012a, p.216).

Kausar Bilal (2013) strongly believes many higher education learners in the country are unaware of both, the "practice," as well as a different mode of learning paradigm offered by Creative Writing, particular to this field, which distinguishes it from all varieties of "literature" and "linguistics" oriented subjects (*ibid*). What is worst is the fact that the area is often confused with literary studies, by teachers as well as students (Khan, 2011, 2012; Haider, 2012a; Bilal, 2013). And this situation will continue to persist in the country unless:

- Creative Writing Programs are introduced in (all) colleges and at universities.
- Such programs are established so as to create further awareness about the practice.
- Institutes either hire 'professional teachers,' to teach the skill, or 'teachers from abroad in the beginning until we have our own students turning into writing teachers.'

Cited from Bilal (2013).

In Pakistan, most writers have achieved success and recognition by their self-made efforts, their innate talent, and interest in studies. Some learners have also been fortunate enough to receive information on concepts of Fiction, Short Fiction, Nonfiction, Creative Nonfiction and extended genres associated with these terms in native universities. However, there is a strong possibility of coming across many other students who may not have been able to observe what Creative Writing has to offer, both as a practice and a field of studies. Such being the case, in this “competitive world,” as an academic, and a beginner writer, the researcher opined a serious need to investigate all avenues dealing with the practice of writing creatively, as it exists in the global context of contemporary academia. The present research was conducted to this effect.

### **6.3 Implications of research findings**

The present project has primarily demonstrated how to enable students to compose and critically examine their varied yet modest works of fiction, which mirror their individual context. Towards the end of this study, twenty-three short fiction narratives were generated by the research participants, along with critical essays analysing their production context. These stemmed out of the various creative writing activities utilized in “performative” workshops conducted at the undergraduate level. Seeing as an understanding of fiction composition was connected to a comprehension of effective utilization of its key components – *character, setting, conflict, plot* and *theme* – throughout this process, it was imperative to explore the same. Coincidentally, since the purpose of this study was to inspire students to compose fiction, and enable other academics to attempt the same, therefore all pedagogic findings pertaining to the development of Creative Writing skills in students have been appended to this thesis. This information has been offered in appendices “B” through “K”.

It is expected that the appended insight generated by this research will act as a handbook of ready reference for all academics and students who wish to observe (a) fiction writing in English in Pakistan, (b) the pedagogic means that could be utilized to help students compose a varied and multi-thematic body of writing in

English, whose generic and formal traditions align with their own culture and tradition, and (d) the notion of “creativity” in terms of its corresponding association with “academic writing.” The participants’ feedback (presented in *Section 4.5.3.2*) will lead to a broadened understanding of the working limitations of introducing creative writing to the pedagogical context of third-world developing nations resembling Pakistan. Being a unique form of research that focused on the correlation between theory, pedagogy, and the practice of Creative Writing at the university, it will also serve as the starting point for future studies in the arena not only at IELL in the USJP, but other institutes as well.

#### **6.4 Remaining issues and additional remarks**

The term “research” has long been associated with an investigative practice that is scholarly and original, and which leads to the establishment of new facts and reaches new conclusions. Likewise, during the course of this research, a few aspects were inevitably discovered that still need to be researched further to generate valuable insights.

Researchers primarily need to look into a specific issue: what amounts to a proper academic research practice when dealing with the creative arts – *in Pakistan*? Research methods and norms pertaining to the crafts have taken a visible shift in international countries across the globe. Researchers investigating Visual Arts disciplines, i.e. “Fine Art, Design, and the Crafts,” have already progressed to the extent of employing ‘methodologies which reflect their particular discipline-specific expertise’ (Malins & Gray, 1995, p.3). But when it comes to educational research within Pakistan, Social Science and Scientific research methods still reign supreme. The criterion for the evaluation of findings either falls under qualitative, quantitative and/or mixed method of research. There is no place for subjective perspectives of objects. Under the circumstances, Haseman (2007) and other practice-led performative researchers, who believe research projects need not necessarily articulate a research problem or set up aims and objectives to deal with questions, concentrating instead on critical self-assessment, interactive

communication with peers, and being open to the evolutionary nature of research, will likely find themselves in a tight spot. As brusque a conclusion as it may seem, investigating art-based concepts by utilizing conventional social science methodologies, or other established strategies that do not go well with such concepts, may be intimidating and unproductive, both for the artist-practitioner as well as for the discipline at large. Much research needs to be carried out to study the unique nature that creative arts subjects incorporate, and the prerequisite strategies for arts research in Pakistan, and to some extent elsewhere around the world, still remain to be assessed.

Another issue that remains to be considered is the contextual mandate that has grounded this study. The setup of the present project on developing students' creative writing skills has been located in a South-Asian academic environment, where the discipline is virtually non-existent. This shows that there is a concurrent need for broader exploration of pedagogical approaches beyond those suggested by western creative thinkers, specific to their own correlating practice or particular contexts; or those applied in this study that has explored the writing practice of a specific university in the province of Sindh. Speaking just with respect to Pakistan alone, there are four other major provinces situated in this country. Most pedagogical studies on developing Creative Writing course material, and the ways they should be administered in HE institutes, have been conducted in the rather developed circles of the British, American and Australian based universities. Very few studies have been carried out to examine the area's pedagogical mechanism, modular format of instruction, or test the applicability of the workshop method outside these countries. Even where that is not the case, research in the field has been observed to be limited to the established institutes in the established cities of Karachi (Sindh Province), Lahore and Islamabad (Punjab). Due to the lack of investigations in other localities, it would be difficult to assume if the Creative Writing theories and pedagogical means utilized within this study would work equally well in other ethnic, cultural, or geographic settings. The strength of the project, the research context focusing on a pedagogical investigation of Creative Writing in the university, and a utilization

of associated models and research designs may contrast across different cultures. Given the same, there is a pressing need for closely investigating the impact of implementing assorted strategies in the teaching of Creative Writing on learners from diverse cultural/linguistic backgrounds across the country on a wider scale.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

Research on undergraduate literature students' capability to produce fiction at the IELL in the USJP was stimulated by the progressive expansion in Creative Writing Studies across global academia. The discipline is still in its infant stages in the primary and secondary education circles in Pakistan, though virtually non-existent in our universities, unlike in the United Kingdom, America and Australia where it has been actively prevalent for some time. The writing practitioners and researchers in these countries have been responsible for introducing some of the most noticeable of changes in their own higher education context. These include slight alterations in the practice-based and practice-led paradigms to conduct research, now considered a second nature to the Creative Writing discipline. Another factor of change that has been introduced to the domain is an articulated differentiation between the quantitative, qualitative and the performative methods of research. Together with findings generated by researchers belonging to a plethora of creative arts disciplines – fine artists, painters, photographers, designers, musicians, stage performers – creative writers have enlightened the means which can lead to quality research in this field. Through their varied explorations, they have also exhibited contexts wherein the pedagogical mechanism involving creativity can be designed and delivered. Having just begun to establish itself as an independent entity, without being linked to literary studies or criticism in any way, the Creative Writing discipline has recently started producing writer-teacher-researchers to explore and encourage students to move through channels specific to their context – as poets, novelists, dramatists, short story writers, music composers, and more. However, as published literature shows, there has been an evident scarcity of credible research to explore learners' perspectives focusing on their exposure to creative writing pedagogy, globally as

well as in a purely Pakistani context. The intent of this study was to attempt precisely that.

In order to procure contributing insight concerning the discipline's identity in Pakistan, it was important to understand how the sample population from the Institute of English in the University of Sindh – who are representatives, therefore, of this nation's higher education learners across the province of Sindh – would react to the introduction of a novel field of studies, and explore such pedagogical means that may influence its acceptance. To address this issue, a course module was consequently developed and implemented in a 29 session creative writing workshop. The modular format was based on the ICARE model, known for expediting creative learning and relevant research streams. The workshopping pedagogy incorporated direct, constructive and learning generation models of instruction. These teaching methods were then used to shape “the pedagogical praxis of creativity,” and use it to investigate “the teaching of creative writing in a diverse lingua-cultural university context” with thirteen participants. Their responses to feedback questionnaires provide a framework to understand native learners' grounds for acceptance or rejection of teaching creative writing approaches relevant to fiction. And the resulting artistic outcomes of this study offer credible evidence that supports all claims relating to the possibility of exerting a favourable impact on academic circles by an introduction of creative training to learners. By examining the feasibility of using teaching resources and learning strategies, which were employed in developed educational settings, in identifying a similar impact in a developing educational setup, the results of this study have contributed to knowledge by:

- a) Filling one important information gap by supplying relevant Pakistani practitioners with details concerning a practice-based and practice-led investigation of creative writing training, and its reception by learners, in their own context;

- b) Filling another gap by generating insight based on utilization of explicit-cum-tacit or the combination of mentoring and reverse-mentoring learning approaches (by using direct, constructivist and learning-generation teaching methods) relevant to the practitioners of developed economies as well as those of developing nations.

Another contribution has also been made to the body of knowledge. Prior research had suggested that practitioners either considered practice-based as a spinoff of the practice-led research methodology, or that (where differences were perceived) they were at ease with one paradigm of research over another (Boyd, 2009; Candy, 2006; Haseman, 2007). This investigation not only attempted to utilize a combination of both paradigms by adding constructs specific to each, but added a third paradigm as well; that of research-led practice. The study explored research insights that resulted from the researcher's tacit learning informed by their fiction writing experience, which directed their development of teaching methods and instruments that were implemented in a training, that led to learners' creative and critical response. This was how the present study extended the single research-led practice by merging it with the practice-based method, which was then used to ground the practice-led path of communicating documentable research insights. In short, each paradigm was shown to be interlinked with the next, and exhibited a resulting matrix that contributes to a rather holistic understanding of Creative Writing discipline, and its research and pedagogical constructs. However, it is suggested that the cycle is definitely in its experimental phase and researchers are encouraged to enhance the matrix's impact by including additional constructs from other creative arts research paradigms.

In addition to the aforementioned contribution, the feedback information submitted by participants showed a favourable influence of the workshop method on their abilities to undertake creative work and meet the learning outcomes since it was collaborative in disposition. Thus this study has thirdly revealed that apart from enjoying a novel learning experience, the comfort level of students also influences the rate of success of Creative Writing training on artistic productivity.

Therefore, findings of this study suggest the provision of a non-judgemental critical environment as necessary logistics to enable novice writing students to meet the requirements of this discipline. This also implies that the more a creative writer-teacher forgoes their control over the learning environment, allowing instead the participants to guide their own learning, it would provoke ease and usefulness of training, which would subsequently influence their acceptance of the Creative Writing conventions and practices offered in a non-native language.

Fourth, this project revealed that some factors such as the *extensive workload*, *time constraints*, *negative feedback*, and *contextual analysis mandates* failed to trigger learners' active participation during the training. The insight indicates a need to investigate the impact of these factors in the context of Creative Writing pedagogy further. In order to improve means to beget a more constructive impact, writing researchers would have to resolve all such issues that cause inadequate student response. Such attempts will contribute to the generation of a stronger base of potential learners to access the discipline and its protocols more easily, and will consequently increase their willingness to study the field.

Fifth, existing investigations conducted in the discipline across Pakistan were mostly found to have focused on voicing a need to introduce Creative Writing on a broad scale within the university sector, or tended to explore the development of students' overall creative skills, without being genre specific. This has been explored in *Chapter 2* of this thesis. However, this study examined pedagogical approaches in a university setup, with students who were provided with a fiction-writing training.

Sixth, this study utilized a rather novel modular instruction model, which was not like any systematic ISD models that have been employed thus far to design, develop and conduct pedagogic courses. Creative Writing is distinct from all conventional disciplines in the academia. It required a more sophisticated student-centered format to be able to support effective creative learning. The ICARE model is a state-of-the-art design, relaying insight using which has no doubt

generated enriched knowledge. This model, as discussed in *Chapter 4*, was extended in range by incorporating structures from additional ISD frames to its genetic makeup. This allowed a richer, more in-depth exploration of teaching resources and strategies to be developed and implemented during the workshop. In addition, the modified model showed management support for both the learners and their instructor. It thus enabled students to enhance their own learning, and their teachers' maintenance of their normal function, without either of their perspectives conflicting with the other's interests.

The introduction of diverse methodologies and strategies to explore pedagogical mechanism offered by the creative arts can therefore be seen as a contribution to knowledge in more ways than one. A good number of researches, apart from this study, (mentioned in *Chapter 2*), have been conducted thus far that describe the beneficial impact to enrichment of knowledge generated by undertaking this form of research. Compared to traditional educational research outcomes, the production of artistic forms relays tacit knowledge along with the explicit or objectifiable content. And despite having some limitations – the sample being a (provincial) cross-section of the native (Pakistani) undergraduate population; this investigation being conducted within the workshop setup; findings being obtained after a single study serving as the pilot process, with a small number of students belonging to a single-level – the resulting insight can still qualify as being holistic and multidimensional in scope. What is now required is maybe a comparative study on a broader scale, investigating additional factors in a non-restricted setup. Thus, for instance, instead of in a workshop, the experiment could be conducted in a classroom with a good number of students. Utilizing Creative Writing as a course in this manner may highlight other facets of learners' reaction to the discipline, thereby resulting in longitudinal data. The idea could be to compare the depth of understanding and quality of skill development of each participant, individually. Another study could observe attitudes of cohorts belonging to varied levels of academic studies. This would serve as a few means whereby additional research would be able to validate the generalizability of present research findings in other contexts.

# APPENDICES

**Consent of Undergraduate Students Enrolled in BS (II) Level at Institute of English Language and Literature, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, to Participate in a Research Study on Developing Creative Writing Skills.**

Dear Students

Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time.

TITLE OF STUDY: The Pedagogical Praxis of Creativity: An Investigation into the Incipience of Creative Writing in USJP  
RESEARCHER: Komal Ansari

**WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?** You are being asked to take part in this study because the researcher believes that your initial experience working with courses on 'Introduction to the elements of Fiction' and 'Writing Skills,' and your flair for creative work makes you an ideal candidate to help answer questions about the dynamics of creative writing process in the local context, in relation to the possibility of such a course on 'Creative Writing' being incorporated in the Institute of English Language and Literature syllabus pertaining to / or irrespective of English Literature.

**WHO IS UNDERTAKING THIS RESEARCH?** Under the supervision of Mr. Keith Jebb, a practicing poet and course leader of Creative Writing at the University of Bedfordshire in United Kingdom, who studied at Oxford University and has taught at the University of Westminster and the American Intercontinental University in London, the researcher Ms. Komal Ansari will conduct the 30 day workshop on developing creative writing skills at Institute of English Language and Literature in University of Sindh and synthesize the information obtained therein.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH?** The goal of this project is to develop creative writing skills of undergraduate students studying in B.S. part II at IELL, who have a commitment to developing their creative writing skills. This topic is of particular relevance to students because every now and then they compose a disproportionate number of creative works on their own, with no reception of any kind of instruction from teachers in English department. The research would do just that. It will examine the dynamics of creative writing process as discussed theoretically and practiced in class rooms in national and international contexts, and establish the same in our local context.

**WHERE IS THE WORKSHOP GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?** The workshop will take place in the multimedia library at the Institute of English. The workshop will last approximately two and a half hours, Monday through Wednesday, every week throughout half this semester. The arrangement has been planned keeping in mind the rest of your class schedule, and will not hamper your remaining two courses. You are entitled to regular vacations and regular break for your mid-semester tests.

**WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?** You will be asked to participate in the workshop and engage in creative writing tasks and activities. This will also be supplemented by reading material on important elements for composing short stories, and critical discussions involving every participant's point of view regarding their own compositions and everyone else's.

**ARE THERE REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?** There are no reasons that you should not participate in this workshop based research study. The investigator assures all kinds of support during the process.

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?** You may feel slightly put down by the aura of possible competitive surge that may be created within the workshop environment. If you believe you would be unable to cope up with the situation then you are advised to give your participation a great deal of thought. Additionally, it is not possible to identify all potential risks in this research procedure, but the researcher will take reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

**WILL I BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?** There are no known benefits for participating; however, you may benefit from taking part in the following ways: 1.) We hope this workshop will give you the opportunity to enrich your academic experience at the Institute of English, and induce you to take this as an opportunity to reflect on life and career decisions. 2.) We anticipate that you will be making a significant contribution to your immediate community by providing thoughtful information that, when combined with the information shared by others in the department involved in the study, we hope will shed light on the standing of creative writing instruction at the institute. 3.) We hope you will be making a significant contribution to the overall body of knowledge on this topic that affects English Literature / Performing Arts departments nationally, and to some extent internationally as well.

**WHAT WILL IT COST ME TO PARTICIPATE?** There are no costs to participate. You will be provided with all necessary resources for the workshop.

**WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE?** Your information will be combined with information about other students participating in the study. When we write about the study in the form of a thesis, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. We may publish the results of this study in the form of research articles, etc, as well. You will be identified in these written materials, with your consent.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?** Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the workshop, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact:

Researcher, Komal Ansari at [komal.ansari@beds.ac.uk](mailto:komal.ansari@beds.ac.uk); OR [ihansari\\_1@hotmail.com](mailto:ihansari_1@hotmail.com). We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

**To show your willing consent, please check below:**

I would like to participate in the study and would like to receive and respond to any questionnaire or interview by postal mail, electronically through email etc.

**If you do not wish to participate, please check the following box:**

I do not wish to participate in this study or correspondence for this research.

**Your signature below further acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing two pages. Please initial and date the bottom of this page.**

Participant name \_\_\_\_\_

Participant signature

Date

Researcher Signature

Date

2013 - ANSARI, K - Course Module: Creative Writing I (Timeframe: 10 Weeks) *Appendix B*  
 Venue: Inst. of English Language & Literature (USJP) B.S. Level 2 (Lit.) / 3 Units (29 Sessions)

Module Identifier	<b>1022805 (RIMAP, UoB, UK)</b>
Module Title	<b>CREATIVE WRITING I</b>
Academic Session/Year	<b>02 September 2013 – 22 November 2013</b>
Research Supervisor	<b>Keith Jebb</b>
Co-ordinator	<b>Komal Ansari</b>
Semester	<b>Semester 02</b>
Course Delivery	<b>70 - 72 Hours Workshop. (28 - 29 x 2.5 hour workshop classes)</b>
Pre-requisite Competencies Or Pre-Module Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Submit a comprehensive and cohesive pre-portfolio of creative work (short story/ anecdote/ reflective writing) of 500 - 1500 words, typed &amp; double spaced.</b></li> <li>2) <b>Submit a critical essay of 500 - 1000 words, reflecting the rationale behind students' own writing practice and their choice to participate in the workshop. (See <i>Appendix F</i> for details).</b></li> </ol>
Semester Assessment Or Post-Module Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Portfolio of Writing: (One portfolio of short story / two concise narratives/ extract of a longer piece of fiction) of 2000 – 2500 words.</b></li> <li>2) <b>Contextual Analysis: (of 1000 – 1500 words) reflecting on agreed aspect(s) of theory as it relates to or has affected student's own writing practice. (See <i>Appendix G</i>).</b></li> </ol>

### **Background**

Creative writing is the one of the fastest growing disciplines in higher education institutions all over the globe today. But for a lot of students at the Institute of English Language and Literature, in University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan, the element presents itself no less than a visionary passion; a discipline fostering its own set of mechanics that many such students are almost completely unaware of. Keeping in accord with current research in the arena, a preliminary study on and analysis of former creative writing curriculum models led to the formulation of the following module for IELL undergraduate learners wishing to broaden their horizons in the practice of literary fiction and the creation of this form of art. The models were designed by Atkinson (2003) and Azerbaijan University of Languages & UNESCO (2010) to policy the theoretical aspect and practical component of creative writing as interdisciplinary elements rather than setting the two in different boundaries. The modules are meant for undergraduate creative writing students, encompassing flexible reading material and informal writing assignments, the purpose of which is to discern learners that they allowed to make mistakes yet learn something from them. The present module voices just the same.

### **Brief Description**

This module focuses on preliminary information pertaining to the contemporary genre of fiction and the mechanics of writing creatively. It encourages critical reflection on the relationship between literary theory and creative practice, and is meant for students who are just beginning to

write. The module is mainly exercise driven, and comprises of a fully integrated range of activities to equip students with beginner level skills involved in the process of composing fiction. As such the compiled material will benefit those students who are interested in exploring the rudiments of the fiction form in their work; and those who wish to enhance their creative writing and critical evaluation skills.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The present module is designed to help students gain a deeper awareness and understanding of the contemporary genre of fiction, and the mechanics of writing creatively. It is also structured to enable students to experiment with their writing, in the light of their theoretical reading and by utilizing the given activities through hands-on creative and critical performance. The main purpose of the exercises is not to write a brilliant, or close to brilliant piece, but to complement critical inquiry with some creative experiment, and to understand the fiction form in terms of craft and technique.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this module students should typically be able to achieve the following:

#### **Creative Practice Outcomes**

- demonstrate some awareness of the many formal techniques available for composing fiction;
- exhibit a beginner level ability at using the elements of craft (e.g. character, conflict, dialogue, plot, point of view, etc.) to produce original pieces of work.

#### **Practical Criticism Outcomes**

- make constructive critical responses to their own and their peers' composition, offering analysis and logical practical suggestions for improvement;
- formulate opinions on works by professional authors in an objective fashion;

### **Learning and Teaching Strategy**

The module will be utilized in a workshop comprising of 29 sessions, spanning a period of approximately 10 weeks. There will be three to five sessions every week, most being held on Monday through Wednesday, and each session will last for two hours. An additional thirty minutes of talk-time will be reserved for remaining queries and dialogue, if any. During the workshop student-led discussions will be preferred over tutorial interpretation, and students will create their own writing and offer feedback on works by published authors and the writing of their peers. The instructor will facilitate additional dialogue and learning with students within as well as outside the 'contact hour' slots. Students will be subjected to direct, constructivist, and learning generation techniques of instruction. Direct instruction will take the form of instructor-directed lectures and discussions in the workshop. Learners will be expected to read, write, and investigate given tasks, and thereby construct meanings on their own. Learners will also be required to help facilitate the pedagogical practice by generating their perspective of their peers' work and the researcher's own creative work in progress. Feedback on formative work will be offered in the form of practical evaluation by Module Coordinator and peers. Feedback on summative work will be delivered according to the existing protocols of the creative writing pedagogy, with comments on feedback sheets. Participants' feedback on the pedagogical methods and material employed throughout will be gathered on questionnaires designed specifically to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the course module.

CONTENT					
Strand/ Substrand	Standard (Concepts)	Benchmark (Objectives)	Assessment On	Suggested Readings (Critical)	Suggested Reading Extracts (Creative)
<p><b>UNIT 1: GETTING STARTED</b></p> <p>[6 Sessions / 15 Hours]</p> <p><b>Workshop Segment: Creation and Performance</b></p> <p>[Sept. 2 - 11, 2013]</p>	<p>The rationale of this component is to provide students with preliminary information about the practical aspects of the creative writing process.</p> <p>Specific attention will focus on the practical needs of students and their initial sample of creative work.</p> <p>The students will be motivated to engage in a writing process with attention to personal experience, organization, focus, and quality of ideas.</p>	<p>Participants of the study will;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read creative and critical samples pertaining to fiction.</li> <li>2. Participate in discussion forums with teacher and peers.</li> <li>3. Create original piece as a means of personal or group expression.</li> <li>4. Incorporate use of real events in their narrative.</li> <li>5. Revise, edit and prepare final drafts as per the audience and purposes.</li> </ol>	<p>(Performance assessment)</p> <p>The learning activities and candidates' produced artefacts will be experiential and focus on performance-based tasks.</p>	<p>This component will entail students have a basic reading knowledge of chosen extracts from:</p> <p><i>The Creative Writing Coursebook</i> by Bell and Magrs.</p> <p><i>Imaginative Writing</i> by Janet Burroway.</p>	<p>Fiction extracts from:</p> <p><i>The Creative Writing Coursebook</i> by Bell and Magrs.</p> <p><i>Imaginative Writing</i> by Janet Burroway.</p>

<p><b>UNIT 2: CRAFT AND TECHNIQUE</b></p> <p>[18 Sessions /45 Hours]</p> <p><b>Workshop Segment: Elements of Fiction</b></p> <p>[Oct. 21 - Nov. 18, 2013]</p>	<p>The aim of this unit is to acquaint students formally with the various elements of prose fiction, to motivate students to develop an investigative perception pertaining to such elements, and to further guide them in the production of sample work.</p>	<p>Participants of the study will;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access creative and critical samples pertaining to fiction for reinforcement.</li> <li>2. Participate in discussion forums with teacher and peers.</li> <li>3. Recognize and utilize the fundamental components of the fiction form, including (but not limited to) the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a.) Characterization , Conflict, Dialogue, Plot, Point of View, Setting, Theme, Voice.</li> <li>b.) technical skills, such as organization or focus, vocabulary, grammar.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Revise writing using multiple sources of critique and feedback.</li> </ol>	<p>(Performance assessment)</p> <p>The learning activities and candidates' produced artefacts will be experiential and focus on performance-based tasks.</p>	<p>This component will entail students have a basic reading knowledge of chosen extracts from:</p> <p><i>The Creative Writing Coursebook</i> by Bell and Magrs.</p> <p><i>Imaginative Writing</i> by Janet Burroway</p> <p><i>Beginning Creative Writing</i> by Bruce Anthony.</p> <p><i>Writing Fiction</i> (ed) by Alexander Steele.</p> <p><i>Writing Well: the Essential Guide</i> by Mark Tredinnick</p> <p><i>Making Shapely Fiction</i> by Jeromy Stern.</p>	<p><b>Characterization</b> Nora Roberts' <i>Montana Sky</i>.</p> <p><b>Conflict</b> Dr. Seuss' <i>The Lorax</i>; Kellogg's <i>The Island of the Skog</i>; Ness's <i>Sam, Bangs &amp; Moonshine</i>.</p> <p><b>Dialogue</b> Hemingway's <i>The Short, Happy Life of Francis Macomber</i>; Ansari's <i>Repentance</i>.</p> <p><b>POV/ Voice</b> Salinger's <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>; Mehta's <i>A River Sutra</i>; Chevalier's <i>Girl with a Pearl Earring</i>; O'Connor's <i>Good Country People</i>.</p> <p><b>Plot</b> Chevalier's <i>Falling Angels</i>; Kafka's <i>Metamorphosis</i>.</p> <p><b>Setting</b> Mernissi's <i>The Harem Within</i>; Sidhwa's <i>Ice-Candy Man</i>; Ison's <i>A Child Out of Alcatraz</i>; Staples's <i>Shabanu</i>; Crace's <i>Quarantine</i>; Calvino's <i>Marcivaldo</i>.</p> <p><b>Theme</b> Shamsie's <i>Salt and Saffron / Kartography</i>. Hanif's <i>A Case of Exploding Mangoes</i>; Khan's <i>Trespassing</i>.</p>
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<p><b>UNIT 3: THE NOVEL &amp; THE SHORT STORY</b></p> <p><b>[4 Sessions / 10 Hours]</b></p> <p><b>Workshop Segment: The Practice of Writing with reference to Form &amp; Genre</b></p> <p><b>[Nov. 19 - 22, 2013]</b></p>	<p>The purpose of this unit is to help learners establish a sound understanding of the creative process involved in composing the Novel and the Short Story, and express it in the written form.</p> <p>Participants will be motivated to understand and use artistic processes to create original and longer pieces of fiction, and be encouraged to use the information in their contextual study.</p> <p>Participants will be required to compose an initial draft of their final piece.</p>	<p>Participants of the study will;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognize and utilize the fundamental components of the novel and the short story, including (but not limited to) Conflict, Dialogue, language, Plot, Point of View, Setting, Character, Structure, Voice.</li> <li>2. Understand and utilize the steps of the writing process including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing in case of each.</li> <li>3. Assess written work for strengths and needs through the help of peer writing and/or various other authors.</li> <li>4. Take part in discussion forums with teacher &amp; peers.</li> <li>5. Make decisions based on artistic intent / generate and clarify artistic intent for writing.</li> <li>6. Discuss their work for errors and mistakes.</li> </ol>	<p>Final product:</p> <p>Using artistic processes to create a single, complete short story or a longer piece of fiction (Novel extract).</p> <p>Written statement describing artistic choices and incorporation of elements of creative writing.</p> <p>Note: Final piece of fiction, along with contextual study to be submitted by mid-January, during winter break</p>	<p>Brief supplementary reading material will be excerpted from:</p> <p><u>Short Story Writing</u> by Charles Raymond Barrett.</p> <p><u>Writing in General and the Short Story in Particular</u> by Rust Hills</p> <p><u>Making Shapely Fiction</u> by Jeromy Stern</p> <p><u>Writing Fiction</u> edited by Alexander Steele</p> <p><u>Contextual Study</u> by Various Authors.</p>	<p>Fiction extracts from:</p> <p><u>Confetti</u> by Lesley McKenna (Short Story).</p> <p><u>Participant's Samples.</u></p>
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**The Creative Writing Workshop**  
**September 2 – November 22, 2013**

**Description**

The present workshop will utilize modular course content designed by creative writing teachers in different parts of the world, aimed at offering just a short course in creative writing. It is also an adaptation of successful methods established during various creative writing workshops by practitioners associated with the genre of fiction. It comprises of 3 over-all segments, subdivided into 29 sessions, spread over a period of approximately ten weeks. There will be three to five sessions every week, and each session will last for two hours and thirty minutes. We will meet every Monday through Wednesday, 09.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m., in the multimedia library / seminar room at IELL, from 2<sup>nd</sup> September until 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2013. We will then have a four week break for your regular Mid-Semester Assessments and Eid-ul-Uzha holidays / festivities; during which your participation (if requested) will be considered as optional and out-of-contact-time. The workshop will resume for five weeks on 21<sup>st</sup> October and will conclude on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013. A full description of the pre-requisite reading material is attached as part of the detailed ‘Workshop Schedule’ (as Appendix D) to this document. Below is a list of things to consider before entering the workshop. And remember,

*‘A good writer possesses not only his own spirit but also the spirit of his friends.’*

Friedrich Nietzsche

**‘Workshopping’ the Writing**

To gain entry to the writing workshop, you are required to submit a pre-portfolio of creative and critical work. Please see Appendix F for details. Upon selection, you will either receive a confirmation email or your name will appear on the ‘Creative Writing Workshop Participant List’ posted on the IELL reception notice board.

Over the course of the workshop, in every alternate session, some of you will be selected to bring your samples of fiction (assigned writing tasks and activities) to be discussed with the convenor and other students in the group. You will read your piece aloud, then receive constructive practical feedback. Try not to ‘defend’ or explain your writing during this part: it is helpful to know how your writing would be received and interpreted without your own explanation.

Throughout the workshop, you will also be asked to form critical opinions and perspectives on supplementary reading material or published creative work, the technical aspects of writing in the form, on themes and trends in fiction in the light of provided critical and creative writing samples, and/or brief reflections on your own experience of writing as well. The purpose of this process is to make your writing the best it can possibly be.

Towards the end of the workshop, you will be assessed on your final contribution (a post-workshop or post-module portfolio), which will be a 2000 – 2500 word short story, or an extract of a longer piece of fiction, accompanied by a 1000 – 1500 word critical and contextual commentary. Details on the nature of both components can be found in Appendix G. You will also be required to fill in a comprehensive feedback questionnaire to help the researcher ascertain in what ways the workshop experience proved helpful/ or otherwise to you. See appendix I for the feedback questionnaire. Good luck with the process and have fun.

### **Things to Consider for the Workshop:**

1. As a rule, all written projects/ creative writing tasks assigned to you must be circulated and read before the workshop meets to discuss it, and while commenting on it in the group, 'positive comments will precede the reservations.'
2. Read everything you can manage that's recommended to you, including non-fiction and things you think you won't like; your comments should be based accordingly.
3. Don't be afraid to show your work to as many people as are willing to read it, all feedback is useful even if you disagree with it.
4. Try establishing a critical distance between your writing and yourself. Practice the art of detachment.
5. Avoid excessively negative criticism or feedback.

### **Things to Consider for feedback:**

Some of the basic key questions to address in the workshop will encompass the following;

- Content:** Does the writing draw you in as a reader right from the start?  
Does the particular extract/ activity/ story move and fascinate/ captivate/ mesmerize you as an audience, or does it leave you restless and bored?  
What did you want to know more about and why?  
Is there a clear relationship between purpose and theme?
- Form:** Is there a recognizable form? Is it the most appropriate one for the treatment of this subject? Should it be structured differently?  
What according to you is it about the telling of this extract/ activity/ story which creates the particular effect that it does?  
How is the form or figurative language working?  
How are the characters/plot/setting working? Where does the strength of the narrative lie; character/dialogue/setting?  
Is there a clear relationship between purpose and form?
- Style:** Is the style distinctive?  
Is the language fresh and original? Is it contemporary? (You should write in the language you live in, provided the particular genre of your choice, for instance 'historical romance,' does not suggest otherwise).  
Are there clichés which might be edited out?  
Are there sentences which are too long and complicated, or which use too many adverbs and adjectives, or figures of speech?  
Is there a clear relationship between appropriate form/genre and style?

**What do you think are the two strongest aspects of this writing?**

**What are the two ways in which you think the piece could be improved?**

*Note: The methodology and information contained within this document has been derived from Atkinson T S (2003); Azerbaijan University of Languages, UNESCO (2010); Bell and Magrs (2001); Burroway (2003); Haven (1999); Khan (2002); Mac (2011); and Queen's University (2011) for purely research purposes. Hence issues of copyright do not extend to a third person/party.*



**Session Three (Wednesday Morning – 04/09/2013)**

**Topic: Gathering Material for Fiction & Making Space (Notebook / Journal / Diary)**

Journals aren't only repositories for overheard conversations, but a place to experiment, to recall a scene from your childhood, to try out first lines. A fiction writer, or any artist, attempts to see the world in a new light, in a way that makes the ordinary seem extraordinary or the extraordinary seem ordinary; and noting the details of such experiences down can enrich one's creative output in interesting ways (Hemley, 2006).

A comprehensive in-class writing exercise that will help you understand how by simply paying attention to the everyday world around, a writer can yield extraordinary results. Choose any single activity from the given options in Appendix E titled 'Activity Itinerary.' Free write for about twenty minutes. We will discuss your samples then. Follow-up by conducting the necessary revision of your work.

For the next session, please review the given reading material in advance. Connect the textual information with the accompanying set of questions as well.

**Session Four (Monday Morning – 09/09/2013)**

**Topic: Show, don't Tell**

Brainstorming on what is commonly meant by 'Concrete Writing' in fiction. Next, we will go through selected passages from: Concrete Significant Details by Janet Burroway (Imaginative Writing, p.7); Showing and Telling by Jeromy Sterne (Making Shapely Fiction, pp. 218, 219); and Character: Casting Shadows (Showing & Telling, Action, Speech, Appearance, & Thought) by Brandi Reissenweber (Writing Fiction, pp. 41-48). We will also read the selected fiction extract Accidental Tourist by Anne Tyler; and a few other samples from Description to Picture in Words by Chris Lombardi (Writing Fiction, pp. 105-113) and Imaginative Writing by Burroway (pp. 9-41). Think about the following: While writing fiction, story tellers are frequently advised '*show, don't tell*'; what does this mean? In all the fiction extracts that you just read, how was the writing process different, with reference to vivid details, each time? Which writer was the most vivid in his approach, and how? What failed and where, through lack of appeal, to your senses?

A very brief (ten minute) writing activity, if time. This will be followed by a reflective review.

Students will be divided into ten pairs and each student in *Pair A* will be assigned a concise, (maximum 750 words), assignment for the next session. The assignment will be selected by the students from the given list of activities (see Appendix E, Activity Itinerary). The remaining students will be asked to examine the reading material for session 5 ahead of time.

**Session Five (Tuesday Morning – 10/09/2013)**

**Topic: Writing from Experience (Autobiography / Memory / Personal Reflexivity)**

Together, we will read and discuss the writing of Pair A. Remember; pay as close attention to the work of your peers as you want them to pay to yours.

Free-associate on how we can correlate fiction with autobiography. While writing, do we really want to use up everything around us, including our experiences and our memories? The experience that we may want to utilize in our writing, must it result from our factual memories, or can it even be a part of our imagination that needn't necessarily be a concrete lived experience, only emotionally felt? Do you agree with Magrs (2001) when he suggests that, since our experiences are so unique to each of us, using our actual memories in writing can be quite constructive in developing an 'awareness of our own voice' (p. 38)?

An in-depth overview of selected extracts from Autobiography (ed) by Bell & Magrs (The Creative Writing Course Book, pp. 70-91); and Experience versus Imagination by Robin Hemley (Turning Life into Fiction, pp. 3, 5). Think about the following: What are some of the ways you can recover the past, or access old memories? What aspects of your memories can make your fiction seem real and vivid (smells, tastes, colors, dialogues, etc.)? What is the role of our experiences in our writing and how can we edit, structure, and fictionalize 'real' events, personal reflections or memories to create an effective narrative (based upon a combination of the real and the imaginative)? Reflect and discuss.

Pair B assigned a concise writing activity for the next session; each student will select an exercise from the given list in Appendix E, Activity Itinerary. The remaining participants will be asked to pre-read for the next session beforehand.

**Session Six (Wednesday Morning – 11/09/2013)**

**Topic: Writing from Experience (Autobiography/ Memory/ Personal Reflexivity)**

A continuation of last session's reading assignment, if our discussion was not complete. If it was, we will move on to the reading and analysis of writing samples by Pair B. We will specifically observe if a sense of 'self' emerges in the sample work, and if so then how the pieces could be developed further (monologue, soliloquy, or genres such as poem, short story, drama or novel). Because the material could be slightly more personal, it is important that we discuss confidentiality and be especially sensitive in offering critique.

A very brief (fifteen minute) writing activity.

Discussion of The Harem Within by Fatima Mernissi. A quick glance at selected fiction extracts for session eight. Your next task would be to look at the mechanics writers have employed to create a unique setting in each piece of work, and observe which extract situates you the most vividly in time and place – or Why?

**Seven: Extra Practice Sessions (Optional)**

From September 16 through October 16, 2013, participants will continue with their regular course work and prepare for their upcoming midterm exams. Excluding the days that cover the break (Monday, 14th October, 2013 to Friday, 18th October, 2013 on account of Eid-ul-Uzha holidays / festivities) the workshop coordinator would continue holding one hour sessions during which participants would be allowed to expand on their initial work and confirm their request for participating in the up-coming formal workshop. During the mid-term period, the participation would be left optional, yet encouraged.

**Unit II: Craft and Technique**  
**Workshop Segment II: Elements of Fiction**

Through in depth analysis of theory and practice in light of prose on composing fiction, followed by a wide range of sample works by different novelists, we will observe the essential mechanics of the craft of writing fiction, witness a variety of different approaches to creating the same, generate sample artifacts, and establish a constructive critique of each other's work.

**Session Eight (Monday Morning – 21/10/2013)**

**Topic: Setting (Abstract versus Concrete)**

Today's session will be spent discussing setting, beginning with a thirty-minute guided-writing exercise. Next we will brainstorm on our associations with the word 'place.' Think broadly of the word. It could be something on a large scale (a river, a city) or a smaller one (a swing, a bath-tub, the shade of a tree). What mood do these places evoke? What words can be used to describe them? What kind of sensory information do these words give? Now connect the same questions with Mernissi's narrative. We will also talk about some of the other story extracts: Ice-Candy Man by Bapsi Sidhwa; A Child Out of Alcatraz by Tara Ison; Shabanu by S. Staples; Quarantine by J. Crace; and Marcovaldo by Italo Calvino. Which extract situates you the most vividly in time and place? Why?

Pair C will be assigned assignment for the next session; each student will select an activity of their choice from the given options in Appendix E. The remaining students will be asked to go through the reading material for session 9, in light of the accompanying queries, prior to the session start.

**Session Nine (Tuesday Morning – 22/10/2013)**

**Topic: Setting (Known/Factual Versus Unknown/Imaginative)**

(Reading and discussing the writing of Pair C.)

Next, concentrate on the phrase 'realistic setting.' When readers read a piece of fiction, they expect it to feel real, even if it's a life they don't and will never know. They want to enter into it, to live there, with the characters. Setting—which refers simply to time and place—grounds the reader in the story in the most physical sense. When writers talk about place, they mean the specific and definite location of a story, on a large and small level: the planet, continent, country, state, city, neighborhood, street the characters are in; the way an office or building or river or castle or room look; the kind of weather or atmosphere a place has; or even the time. And the more realistic the setting, the better.

Review selected passages from the following extracts: Setting (ed) by Bell & Magrs (The Creative Writing Course Book, pp. 168-193); Real Places by Robin Hemley (Turning Life into Fiction, pp. 133-140; pp.143, 147); Setting and Pacing (The Weather, The Time and Setting the Mood) by Caren Gussoff (Writing Fiction, pp. 153, 155-158). Ask yourselves plenty of questions: Why is it essential for any kind of character in fiction to need a setting? How does the place, or places, in which a story is set affect the action? What are some of the most effective ways of creating a setting? Think about landscaping, time, place, weather and creating a mood in your story: what do you understand about these terms and how are they connected to the setting? Follow-up by discussing your findings. We will then engage in a brief writing activity to exemplify the same.

**Session Ten (Wednesday Morning – 23/10/2013)**

**Topic: Character (Directly) as ‘Action, Voice/Speech, Image/Appearance, Thought’**

Brainstorming on what you understand by ‘character’. How far do characters in fiction mimic people that we have seen or observed in real life? How do we learn about the people, and discover what kind of persona they are, outside the realm of fiction? Is it from (a) what they say, and don’t say; (b) what they do, and don’t do; or (c) what other people say, or don’t say about them? Find the answers, and the same applies to fiction as well. The thing to remember is, a good writer must never rely on physical descriptions alone. Readers are entitled to know what a character looks like, what he thinks, feels and how he functions, all at the same time.

A look at the reading extracts: Characters (Character Descriptions, Recognition, Behavior & Complexity) by Bruce Anthony (Beginning Creative Writing, pp. 43-46); Character: Casting Shadows (Getting to Know Your Characters) by Brandi Reissenweber (Writing Fiction, pp. 37-38); and Character (Voice, Image, Action & Thought) by Janet Burroway (Imaginative Writing, pp. 87-131). Ask yourselves the following: How can a writer generate a character, and vividly at that? How important is it for the writer to describe a character’s physical appearance for the same? How can one make characters ‘stereotypically easy to recognize’ yet ‘different and interesting’ at the same time? How should they be sketched out in terms of ‘behavior,’ ‘psychological complexity,’ ‘motives,’ and ‘reputation’? What are the four categories of mapping a character? What does representing a character as ‘image, voice, action, and thought’ mean?

Pair D will be assigned assignment for tomorrow; select the activity from the given list in Appendix E. The remaining students will be asked to study the reading material for session 11 in advance.

**Session Eleven (Thursday Afternoon – 24/10/2013)**

**Topic: Character (Directly) as ‘Action, Voice/Speech, Image/Appearance, Thought’**

Together we will read and analyze the writing of Pair D.

An overview of the following extracts: Character: Casting Shadows (Getting to Know Your Characters) by Brandi Reissenweber (Writing Fiction, pp. 38-39); The Story Process (Character Description) by Bruce Anthony (Beginning Creative Writing, pp. 84, 85); and Characterization in Bell & Magrs (ed) The Creative Writing Course Book (pp. 100-103; pp. 132, 133). Follow up by constructing a ‘Character Description’ of your own. The description should include everything that would be included in a description of a real person, even if this information never appears in a story. If you can’t visualize your own characters, chances are your reader won’t be able to either. Give the character the following: a full name; physical descriptions (age, height, weight, colour of their hair or eyes, etc); a description of their whereabouts (address, telephone number, career); something about their likes and dislikes; definition of all their talents and skills; goals and aspirations; and maybe something about their past. Also ask yourself all sorts of questions about your character to get a better idea of who he/she is. Use the given rubrics (that will be provided to you during the session) to guide you.

For the twelfth session, please find two pieces of writing, both being character descriptions that you admire somewhat. Make sure the first piece corresponds to the writer himself telling us about a character's personality and what he/she is like; while the other has a character who reveals information about himself by expressing his own thoughts, words, and actions, or wherein the writer shows how other characters respond to that character, or what they think and say about him. Photocopy a short piece of the samples (each no more than three paragraphs) to bring to the next workshop.

**Session Twelve (Friday Afternoon – 25/10/2013)**

**Topic: Character through Indirect/Authorial Interpretation**

A continuation of yesterday's activity session, followed by a whole class discussion on the samples generated. An integrated in-session exercise (Using your character sketching handouts).

A follow-up discussion of Direct and Indirect Characterization using your reading samples. We will also review a couple of very brief reading extracts from the novel Montana Sky by Nora Roberts (Chapter Two). Consider the following: What do we learn about each character? Whom do we learn it from?

Please pre-read for the next session beforehand. Your reading efforts are particularly being appreciated.

**Session Thirteen (Monday Morning – 28/10/2013)**

**Topic: Dramatic Conflict**

Brainstorming on the mechanics of storytelling. All stories require characters to push the action forward in time. The characters, in turn, are shaped by their aims. Every major character in a story wants to do or to possess something throughout the course of the narrative. All of his/her actions are informed accordingly, as they are directed towards achieving such intended goals, which is what moves the story forward. But when the character's desire(s) comes into contact with obstacles in his path, we get the element of conflict. Dramatic conflict is a necessary requirement for any form of fiction. No story would make much sense without encompassing an intense struggle between two or more principle entities (characters or forces) in it. It is precisely that struggle which gives rise to the challenges and complications which the chief characters must confront, and details the means by which they overcome them (or in some cases, fail to overcome them). Without conflict, there is no story (nothing would happen). More importantly, without conflict, the characters themselves would not grow or change, which means there would be no plot (Vaux, 2011).

Examine and discuss selected passages from: Conflict and Uncertainty, Tension and Anticipation by Rust Hills (Writing in General and the Short Story in Particular, pp. 38-40; pp. 40-43); and Plot as a Question of Focus (Goal & Conflict) by David Harris Ebenbach (Writing Fiction, pp. 57-58; pp. 58-59). Consider the following queries: What functions does the element of conflict have in a story? What should be done to develop effective conflict situations within the main storyline? How does the element correlate to the elements of uncertainty, mystery, tension and anticipation?

Pair E assigned assignment for tomorrow; select the activity from the given list in Appendix E

**Session Fourteen (Tuesday Morning – 29/10/2013)**

**Topic: Conflict and its Various Kinds**

Together we will read and discuss the writing of Pair E.

A whole group examination of supplementary reading material Conflict in Fiction, extracted from Patricia Osborn (Reading Smarter, Online). While reading, think about the following: What do you understand by external and internal conflict? What various sub-forms does conflict take? A detailed in-session writing exercise to exemplify the same. We will discuss your writing up next. Please follow-up by conducting the necessary revision of your work. Pre-read only the selected fiction extracts for session 15 in advance. The prose extracts will be reviewed as an in-session activity during the workshop.

### **Session Fifteen (Wednesday Morning – 30/10/2013)**

#### **Topic: The Captivating Dialogue**

Introduction to dialogue. Though fiction can at times do without this element, more often than not, dialogue is what keeps readers coming back for more. The characters' interactions provide the interest factor attracting readers to the story, and most of the time dialogue is a key part of this interaction. If their speech is done well, the readers often forget that the people they are reading about are the writer's creation. The characters assume a life of their own, and 'that's the real purpose of fiction' (Amend, 2003, p. 126).

Please review and discuss selected extracts from Dialogue: Taking it Up (Dialogue Explained & Indirect Dialogue) by Allison Amend (Writing Fiction, pp. 127-129; pp. 138-139); and Direct, Indirect & Intermixed Dialogue by Jerome Stern (Making Shapely Fiction, pp. 115-116). While reading, ask yourselves the following: There are two fundamental ways a writer can reveal any moment in a story—summary or scene. What is the difference between the two? What is the difference between direct, indirect and intermixed dialogue? How do you know if a moment should be translated into dialogue or not? An in-class writing exercise that will establish the need for including dialogue with tags in a scene or not, & the varying impact of the two scenarios as well.

For the next session please study all given extracts, in light of the accompanying queries, prior to the session start. A review of the same will come to pass during our next workshop.

### **Session Sixteen (Thursday Afternoon – 31/10/2013)**

#### **Topic: The Good v/s the Bad Dialogue**

A wrapping up of last session's discussion, if need be. Next, we will review the reading extracts: Dialogue, Talking it up (Dialogue Explained, The Illusion of Reality, Dialogue Convention, Stage Directions, Dialogue & Character, and Dialect) by Allison Amend (Writing Fiction, pp. 127; pp. 130-132; pp. 132-136; pp. 136-137; pp. 139-143; pp. 148-149); Dialect and Direct, Indirect & Intermixed Dialogue by Jerome Stern (Making Shapely Fiction, p. 113; pp. 117-120); Viewpoint (Dialect and Voice, & Using Dialogue to Narrate) and Writing Your Story (Story Dialogue) by Bruce Anthony (Beginning Creative Writing, p. 51; pp. 55-56; pp. 93-94). What are some of the conventions of good dialogue? As a rule, how much dialogue should be used in fiction? Should it seem real, or unreal? Should it be read aloud while being written? What is your understanding of the use of quotation marks, tags, and the use of stage directions or physical action with 'character's speech'? Do you think using 'dialects' in your dialogues is a good idea?

A look at selected fiction extracts from Repentance by Komal Ansari (An on-going work by the researcher in process) and The Short, Happy Life of Francis Macomber by Ernest Hemingway. Some would find the conversations interesting and of 'good quality'; others would not. Which category do you fit in? Justify by giving reasons for your answers.

Pair F will be assigned assignment for the next session; each student will select an activity of their own choice from the given options in Appendix E titled 'Activity Itinerary.' The remaining students will be asked to go through the reading material for session 17 beforehand.

## Session Seventeen (Friday Afternoon – 01/11/2013): Narrator; Persona; Voice

Together we will read and analyze the writing of Pair F.

Every story is told by someone, suggest Anthony (2007) and Vogrin (2003). Readers cannot know the story directly, because they are absent when the story occurs. They must see what's happening through someone else's eyes. Writers creating a story must decide who that someone should be; who will tell the story to the readers, how it will be told, and what will be the sound of the story. When it comes right down to it, things look different depending on who is doing the looking and what their vantage point is. In short, writers have to deal with the following issues:

**A)** Who is speaking: the writer or a character? **B)** Whose eyes are seeing the events of the story unfold? **C)** Whose thoughts does the reader have access to? **D)** What kind of voice will the readers hear in their heads when they're reading a particular work?

Please review selected passages from Viewpoint (Narrator) by Bruce Anthony (Beginning Creative Writing, p. 49), Voice (Author's Voice, Persona, & Character's Voice) by Janet Burroway (Imaginative Writing, pp. 44-49), and Voice: The Sound of Story (Types of Voice) by Hardy Griffin (Writing Fiction, pp. 172-182). Reflect on the following: What is your understanding of the terms 'narrator' and 'narrator's voice'? How would you distinguish between persona and the character's voice? What are the different types or choices of voice that readers may encounter in a piece of fiction?

For the next session, please scan selected reading passages from: Point of View - The Complete Menu by Valerie Vogrin (Writing Fiction, pp. 79-84); First Person POV by Jerome Stern (Making Shapely Fiction, pp. 178-182); and Viewpoint by Bruce Anthony (Beginning Creative Writing, pp. 50, 52, 53). Discuss your findings on the following: How is a story narrated from the first-person POV? What are some of the various challenges or limitations that the first-person POV offers? What is your take on central, peripheral, and multiple first person narrative; and how do the hero/main protagonist or the sidekick fall into the whole scheme? What is the impact of varying tenses on first person POV? And what can the 'I' in first person POV sound like?

## Session Eighteen (Monday Morning – 04/11/2013): 1<sup>st</sup> Person Point of View

Intimately allied to the concept of narrator is his point of view. We use the phrase 'point of view' as a synonym for 'opinion' in our regular lives. But viewpoint as a literary technique implies something else. The point of view decision that we, as writers, must make is the person in which we are to speak: *1st person* (I/we stepped out of the office complex), *second person* (You stepped out of the office complex), or *third person* (he/she/they stepped out of the office complex).

An introduction to first person writing. Most often a story is told in the first person using the voice of a story character to tell the story. The first person narrator influences everything in a story and all events and characters are coloured by the narrator's personal perceptions and motives. Most often first person uses just one first-person narrator, but occasionally, especially in novels, there are **multiple narrators** speaking in first person, each allotted a separate section in the story to present his/her version of the narrative. Although the first-person narrator is usually the protagonist, the **central narrator**, the / telling a story about himself; yet you may still choose to have your first-person narrator be another character in the story, a **peripheral narrator** - someone on the edge of the action, but nevertheless our eyes and ears in the story.

An in-class writing activity followed by reflective review. Don't forget to pre-read for the upcoming sessions in advance.

## Session Nineteen (Tuesday Morning – 05/11/2013)

### Topic: 2<sup>nd</sup> Person Point of View

An introduction to the second person POV. This is the basic point of view of a piece only when the 'you' is a character – usually in fact the reader whom the author turns into a character by assuming he/she knows just how 'you' behave in the situation invented by him/her. The use of this second person as someone to whom the story is addressed can enhance a sense of intimacy; even make us feel as readers that we are over hearing something private.

Read the selected prose extracts from Point of View - The Complete Menu (Second Person) by Valerie Vogrin (Writing Fiction, pp. 95-96); and Second Person Point of View (The Second Person Possibilities) by Jerome Stern (Making Shapely Fiction, pp. 184-185). A follow-up reading of selected fiction samples from Lorrie Moore's story How to be a Writer in Janet Burroway's Chapter titled 'Voice' (Imaginative Writing, pp. 50-51) and the short extract Up Close and Personal in Julia Bell's Essay titled Whose Story is it Anyways? (Point of View, The Creative Writing Course Book, pp. 166-167). Think about the basic mechanics of this POV. How can one experiment further while writing in this format? Think about further possibilities while working on a brief writing activity.

Pair G will be assigned a reading assignment for the next session. Please review selected passages from The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger; A River Sutra by Geeta Mehta; Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier; and Good Country People by Flannery O'Connor. The remaining participants will be required to study all given prose extracts for the next session, in light of the accompanying queries, prior to the session start.

## Session Twenty (Wednesday Morning – 06/11/2013)

### Topic: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View

Together we will read and analyze the conclusions drawn out by Pair G.

An introduction to the third person POV. When the story teller is a witness to a story rather than a participant, the story is narrated in the third person. The third person is not a character in the story. The narrator is a voice created by the author to tell the story. This POV can be roughly divided into three techniques: that of the **omniscient** or god-like narrator, who may know everything past, present, or future, and is free to tell us what any character thinks; the **limited omniscient** or sub god-like narrator, who may go into the mind of one or perhaps two characters alone, and doesn't know what other characters think or feel; and the **objective narrator**, who may know no more than a person observing the scene, the facts and whatever is present to the senses; who is denied access to even a single character's mind; who must reveal everything about the story (background, characterization, conflict, theme, etc.) through dialogue and action alone.

Perhaps the most prevalent version of the third person is the third person **single vision**. With this POV, the narrator has access to only one character's mind. The **multiple-vision** POV allows the writer to show a story's events from different angles- minds of different characters.

A look at the following: Point of View - The Complete Menu by Valerie Vogrin (Writing Fiction, pp. 85-94); and Third Person POV by Jerome Stern (Making Shapely Fiction, pp. 185-191). Consider the selected pieces of fiction in the above chapters. Think of their textual effects. How is a sense of self created? How do we get an insight into the character's consciousness? How is the character's 'presence' created to begin with? Now think the same via another in-class writing activity.

### **Session Twenty-One (Thursday Afternoon – 07/11/2013)**

#### **Topic: Plot**

Introduction to plot. This element usually refers to how to set up the situation, where to bring about the turning points in the story, and depicting where the characters will turn out to be in the end. In brief, the plot is all about ‘what happens’ within the over-all story, what you have to do to keep the ‘action going,’ and how to ‘move’ the characters in and out of your story. In novels, plot seems more important. The shorter the piece of fiction, the less need for plot. And remember, plot, like the theme, grows out of the setting and character, not vice-versa. In other words, what happens in a story happens because of who the character is, and where he or she is (Stern, 1991).

An in-class reading and writing activity. We will look at selected fiction extracts from Falling Angels by Tracy Chevalier and Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka and continue the plot from where the writers left off. Ask yourselves the following questions about each: Who is this man? Where is he? What is he talking about? What’s going to happen next? Invent the story’s plot!

Pair H will be assigned assignment for the next session; each student will select an activity of their own choice from the given options in Appendix E titled ‘Activity Itinerary.’ The remaining students will be asked to go through the reading material for session 22 in advance.

### **Session Twenty-Two (Monday Morning – 11/11/2013)**

#### **Topic: Plotting and Shaping**

Together we will read and analyze the writing of Pair H.

A follow-up discussion of selected reading passages from Plot by Bruce Anthony (Beginning Creative Writing, pp. 57-58; 60-65); Plot as a Question of Focus: ‘The Structure of Plot’ by David Harris Ebenbach (Writing Fiction, pp. 60-61; 63-64; 66, 68; 74, 76); and Plotting & Shaping in Bell & Magrs (ed) The Creative Writing Course Book (pp. 195-203). Ask yourself this: How should the plot be set up and what is good plotting all about? What can one do to weave an effective beginning, middle and end? What are some of the varying types of plotting that can be easily placed in your story? Think about plotting techniques like ‘flash-forwards’ and ‘flash-backs’.

Find a piece of writing that you believe has an especially compelling or persuasive plot. Photocopy a short piece of it (no more than 350 words) to bring to the next session.

### **Session Twenty-Three (Tuesday Morning – 12/11/2013)**

#### **Topic: Plot and the Three Act Structure**

An in-depth look at the three act structure of the plot, along with various models pointing out how some authors map their scenes. This will be followed by a close examination of the writing samples selected and brought to the workshop by the whole group. Which ‘Plot Model’ do you believe the extract exemplifies?

A correlating, but intensive, in-session activity. In pairs, we will work up an initial draft of the activity, but the final draft will have to be composed separately, on your own, outside the in-session contact time. We will then agree on a set deadline for the submission of your assignment, and have a quick overview of selected reading material for the up-coming session in advance.

**Session Twenty-Four (Wednesday Morning – 13/11/2013)**

**Topic: Theme**

The last component of fiction is ‘theme’. This element refers to the punch-line meaning within the story; its central or dominating idea(s). It is what a story is truly about. It is different from plot in that it is not what happens externally or measurably. It is what you have to read between the lines to dig out of a story. It requires much imagination on the part of the reader to understand a book’s theme (or themes) as is required of the writer who invents it.

Like plot, the theme develops with the story. Often writers do not know what their own works are about till they near the end. And remember; the theme is discovered on the journey to completing a book. Contrary to what many a novice readers and writers think, novelists and storytellers do not always begin their work with the theme in their mind. So just because you have a good idea, doesn’t mean you can build a story out of it! Your setting and your characters will tell you (you will not tell them) what your story is really about. However, exceptional cases are always there.

A look at selected passages from: Literary Themes, Genres and Elements (available online); and Story by Janet Burroway (Imaginative Writing, pp. 179-187). Discuss what a theme *is* and what it is *not*. How can the theme(s) be discovered or identified within a text? What are some of the most recurrent themes used by authors in their fiction?

Pair I will be assigned assignment for the next session; the remaining students will be asked to go through the reading material for session 25 beforehand.

**Session Twenty-Five (Monday Morning – 18/11/2013)**

**Topic: Theme**

Reading and discussing the writing of Pair I.

An examination of selected short fiction extracts from: Salt and Saffron / Kartography by Kamila Shamsie; A Case of Exploding Mangoes by Mohammed Hanif; Trespassing by Uzma Aslam Khan; and Scheherazade, the King, and the Words by Fatima Mernissi. While reading these extracts, keep in mind all the components of fiction learned thus far. Pay attention to how each writer uses these components to carefully craft each piece and construct each theme. What is each one *really* about?

**Unit III: The Novel and the Short Story**  
**Workshop Segment III: The Practice of Writing / Form & Genre**

Using students' sample stories as contemporary examples, this segment will introduce the essentials of short story: character development, problem and events, etc. Students will be induced to comprehend basic differences between a novel and a short story, will be encouraged to analyse the context of their fiction, and engage in discussions taking up various issues of concern ensuing from their analysis and study

**Session Twenty-Six (Tuesday Morning – 19/11/2013)**

**Topic: The Novel versus the Short Story**

The term short story refers to a short prose narrative, "shorter than a novel" or as Edgar Allan Poe specified, "no longer than can be read in a single sitting." It is something that presents a bit of real life; the primary object being to depict a character, plead a cause, or point a moral, and to amuse. This amusement is neither of that aesthetic kind which we obtain from poetry, nor of that cheap sort which we gain from a parody/skit. It is the simple and intellectual pleasure derived from listening to a well told narrative.

The narrative is, most basically, about a character who wants something, but can't have it because something else is in the way. In the process of trying to get what they want, something changes. Though they are not necessarily less emotionally complex than novels, but the scope of a short story is narrower. Often short stories focus on a single event, or at least a single aspect of a character's life.

The question of length is but relative; in general a short story should not exceed 10,000 words, and it could hardly contain less than 1,000; while from 3,000 to 5,000 is the most usual length. At the most, short stories tend to run no longer than fifteen thousand words (about sixty pages of double-spaced typing), though recently flash fiction—stories that run only a page or two—has come into fashion.

A detailed overview of selected reading passages from The Short Story, and Short Stories Classified by Charles Raymond Barrett (Short Story Writing: A Practical Treatise on the Art of The Short Story, pp. 31-33); The Short Story, as against the Novel, Plot in a Short Story, as against Plot in a Novel, Scenes, and Plot Structure by Rust Hills (Writing in General and the Short Story in Particular: An Informal Textbook, pp. 2-3, pp. 83-89, p. 93, pp.95-96); Short Story by Jeromy Sterne (Making Shapely Fiction, pp. 217-218); and selected prose extracts from Writing Fiction edited by Alexander Steele (pp. 4, 81, 118, 199). Follow-up by discussing your findings.

**Session Twenty-Seven (Wednesday Morning – 20/11/2013)**

**Topic: Revision / Contextual Study (Practice One)**

For this session, we will engage in any *one* of the 'Revision Activities' from the given options in Appendix E titled 'Activity Itinerary.' Please be aware that during the activity, you will be requested to return to something you have written, perhaps from one of the previous exercises. Bring a piece to the session and we will observe how the piece could be revised in the most effective manner possible. The activity will be followed by a quick overview of selected reading material for the up-coming session in advance.

**Session Twenty-Eight (Thursday Afternoon – 21/11/2013)**  
**Topic: Contextual Study (Practice Two)**

An in-depth review of the short story Confetti by Lesley McKenna, and an accompanying commentary on the same. A few things to think about while reading the samples. How has the writer contextually analyzed the various elements of fiction presented in her work? How has she justified her rationale for creating the plot/subplot? Does the place the story is set in affect the action? Does the writer's explanation regarding the selection of 'tense' that her narrative has been structured in make sense? What do we learn about her characters from her? How do we get an insight into the character's consciousness? How is the character's 'presence' created to begin with? What functions does the element of conflict have, according to the author, within the main storyline? What impact does the writer's reasoning behind the dialogue narration and POV selection have on your understanding of the story? How has the writer examined the plot structure in terms of weaving an effective beginning, middle and end? Which 'Plot Model' does she believe the extract exemplifies? How has the author discovered or identified the theme(s) within her text?

While reading the sample 'Contextual Study', keep in mind all the components of fiction learned thus far. Pay attention to how you, as a writer, can use these components to carefully craft your piece and construct a comprehensible short story commentary.

For the next session, please bring your original short story that had been submitted prior to your participation in the workshop. We will attempt a contextual analysis of the same, and try to modify the content in lieu with the suggestions of the participants.

**Session Twenty-Nine (Friday Afternoon – 22/11/2013)**  
**Topic: Contextual Study (Practice Three)**

A look at selected prose extracts on Contextual Study.

The contextual study is often something that causes confusion. In fact, it's quite a simple concept that will give you a valuable opportunity to discuss the work you've presented, and which will demonstrate your skills as a self-reflexive writer. Basically, it enables you to put your work in context, so that as assessors, your instructors can see that you're aware of what you're doing when you're writing, and that you are able to be a self-critic in a productive way.

Things you might want to include when you're writing a contextual study will obviously vary from piece to piece. Some pieces of work will rely heavily on characterization, in which case you might want to talk about characterization; some might work on narrative structure, in which case you'll talk about how you created the plot. The most important questions you'll probably find yourself asking are 'How?' – as in 'How did I do this? What were the stages of writing I went through to achieve this – how many edits, etc.?' And – if you workshop a piece – did the work-shopping experience help you and how?

We will discuss your pre-workshop writing up next. All fiction extracts will be reviewed as an in-session activity during the workshop. Please follow-up by conducting the necessary revision of your work. For your final contribution, refer to Appendix E titled 'Activity Itinerary,' and Appendix G titled 'Summative Assessment' for details.

*Note: The methodology and information contained within this document has been derived from Atkinson T S (2003); Azerbaijan University of Languages, UNESCO (2010); and Khan (2002) for purely research purposes. Hence issues of copyright do not extend to a third person/party.*

ACTIVITY ITINERARY

**Session 1: Pre-workshop Orientation (Free-Writing). Please select any one of the in-class activities given below.**

*Free write (writing quickly, without stopping, without worrying about language or the formal techniques of writing or even thinking too much, just scribbling away however things come out). You should write for at least ten minutes but feel free to go as long as you like. No one will see this but you, unless you want to share it, and you have permission for this to be nothing but gibberish. Just feel what it's like to write in a white heat.*

{Mansoor, A. (2012). The Recipe for Novelty: Using Bilingualism and Indigenous Literary Genres in an Advanced Level L2 Creative Writing Context in Pakistan. *New Writing*: p.7.}

- 1- Look at the given pictures highlighting a Moghal miniature painting and the other pertaining to the Rajasthani culture. Choose ONE and freewrite. A list of words with their counterparts in Urdu has been provided (see Table 1). Utilise at least eight of these words so that the original cultural ambience of the painting may be retained.

**Table 1**

English Words	Urdu Equivalents	English Words	Urdu Equivalents
Bindiya	Bindiya	Tambour	Rubab
Platter	Paraat	Top and skirt	Ghaghra Choli
Scarf	Veil Dupatta	Pail	Garha
Kiln	Bhatti	Mill	Chakki
Amulet	Taviz	Earrings	Jhumkay
Anklet	Pahzeb	Nose ring	Nathni
Turban	Pugri	Hand fan	Pankhi
Kirtle	Lehenga	Head set	Matha patti
Kohl	Kajal	Bangles	Churiyan

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp. 18, 22}

- 2- Take this opening phrase: Sameera wasn't sure if it was a wonderful sign or a sign of disaster but she knew....Write down that fictional opener, then keep going.
- 3- Choose a work of fiction (from your current course) that you cherish. Get your hands on a copy of this story. Pick a passage that you especially like. Write out a page or so of this section, word for word, just to let yourself feel what it might have been like to create that particular arrangement of words. You may gain some insight into how the author did what he did. At the very least, you'll see that everyone does it the same way, one word at a time.

{Azerbaijan University of Languages & UNESCO. (2010). *A Sample Creative Writing Workshop Curriculum for High School and University Classes*.}

- 4- A Picture is Worth a Thousand words. Write about the photograph. Who is in the photo? What is the context? Time period? What their lives "might" be like; who "might" have been left out of the photograph? Who is absent from the pic? What else may be happening around?

{Bell, J., & Magrs, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (1st ed.). London: Macmillian. pp. 40-43}

- 5- Pick a random object and go into a semi-real close-up. The object may remind you of a person and so you can talk about that person and his object (e.g. a wool sweater that reminds you of your grandmother since she sew it / used to wear it / gifted it to you, etc.)

**Session 2 and 3: Gathering and Making Space (Notebook/ Journal/ Diary). Please select any one of the in-class activities given below.**

{Mansoor, A. (2012). *The Recipe for Novelty: Using Bilingualism and Indigenous Literary Genres in an Advanced Level L2 Creative Writing Context in Pakistan*. p.14.}

- 1- Write a brief *Dastan* (a form of Urdu prose Romance) in your journal. Imagine going on a journey to a place where you met human character(s) which were not of the type you meet in daily life. Make the character(s) supernatural and romantic, but give them human and humane feelings. Thus you can draft your narrative about princes and sorcerers whose life forces are stored in talismans and other exotic items and creatures. Since a dastan features local occult characters like peris (fairies), jinns (genies), devs (demons), adam-khores (giants) you can give a sway to your imagination and create a concise account about a central heroic figure embroiled in encounters of a supernatural kind.

*Note:*

- *Do not unnecessarily turn your piece into a long composition. Utilize whatever time you have.*
- *A dastan 'is rich in visual imagery, giving a resplendent array of the culture of the era it portrays, and since it highlights the entire spectrum of the court culture, it catalogues ornaments, cuisines, weaponry, soldiery etc. Moreover, music, dance, religious beliefs, even superstitions, find their way into its structure.' But you can skip all that you cannot do.*
- *You may or may not use archaic and ornate language, rich description using various figures of speech, to give an epic touch.*
- *What is, however, must for this writing is you incorporate the conflict between good and evil.*
- *Some of the objects from our native oral dastans you can use are Amer Ayyar's "Suleimani Cap" (Harry Potter's Invisibility Cloak), Amer Ayyar's "Zambeel" (leather pouch like Hermione's voluminous beaded bag), or "Jaadu ka tota" (magic parrot like the Horcruxes, which is reminiscent of those objects in which the life forces of sorcerers are concealed).*

(Turning Life into Fiction. Robin Hemley. Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota. 2006, p 33-34)

- 2- Go to a nearby park, grocery store, a shop or somewhere else where people congregate in large numbers. Sit on a bench with your journal and sketch the people walking by—not with pictures but words. Describe at least three people in as much detail as possible: their gestures, what they're wearing, what they're saying. Try not to pass judgment on the people you're observing. Let the descriptions do all the talking.
- 3- Eavesdrop on a couple of strangers. (Don't be obvious. I don't want you to end up in jail.) Again, this is just practice, so don't worry about it. Write down what they say as close to verbatim (word for word) as possible. Do you notice any difference between the conversation you've recorded and the dialogue of short stories and novels? Generally, fiction writers try to make their dialogue seem as realistic as possible. The key word is "seem." Dialogue also has to flow smoothly. In real life, people stutter, say "ah" and "um", change subjects midsentence, ramble, pay no attention at all to what the other person is saying, trail off, talk

at the same time. To a certain degree, this can be imitated in one's fictional dialogue, and it can even heighten humour or tension. But not always. If you try to be too true (recording dialect exactly, printing every "um"), you risk losing your readers, making them stumble over awkward phrases and misspellings—in short, making them conscious that they are reading a story. That's the last thing you want to do. You don't want to call attention to the fact that what you've written isn't real. You want to seduce readers into believing they have entered a world as real as the one they inhabit every day.

{Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft* (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. pp. xxv – xxvi }

4- Write any sort of thing in your journal, and write various kinds of things:

An observation	An overheard conversation	Names for characters
Lists	Longings	A rough draft of a letter
An idea for a story	Quotations from what you are doing / reading	
A few lines of a poem	A fantasy conversation with imaginary characters	
A dream/memory	Your response to a piece of music/ scene in a movie/ drama	

5- Here is a list of lists. Pick any one of them to generate a list in your journal. Write a paragraph using all words in that list.

Things on which I am an expert	Things I have lost
Things people have said to me	What to take on a journey
Things to do	Things I have forgotten

{Bell, J., & Magrs, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (1st ed.). London: Macmillian. pp. 40-43 }

6- Take a number of advertisements from magazines, or newspapers. Which details in their imagery stand out? Describe them in your journal.

#### Session 4: Show, don't Tell

(Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft* (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. pp. 7-41 }

#### In-class activity:

- 1- The teacher would bring to the class a collection of household objects, which may include anything ranging from a priceless artefact such as a vase, full of varying patterns, or a simple pebble or a rock found outside the class, to something as simple as an item of clothing or a toothpaste. The objects will be distributed to the students with their eyes closed, so they could explore the objects purely with their hands, using their sense of touch, for a few minutes. When ready, and eyes open, students will be asked to describe their experience in as close detail as possible, first using the sense of feel, and then exploring the object further including all the five senses, writing about the visual appearance of the object, any sound it may make, taste, smell, etc, without forcing it.

#### Assignment:

- 2- Without naming an object describe it in such a way that others can tell what it is you are talking about. Take all five senses – its size, shape, location, colour, smell, sound, taste – into consideration and even its abstract qualities, if any. What is it used for? Or bad for?
- 3- Pain is somewhat difficult to describe. Describe a pain you remember, in images of all five senses – its size, shape, location, colour, smell, sound, taste – and explain without naming the illness / injury.
- 4- Write a very short mime – a scene in which no word is spoken. Involve only one character, his/her actions, and two or three objects.

{Character: Casting Shadows (Showing & Telling, Action, Speech, Appearance, & Thought) by Brandi Reissenweber (Writing Fiction, p.49)}.

- 5- Imagine some person is entering an office for the first time. The type of office is up to you. Keeping the character in the waiting room, write a passage where he is revealed through all four of these "showing" methods—action, speech, appearance, and thought. For a bonus round, you can put this character in an even more stressful situation, like observing someone being held at gunpoint. What will your character do then?
- 6- Without naming a place describe it in such a way that others can tell what it is you are talking about. Take all five senses – its size, shape, location, colour, smell, sound – into consideration and even its abstract qualities, if any. What time of day is it? Are there people around? Animals? What is the weather like? What time of year is it? What historical period? Start to explore . . . Look . . . Touch . . . Feel the air against your skin. What can you hear? . . . Smell? Can you taste anything? What is the atmosphere of this place? Do you feel comfortable here? What is the pace like – lively and fast? Slow? Is it in tune with your mood?

{Mansoor, A. (2012). The Recipe for Novelty: Using Bilingualism and Indigenous Literary Genres in an Advanced Level L2 Creative Writing Context in Pakistan. *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*, 10(1), 52-66. p.12. }

- 7- Write a concise narrative ((also called an ‘*afsanah*’ in Urdu Literature) by focusing on the tragic Sindhi folktale of Noori Jam Tamachi to allude to political suppression, suffocating conventions in a society where love cannot reach fruition, or even for a mystical analysis of love in the local vein of Sufism. Use explicit narratorial techniques or with the help of stylistic devices like analogues, metaphors, allusions, allegorical patterns etc.

## Session 5 and 6: Writing from Experience (Autobiography/ Memory/ Personal Reflexivity)

(Turning Life into Fiction. Robin Hemley. Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota. 2006, pp. 33-34)

1. Close your eyes. Remember a scene from your childhood. It doesn't have to be a traumatic event or something inherently dramatic. In fact, it's best to simply go with the first memory that surfaces. Remember all its details. Use the senses. If you remember making orange peel candy with your grandmother, imagine the smell of the orange rinds, the sight of the curled crisp rinds, smothered in sugar, and baking. The ones that invariably burned, but your grandmother liked those, right? Or maybe she just said she liked them so you could have the ones that came out perfect. What did they taste like? What did you and your grandmother talk about? Try to evoke the memory with as much clarity as possible. Now write it down in your journal. It doesn't have to fit into a story. It's just practice. But if it does fit into a story, that's fine, too. I once had a teacher who said he didn't understand when people said they had nothing to write about. All they have to do is keep their eyes open and/or remember.
2. Think back within the last year or so and remember dealing with a service person—a plumber, an air duct specialist, a mechanic, a maid. Remember the details. Write them down in your journal. What was he/she wearing? Was he wearing a toupee? Was she wearing a scarf? Did he/she tell you about likes/ dislikes/ tensions? Life is in the details, and so is good fiction. Often when one imagines something whole cloth (that is, without incorporating bits of one's own observations and experience), one comes up with a stereotype or cliché. If you want to write a story about a plumber, the first images that spring to mind are sometimes the most hackneyed. Rely less on your preconceptions and more on your own experience with plumbers or service people of any kind.

(Pg. 52-53)

3. Write an anecdote, something someone told you or that you observed. This should be a story you're quite familiar with, something that you've told before. Write the opening scene of the anecdote, a page or two, then make notes on how you would transform it into a story, how you would go beyond the punch line. Who is the main character? What does that character want or fear?
4. Take a family event from your childhood and write it exactly as you remember it, without embellishment. After you've finished, use this same memory as the basis of a fictional scene, using a combination of dialogue, action, description, thoughts, and exposition. What choices will you have to make to fictionalize it? Are there details or characters you have to add or leave out in the fictional treatment?

(Pg.70-71)

5. We've all been to carnivals and fairs. Write a memory of a fair or carnival in as much detail as you can. Now make that the setting for the opening of a short story. But don't base the main character on yourself. If other memories of other carnivals flood in, be sure to include them.
6. Think about someone you've known well, someone from your family perhaps: a brother, sister, mother, father. First, write as many memories and associations of this person as possible. Mark the memories that seem especially resonant to you – ones that seem either most moving or that best show the personality of your subject. Now, brainstorm a bit and cast these memories in a fictional context. Block out scenes. Make associations. Write an outline for a story based on these memories. Be sure to stay focused.

{Azerbaijan University of Languages & UNESCO. (2010). *A Sample Creative Writing Workshop Curriculum for High School and University Classes.*}

7. For this exercise, brainstorm a whole range of possible topics to write about. The goal is starting to get at particular memories that will make good stories. You can write as many answers to each question as you wish. Initially, you should write just a sentence or phrase to answer the question. Then after you have a number of memories noted, you choose one to free-write on for 10 minutes, then another, then another. You can then share your writing and offer feedback to each other about which pieces seem most interesting to continue working on.

What is your scariest memory?

What is your earliest memory?

Describe about a time you broke the rules.

Describe a time you were mean to someone else.

Describe a time someone was mean to you.

What is your best memory of your mother (or father)?

What is your worst memory of your mother (or father)?

When were you very angry?

Describe a time you wanted something badly—but didn't get it.

Think of more questions!

## Session 8 and 9: Setting (Abstract/Concrete, Known/Factual, Unknown/Imaginative)

(Turning Life into Fiction. Robin Hemley. Graywolf Press , Saint Paul, Minnesota. 2006. P.148)

- 1- Write a scene with a character based on someone you know well in an unfamiliar setting (unfamiliar to this character but familiar to you - Krish from Krish 3 showing up unannounced at your house. How do the both of you react in this setting?
- 2- Take a mental tour of the neighbourhood in which you grew up. Pay attention to all the details. Get reacquainted with the place. Are there any stories lurking in the streets, the houses, the fields of your past?
- 3- Take a mental tour of your present neighbourhood. Where are the stories here? Pay attention to every sight and sound, and sniff out the stories.

(Pg. 163)

- 4- Write a description of the area you now live in—your city, town, or neighbourhood—as if you plan to use this area as the setting for a piece of fiction. Try to evoke a vivid sense of what this place is like today. Next, research the area's history somewhat, if possible, and rewrite your description, enriching it with the facts, details, and anecdotes acquired through your research.

{Setting and Pacing (The Weather, The Time and Setting the Mood) by Caren Gussoff (Writing Fiction, p. 158)}.

- 5- Imagine a character who is contemplating a major change in his or her life—dropping out of school, having a child, entering a risky business venture . . . Once you have fleshed out the character a bit, write a passage where this character is dealing with the change. Here's the interesting part: let weather underscore the drama of the passage, be it the first gusts of autumn or a torrential downpour or any other act of the elements.

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp. 110, 152}

- 6- Think of a place well known to you from your youth—a street, park, school . . . Write a passage where you describe this place with great specificity. What colour were the bricks? Was the slide straight or curving? How far was the pond from the house? If you can't remember key details, fill them in with your imagination.
- 7- Pick up one of your favourite works of fiction and read the first few pages. Pay attention to how quickly you get some indication of the setting. Notice how much or how little the setting is layered into the action and description. If you want to have some fun, try revising the opening of the story using a drastically different place or time. For example, put Scarlett O'Hara in contemporary Los Angeles and see how she does.

{Bell, J., & Magrs, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (1st ed.). London: Macmillan. pp. 170, 192, 194}

- 8- Try to describe the view from your house. What is outside your front door? Make notes, describing everything in detail. It's not enough to write trees, a park, a lot loaded with cars, a row of houses, shops. Mention what kind of trees? What type of shop? What apparatus do they have in the park? What kind of road? What smell, etc?

{Bell, J., & Magrs, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (1st ed.). London: Macmillan. pp. 170, 192}

Please select any one of the in-class activities given below.

- 9- Try out 'guided visualisation.' Close your eyes and imagine you are not in the class / at home any more. You are at some other place. Stimulate your senses. Picture in your mind what is happening and involve all your senses in order to allow you to create a vivid picture. After the visualisation process, analyse what you saw and felt, and jot it down with as many details as possible.
- Find yourself in the location of your story. Really feel you are there . . .
  - What time of day is it? Are there people around? Animals?
  - What is the weather like? What time of year is it? What historical period?
  - Start to explore . . . Look . . . Touch . . . Feel the air against your skin
  - What can you hear? . . . Smell? Can you taste anything?
  - What is the atmosphere of this place? Do you feel comfortable here?
  - What is the pace like – lively and fast? Slow? Is it in tune with your mood?
  - What is the name of this place? See it written on a sign saying 'Welcome to . . .'
  - Take another walk around. Find a door or a road or pathway that you have not noticed before. Where does it lead you?
- 10- Take the following newspaper picture into consideration and explain the setting in words. What do you see? Who are the people in it? What are they wearing or speaking about? What do they seem to be doing? Where was the picture taken? What time of day do you think it was? What is the weather like? What time of year is it? What historical period? What is the atmosphere of this place? What is the pace like – lively and fast?
- 11- Write about the place you live at. Describe the house in detail. Everything you can write about, from the no. of rooms/bedrooms to the colour of the kitchen tiles, curtains, carpets, furniture in the sitting room, to the plants in your garden. What is this person's house like? Is it clean and tidy, or in a muddle? What do the different parts of the house smell like? What can you hear as you move around this house? What can you see out of the windows? Are there any neighbours?

**Session 10 and 11: Character (Directly) as ‘Action, Voice/Speech, Image/Appearance, Thought.’**

(Turning Life into Fiction. Robin Hemley. Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota. 2006. P.86)

- 1- Recall someone you know well—a friend, a relative—preferably someone who's a bit unusual, someone with strong personality traits. Identify two or three of those personality traits and list them at the top of the page. Now create a scene that shows these personality traits in your friend or relative—but never mention these personality traits. Try to convey them through their dialogue, action, image, appearance, and thought. So, if your uncle Lou is childlike, forgetful, and generous, show him as such in the scene.
- 2- Recall someone you know well—a friend, a relative—preferably someone who's a bit unusual, someone with strong personality traits. Identify two or three of those personality traits and list them at the top of the page. Now transform that person. Change one or two of his/her personality traits. Use your imagination so that you end up with an imaginary character who is based on your friend or relative, but is not that person at all anymore. Now create a scene that shows these imaginary personality traits in your friend or relative—but never mention these personality traits. Try to convey them through their dialogue, action, image, appearance, and thought. So, if your uncle Lou is childlike, forgetful, and generous, show him as such in the scene.

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp. 31, 58}

- 3- Recall the worst person you've ever met. A psychotic boss, a back-stabbing friend, a playground bully, a jealous relative. Or make someone up. Next, assign one positive quality to this character—kindness, courtesy, sympathy, a fondness for animals. Then write a passage with this person in action. Perhaps the character is traveling to a place. (It will help tremendously if you put some obstacles in the character's path.) You don't have to bring this "quest" to a conclusion, but have something happen that allows both contrasting traits to emerge and also try to include some hint that the character is capable of change. You can show a corrupt man helping a homeless person find shelter, or a bank robber arranging a baby-sitter on behalf of a woman he's just tied up. The result? A fully dimensional villain.
- 4- Imagine a protagonist who seems to have it all—a home, financial security, a loving spouse. Give this person a name and write out some details. Then figure out a goal that might work in a story. For example, if this person desires adventure, then perhaps make his or her goal to sail around the world. Hint: the goal should probably stem from something that's missing in this person's seemingly perfect life. Make a list of obstacles—internal and external—that might block the achievement of the goal. List as many obstacles as you can think of, more than you could possibly use in a story.

{Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft* (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. pp. 90, 94, 96}

- 5- If people are characterized by the objects they choose, own, wear, and carry with them, then write a character sketch by describing the items your character owns. Describe a man or woman (someone you know, maybe even yourself, or the imaginary character in your mental sketch) by describing a room in their house or a garden or a landscape they're attached to. Don't describe or characterize the person. Don't even have the person present. Just show the items he/she has in his/her room, or a view of the garden or landscape outside their room.

- 6- Write a dialogue between two characters, only one of whom can speak. The other is physically, emotionally, or otherwise prevented from saying what he/she wants to say. Write only the words of the one, only the actions and appearance of the other. Remember that a good way to reveal characters' feelings is through their relation to objects.

{Bell, J., & Magrs, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (1st ed.). London: Macmillan. pp. 170, 192}

- 7- Try and build a character from ground up. Follow the list of items below and create a character based on these items.

Used tissues	Lighter	Copy of poems by Wordsworth
Hand lotion	An unused Diary	Rubber
Three hundred rupees	Tooth paste	Picture of a beautiful Woman
Three pens, two of which don't work		

Now what observations can we make about this character? The lighter might indicate that the character smokes, yet there are no cigarettes. Does that mean he/she smokes intensively and has run out of cigarettes, or that the lighter was a gift from someone and is of sentimental value? Or does he/she have friends who smoke, but the character does not smoke himself/herself? Or is he/she filthy poor to afford a new pack of cigarettes, since he/she is left with 300 Rs. only?

In case the above scenario doesn't work for you, take a clean sheet of paper and simply start listing items off the top of your head. List the first ten things you think of, no matter how random or dissimilar they may seem. When you have finished, look over your list and create a character based on your items.

## Session 12: Character through Indirect/Authorial Interpretation

(Turning Life into Fiction. Robin Hemley. Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota. 2006, pp. 86)

- 1- An integrated in-session exercise (Using your character sketching handouts). Choose a profession. Make a list of things, objects, personality traits, etc, that are typical to that profession. Now write a scene including some, though not all, of your typical list. To make the character seem more real, model him on someone you've actually known or observed in that profession or a similar one. Present your character to the readers indirectly through "telling" or interpreting him/her as an author. Your passage should be very brief. You can stop whenever you want to.

{Burroway, J. (2003). Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. pp. 87, 91, 99}

- 2- An integrated in-session exercise (Using your character sketching hand outs). Choose a character you thought of and sketched during the previous session. Then quickly jot down what makes your character:

Laugh	Afraid	Angry	Awed	Tender
Ashamed	Obsessed	Other		

- 3- An integrated in-session exercise (Using your character sketching hand outs). Imagine your character in a situation that produces one of these emotions. What does he/she want? What is the deep desire? What is this specific situation? Does he/she want something that would at least for the moment fulfil that desire? Once you've decided the answers, present your character to the readers indirectly through "telling" or interpreting him/her as an author. Your passage should be very brief. You can stop whenever you want to.

- 4- An integrated in-session exercise (Using your character sketching hand outs). Choose a character you thought of and sketched during the previous session. Focus on no more than 2 or 3 of his/her character traits. Then pick one of the lines below and write a brief monologue (a few sentences) in that character's voice. You can stop whenever you want to.

- It doesn't take much, does it, for...
- And what I said was true...
- I know right away I'm going to...
- I've become a different person since...
- I don't like anyone to watch me...

Next, take the same details and present your character to the readers indirectly through "telling" or interpreting him/her as an author.

- 5- Write a short character sketch (it may be from life), focusing on how your character makes a living. Put him/her in a working situation and let us know by a combination of direct and indirect methods what that work is, how well he/she does it, what it looks, sounds, smells like, and how the character feels about it.

### Session 13 and 14: Dramatic Conflict

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. P.160}

- 1- Think up a character who is very much the opposite of yourself. Choose some of the following differences: sex, age, occupation, background, temperament . . . Now write a passage where this character must live for a while in an environment very similar to your own. Let the setting cause as much conflict as possible for the character. For example, if the character is a freewheeling bachelor, perhaps let him struggle tending to your houseful of kids. If the character is a spoiled rich kid, perhaps let her hold down your job for a day. Have fun letting someone else struggle with your setting!

(The Creative Writing Handbook. 2009. Derek Neale (ed). A & C Black Publishers Limited: London. pp. 19, 20, 42, 167.)

- 2- Watch or listen to two or three minutes of drama – on television, film or radio. Spot the contrast between each of the characters. Identify the conflict between and within the individual characters. What other forms of conflict did you find?
- 3- Draw on any experience you have of a conflict between some characters on authority issues and someone on whom they are trying to impose their point of view. For instance, a librarian might tell a group of people to stop talking, because they are interfering with the concentration of other readers. In this case, you might write about characters bickering and answering back and forth. You might find it helpful to think of a list of statements, using the second person ('you have', 'you will', 'you must', 'you should not', 'you did not'). You might think about ways in which you could make the position of the speaker or speakers firm and emphatic. You could use repetition, or quote the other person's words back to them, or use a determined, assertive rhythm.
- 4- Create a scene with dramatic tension between a father and his son. Characters in conflict also do not need to share the same perception of their differences. You can make a piece of writing more absorbing by having one character fail to realize the extent of the conflict. One character may be quite unaware about the conflict, the other highly aware. You can create great drama by persuading the reader that one view is correct and one character is decent, trustworthy & deserves readers' sympathy and the other does not. Or keep it open.
- 5- Draw on any experience you have of a conflict between some characters on authority issues and someone on whom they are trying to impose their point of view. For instance, one spills a drink over the other; they have an argument, or they are involved in an accident, etc. In this case, you might write about characters bickering and answering back and forth. You might find it helpful to think of a list of statements, using the second person ('you have', 'you will', 'you must', 'you should not', 'you did not'). You might think about ways in which you could make the position of the speaker or speakers firm and emphatic. You could use repetition, or quote the other person's words back to them, or use a determined, assertive rhythm.

{Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft*. pp. 180, 183} In-class.

- 6- Write about a time when your character started out on a trip but failed to arrive at his/her destination. Mention what was the obstacle – weather, accident, mechanical failure, human conflict? Characterize the people involved and the setting through significant detail. Give your readers a sense of the trip and its related conflicts.

## Session 15 and 16: The Captivating, Good and Bad Dialogue

### In-class Activity.

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp. 132, 143}.

- 1- Recall a dialogue exchange you had in the past few days. Do your best to write it down being faithful to what was actually said. Don't brush out the boring parts or make the dialogue stylish. Pretend you're transcribing a conversation from a tape recorder. Just write each character's name, then put the dialogue beside the name. (Jack: Hey, what's going on, man?)

Then rewrite the dialogue exchange, this time making it concise and dramatically interesting. Why don't you fictionalize the names this time and feel free to embellish a bit. Rewrite the exchange, this time adding in tags and stage directions. Your tags should make it clear who is speaking and your stage directions should offer an added dash of nuance or meaning.

Hint: it may help if one or both of the characters are engaged in a physical action. Then marvel at how well you've transformed real life into an interesting clip of fictional dialogue.

OR

- 2- Miss Jehan, a somewhat strict and traditional university student (you pick her field), stops at a book stall in some remote place. As she picks a few books, Ahmed, the book keeper, approaches her. He is an uneducated sort (though not necessarily foolish) and, being both bored and friendly, he wants to chat. Miss Jehan would rather not chat but she also doesn't want to alienate Ahmed because she would like directions to a nearby restaurant that won't be too greasy or frightening a place. Write a scene between Jehan and Ahmed, using dialogue, tags, and stage directions. Your main goal is to capture the flavor of these two people through how they speak.

### Assignment.

{The Creative Writing Handbook. 2009. Derek Neale (ed). A & C Black Publishers Limited: London. pp. 52, 61}.

- 3- Pick one of the following situations and write a one-page dialogue script using at least two distinct voices, one of which should reveal a particular idiom or dialect:  
At the university clerk office      At the restaurant      At a wedding hall.
- 4- Set two or three characters round a dinner table, in a restaurant or at home. Give them distinct voices. Focus on each character's individual use of diction, (bad) grammar and syntax to create particular speech patterns.

{Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft* (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. pp. 42, 45}

- 5- Have a look at the given picture. Write a few sentences that might be coming out of the mouth of each of these characters.
- 6- 'Stuck-up,' 'snobbish,' 'arrogant,' 'haughty,' 'imperious.' Pick any three of these words and produce an image through dialogue of a person, whose conversation with other character(s) fits each of these three terms.

**Session 18: 1<sup>st</sup> Person Point of View. Please select any one of the in-class activities given below**

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp. 81, 167, 179}.

- 1- Get inside someone's mind. Write a passage from the first-person POV of a person walking to a mailbox to send a difficult letter – having a problematic issue with someone, confessing something unpleasant . . . Then pick another character also walking to a mailbox to deliver a difficult letter and write from that character's first-person POV. These characters can be anyone you like, but make them the opposite sex from each other and quite different in age. Remember, this is first person, so you should inhabit these characters and tell things the way they would tell them.
- 2- Recall the most frightening moment of your life. If it's too scary or recent, go for the second most frightening moment. Using yourself as a first-person narrator, write a passage about this moment. Include minute details and the variety of your thoughts.
- 3- Two cars collide at an intersection. Write a brief passage describing this event from the POV of a city teenager, then again from the POV of a fashionable socialite, then again from the POV of a village type. You decide how these characters were involved in the collision. In all cases, let the character be a first-person narrator. So pick the voice type - conversational, informal, or formal - that seems most appropriate for your narrator. Conversational may work well for the teenager, but then that depends on your teenager, doesn't it? Whatever you come up with, each passage should sound different from the others because these are three very different characters

(Writing Well: The Essential Guide. Mark Tredinnick. 2008. Cambridge University Press: The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge. pp. 175, 180.)

- 4- Write about the birth of a child in your family or the first time you knew you were in love with someone or the moment you got news of a death; and write it from the viewpoint of someone involved (yourself or someone else) in the first person.
- 5- Write a scene from childhood that involves at least three characters. Write that scene three times, each time from the point of view of a different character.

{Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft* (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. p. 51 }

- 6- Write about something that happened to you. But write about it in the first person from the point of view of someone else who was present there with you when that something happened.
- 7- Write a first person account from the point of view of anything not human – an insect, a robot, a potato, a tree, etc. Try to invent and develop a diction that represents the frame of reference of this thing. For instance, if you are writing from the point of view of a shoe, it is likely to have extensive knowledge of and opinions about flooring, but a limited concept of the sky or human heads.

**Session 19: 2<sup>nd</sup> Person Point of View. Please select any one of the in-class activities given below.**

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. p.97}.

- 1- Rewrite one of your first-person POV passages using the second-person POV. Though you may do little more than switch the pronoun I to you, the effect may be profound. And feel free to change anything you like to fit this new POV. Compare the two versions and consider the different emotional impact of each.

(The Creative Writing Handbook. 2009. Derek Neale (ed). A & C Black Publishers Limited: London. p. 165).

- 2- Write (up to 350 words) in the second person about a single day in the life of a character who lives in a village or on a particular street. This may be a historical or contemporary character. You might use a character you have already created in your notebook. Write (up to 350 words), again in the second person about the same day, but this time concerning the activities of another character in the same village or street. Your two characters should not meet.

{Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft* (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. p. 51 }

- 3- Write about something that happened to you. But write about it in the second person, keeping in mind that you're trying to make your reader identify and 'become you.'
- 4- Choose a fiction extract written in the first person, or the third person. Try recasting a few sentences into second person. What happens?

{Bell, J., & Magrs, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (1st ed.). London: Macmillian. p. 167}

- 5- Think of the person you love most in the world and write a story for them, addressing them in second person. No one else need know who your implied reader is, just you.

**Session 20: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View. Please select any one of the in-class activities given below.**

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp. 87, 93, 182, 191}.

- 1- Return to something you have written, perhaps from a previous exercise. Rewrite a portion of it using the 3<sup>rd</sup> person POV. You may do something simple, like shifting from formal to informal voice. Or you might want to try something fun, like using a voice reminiscent of, say, a film noir detective story or a fairy tale. Or you may go for stream of consciousness. Look for a voice that will shed an interesting light on your 3<sup>rd</sup> Person POV.
- 2- Imagine an incident in a department store in which a salesperson and a customer clash over something - shoplifting, rudeness, racial misunderstanding . . . Using the third-person single-vision POV, write a passage detailing this clash through the eyes of the customer. As is customary with third-person single vision, include the character's thoughts.
- 3- Using the omniscient POV, write a scene in which something gets broken at a wedding reception. A gift, a bottle of cold drink, somebody's heart ... Employ your powers of observation and describe what takes place, as though you are a journalist writing a news account. What does the behaviour of the characters reveal about their thoughts? Demonstrate at least three of the five omniscient powers—interpreting events, describing unobserved incidents, providing historical context, revealing future events. There is plenty of opportunity here, as there are bound to be many people in attendance. Relish your godlike ability to know and see everything.
- 4- Find an annoyingly dry and difficult piece of writing, preferably an official document or a manual for some kind of appliance or equipment. Then rewrite the piece, turning the writing around 180 degrees, making it blissfully poetic or down-home friendly or anything else you like. Use the third person. But employ drastically different words and sentences and paragraphs than found in the original document.

(Writing Well: The Essential Guide. Mark Tredinnick. 2008. Cambridge University Press: The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge. pp. 176, 178.)

- 5- Rewrite, in the limited third person, what you wrote in the last exercise.
- 6- Write about something you are ashamed of, or something you find it hard to write about, in the third person. Sometimes it is a way to achieve the detachment you need to write about such things.
- 7- Write a scene from breakfast this morning, or from work this afternoon, involving at least three people. Write it in the viewpoint of the detached narrator.
- 8- Use the viewpoint of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient narrator to write about something sad or bad or ugly: a time when someone suffered; a car accident; a war scene; an image of horror from the television. Try it out on a loved one, when you're through. See if they're moved or not.

## Session 21 and 22: Plot, Plotting and Shaping.

### A- In-class

- 1- Take selected extracts from Falling Angels by Tracy Chevalier or Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka and continue the plot from where the writers left off. Ask yourselves the following questions about each: Who is this man? Where is he? What is he talking about? What's going to happen next? Invent the story's plot!

### B- Assignments

(Turning Life into Fiction. Robin Hemley. Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota. 2006, pp. 131, 163)

- 1- Pick up today's newspaper and find a story in it that you think could be transformed into a short story. Sketch it out. Who are the main characters? Who is the protagonist? What is the central conflict? Is the conflict something that's been left out of the actual newspaper account? Again, focus on the characters, and transform the plots.
- 2- Try writing a scene based on your life in a different genre. Turn it into a science fiction piece. Turn it into a thriller, a horror story, a comedy. Twist the plot accordingly.

{Steele, E. (Ed.). (2003). *Writing Fiction*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp. 74,75}.

- 3- Imagine this as a story climax: a person is rushing through a chaotic place— Sunday Bazaar, or university campus, or Mecca during a pilgrimage ...Decide where this character is going and why, bearing in mind that this is the story's climactic moment. Now start writing a story that is headed toward this climax. Feel free to steal a character from one of the previous exercises. Now write an entire story centering around the place you created. Your story should have a beginning, a middle with escalating conflict, and an ending that includes crisis, climax, and consequences. One more thing. This story can be no longer than five hundred words. Not five hundred pages. Five hundred words to seven hundred and fifty words alone.
- 4- Create an outline for a short story, novella, or novel that is structured as follows: the story should open with the protagonist setting out on a trip. The destination could be as close as the corner store or as far away as the other side of the universe, but the story should end when the character either arrives at the destination or returns to the starting point. Your outline should have a clear beginning, middle, and end, as well as crisis, climax, and consequences. Don't feel the need to make everything perfect, though. You can make different choices if and when you write the piece. On a journey, we don't always stick to the planned route.

{Bell, J., & Magrs, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (1st ed.). London: Macmillan. pp. 212-213}

- 5- Use the following situation outline: There is a character waiting for a train. They have a suitcase with an object in it that they wish to conceal. What sort of character would find themselves in this predicament and why? Use the idea of 'realistic appropriateness' to plot out a story that avoids coincidence, cliché or hyperbole.

- 6- Start your story extract with a title that implies time and place (*Family Dinner at RT Restaurant, An Evening at the Hill Park Garden, Night in Karachi, My Day with Grandma, The Last Year in Lahore, etc.*) Next,
- a- Take a piece of paper and break this plot title into its constituent parts: person(s), place, time.
  - b- On another piece of paper, develop a plan for this plot.
    - Brainstorm the scenario, thinking what your plot is likely to involve and what could happen.
    - Make lists of both situations and details.
    - Sift through these lists and think of scenarios that look promising as scenes.
    - Focus on situations you have listed and think about what can be used imaginatively as dramatic conflict triggers in your scenes.
    - Look at what you have got. When you have something that seems appropriate, and there is nothing else you might need, begin to plot out your situations with flow charts.
  - c- Review the following:
    - Do you have a story that involves conflicts and motives?
    - Is your story original?
    - Does the end of your story include a proper conclusion / cliff hanger?
    - Is your story convincing?
  - d- If you can't answer these questions, rework your plot outline so you can.

**Session 23: Plot and the Three Act Structure. In-class writing activity.**

(The Creative Writing Handbook. 2009. Derek Neale (ed). A & C Black Publishers Limited: London. pp. 36).

- 7- Find a piece of writing that you believe has an especially compelling or persuasive plot. Photocopy a short piece of it (no more than 350 words) to bring to the next session. Take the passage from a novel, or short story. Choose about ten sentences. Choose a passage that is rich and complex. Now work through these four stages:
  - a- Rewrite the passage so that it is much plainer, and concentrates on the information provided.
  - b- Leave what you have written for some time.
  - c- Now rewrite your piece in a more expansive style, without consulting the original. Try to introduce a distinctive rhythm, and some fresh and unusual words or analogies (in this context, this means using similes or metaphors).
  - d- Compare your rewritten piece with the original. What do you now notice about the way the plot of the original has been re-constructed?
  - e- Now give it a three act structure in brief outlines. Make sure it has a conflict, a crisis, and resolution.
  - f- Mention which model (The John Le Carre Model, The Rudyard Kipling Model, The C.S. Forester Model, The Hemingway Model, The Michener Model, The Harry Harrison Model) your plot could take after.

## Session 24 and 25: Theme

(Steele, 2003, pp. 199, 201, 202, 206)

- 1- Think of one of your favourite works of fiction, perhaps one of the stories you referred to in a previous exercise. Do your best to state the dominant theme of the story in a single word, phrase, or sentence. More than anything else, what is that story really about? Some hints: look for recurring images; ponder the title; examine the climax.
- 2- Imagine a student has just graduated from his university and is having a strange time readjusting to his new life. You can pick the university and field, even using an imaginary one. Flesh out the character and the setting. Then write a brief passage where this character is going about some everyday activity, but having difficulty with it. Whatever you do, do not think about the theme of this piece. Just focus on the character and what he or she is trying to do. Once you have written the passage, write down three to seven possible themes for this piece. Pick the theme that seems the most interesting. Ponder what direction the story may take using this theme.
- 3- Write a short piece starting with a theme. Here is your theme: faith. Spend some time contemplating characters, situations, settings, and so forth that may illustrate this theme in an interesting, non-cliché manner. Once you have some ideas in place, start writing a story with faith as the theme. You can write just a passage or you can write a whole story. Who knows? Starting with a theme may just give you a focus that allows you to write a wonderful piece, in which case you're free to write a story, every now and then, that does begin with theme.
- 4- Take one of the pieces you wrote for an exercise in a previous session. Look out the theme that may be hidden behind the words. Does a character's situation say anything about human nature? Is there a particular phrase or sentence that resonates for you? There's no telling where the clues lie, but they are probably there. Once you've identified a possible theme, write it down. Then revise the piece, keeping your theme in mind. If you have to alter or even throw out most of the original piece, so be it. A theme demands attention.

{Burroway, J. (2003). *Imaginative Writing: the Elements of Craft* (Penguin academics). (J. Terry, Ed.) Florida State University: Longman. pp. 180, 183 }

- 5- Write a short piece about a journey. Give the setting, at least two characters, and allow them to set off on a trip. Spend some time contemplating character types, situations, settings, and so forth that may illustrate this theme in an interesting, non-cliché manner. Once you have some ideas in place, start writing a story with journey as the theme. You can write just a passage or you can write a whole story.
- 6- Write a short piece taking your story as a power-struggle. Place two characters in a dangerous setting. Each has half of something that is no good and quite useless without the other half. Neither wants to give up his/her half? What happens?

**Session 27: Revision / Contextual Study. Please select any one of the in-class activities given below.**

(Steele, 2003, pp. 217, 219, 227, 232)

- 1- Return to something you have written, perhaps from one of the previous exercises. Read it aloud. As you read, make notes on what you think can be improved. If you find yourself bored as you read, odds are the readers will be bored too. Ask yourself why the piece is less than thrilling. And any words or sentences that make you (or your imaginary reader) wince or cringe should be treated as suspect. As a bonus round, revise the piece based on your notes.
- 2- Return to something you have written, perhaps from one of the previous exercises. Re-envision the piece. Read it through several times, asking yourself what is most original or powerful about this piece. It may be a character, a theme, a stray idea, even a single line. Now be bold. Toss out everything but this one promising thing. Start over, writing the piece entirely from scratch.
- 3- Return to something you have written, perhaps from one of the previous exercises. Revise the piece, making some kind of major adjustment—changing the point of view, overhauling the dialogue, altering the setting . . . As you revise, force yourself to focus solely on this single craft element. If so desired, you may take another round of revision, focusing on another major craft element. With so many craft elements to juggle, often it's nice to focus on just one thing at a time.
- 4- Return to the piece from the previous exercise, upon which you tampered with something major. Even if you're sick of it by now, stick with it. Revise the piece doing the following:
  - a- check the grammar, weed out the be verbs, modifiers, clichés, and pretentious words, reserving the right to keep any of them you find absolutely necessary;
  - b- unmix any mixed metaphors;
  - c- Adjust any attributions that call attention to themselves.

You may look for all of these things at once or do them one at a time. When done, congratulate yourself for graduating to the role of an editor.

**Session 29: Revision / Contextual Study.**

It's time to finish something. If you have an unfinished short story lying around, finish it. If you don't have a short story under way, start and finish one. You should complete a short story even if you're mostly a novel person because you'll be able to finish it in a relatively short amount of time. If you're not sure what to work on, simply take your work from one of the exercises in this hand-out and use that as a springboard for your project. If you want to be a fiction writer, the most important thing is to start a project and the second most important thing is to finish the first draft. Of course, if you're really serious, you'll need to take your project through numerous drafts. So do that too. Create an outline for a short story. Your outline should have a clear beginning, middle, and end, as well as crisis, climax, and consequences. Don't feel the need to make everything perfect, though. You can make different choices if and when you write the piece.

## CREATIVE WRITING I: BASELINE ASSESSMENT

### The 'Pre-portfolio' of Creative Work

To gain entry to the writing workshop, you are required to submit a sample of no more than 1,500 words of your creative work. This usually translates as a 4-5 double spaced pages of a short story, anecdote, reflective writing, or part of a longer prose piece, (i.e. an extract of a novel).

For your convenience, a submission of approximately 500 words onwards has been deemed acceptable, provided the word limit of your pre-portfolio does not exceed the maximum length. Your sample must therefore adhere to the assigned word limit; 500 – 1,500 words. Any creative portfolio comprising of less than 500 words will automatically be disqualified.

All work in the portfolio must be original, and is due in at the first option deadline (Aug 30, 2013), or latest at a second option deadline (Sep 16, 2013). Your sample will be assessed by the workshop instructor with reference to your writing style and technique, and you will receive qualitative feedback on your piece during the workshop. You could then revise and improve this work for submission in the final creative portfolio, which, together with your post-workshop creative writing sample and contextual study, would be submitted at the end of module option deadline. (See *Appendix D - 'Workshop Schedule'*, p. 13, for further details).

Please note that this is a formal requirement of the short training program, and you cannot participate in the workshop if you do not submit your sample of creative work.

### The 'Pre-portfolio' of Critical Essay

You are also required to submit a critical essay of 500 – 1,000 words. This can include a brief reflection on your academic experience at the Institute of English Language and Literature at the USJP so far, why you chose English Literature as your major, what you were hoping to explore or prove, the rationale behind your own writing practice and your choice to participate in the creative writing workshop/training on composing fiction.

The critical essay accompanying your creative work will not be formally assessed, but it is a formal requirement of the module.

### Pre-workshop Portfolio Format

Your portfolio should be in accordance with the format used in the corresponding MS Word template file attached to this document. Your manuscripts must be typed, double-spaced, and on one side of the paper. Use 1.18 inch margins (30 mm) top, bottom and right; 1.57 inch margin (40mm) left; a legible font, such as 'Ariel' or 'Times New Roman' (10/12 pt.); and fully justified paragraphs. Please review the next page for further details.

Critical Piece – Intention to Participate in the Creative Writing Workshop – XYZ Words

The first paragraph of each section and subsection should be non-indented left and fully justified. Use Times New Roman (or similar font) 10/12 points (Style: Normal); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Top, Bottom & Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left). The first paragraph of each section and subsection should be non-indented left and fully justified. Use Times New Roman (or similar font) 10/12 points (Style: Normal); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Top, Bottom & Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left).

Subsequent paragraphs use the same font but the first line is indented by 10 mm (Style: Normal Indent); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left); and the length of each paragraph should be in accordance with your terrain of thought. Subsequent paragraphs use the same font but the first line is indented by 10 mm (Style: Normal Indent); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left); and the length of each paragraph should be in accordance with your terrain of thought.

Subsequent paragraphs use the same font but the first line is indented by 10 mm (Style: Normal Indent); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Bottom & Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left); and the length of each paragraph should be in accordance with your terrain of thought. Subsequent paragraphs use the same font but the first line is indented by 10 mm (Style: Normal Indent); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Bottom & Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left); and the length of each paragraph should be in accordance with your terrain of thought.

Creative Piece – Short Story / Anecdote / Novel Extract (Title of Your Work) – XYZ Words

*Begin your text here. Please follow the same format sequence as outlined above, and review the given manuscript sample for further assistance, as texted below.*

“No way to break the news gently, Mike.” Jeremy Stein came around his desk and sank into the armchair next to Mike Henderson’s. Awkwardly, he patted Mike’s shoulder. “You’ve got advanced pancreatic cancer.”

Mike looked into Jer’s eyes. But Jer seemed to be at the end of a long tunnel, very far away. Mike felt far away from himself. Familiar stress response.

“That’s what I suspected,” he heard himself saying. “The symptoms were getting pretty obvious.”

“It’s stage three, T3, which means it’s spread to your stomach and colon as well as your pancreas. I’m really pissed off that you didn’t see me way before this. You’re as bad as a doctor about ignoring your health.”

“Worse. But I’ve been a little busy lately.”

Jer shook his head and rolled his eyes. “Hey. How long have we known each other? First year at McGill?”

“Yeah. September ’95. Thirty-five years almost.”

“And you were always an asshole about your health. You smoked for what, ten, fifteen years? Thought you’d live forever.”

“Twelve years, actually.”

“What I said, you’re an asshole. An unlucky asshole, because usually people get this when they’re sixty-five, seventy. You’re way ahead of the pack.”

“Okay, what can I do about it?”

Jer shrugged. “We can try a couple of therapies, mostly chemo, but pancreatic cancer is still a bastard.”

“So I’ve got about seven months.”

“Done your homework! Actually, that’s just an average from the time of diagnosis, so you could last a lot longer.”

Mike drew a long breath. “Or a lot less. Well, I’d rather hear it from a friend than some flunky in an HMO.”

“Hey, my pleasure.” Jeremy reached out and patted Mike’s shoulder again. “Mike, I am so sorry. You sure didn’t deserve this.”

“No one does.”

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## **CREATIVE WRITING I: SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT**

### The Final / Post-Workshop Portfolio of Creative Work

For the successful completion of this training module, you will be required to submit an original portfolio of creative writing at the end of this workshop. This would be due in at the first option deadline (Jan 15, 2014), or latest at a second option deadline (Jan 20, 2014).

You may attempt your final submission following two variant structures, each allowing you to format your contributions accordingly.

#### *Route ‘a’*

- a) If you are so inclined, please feel free to submit a single piece of creative work by following the structure specified below:
  - 1. At the very end of the course, submit a 2,000 – 2,500 word post-workshop narrative, which may be one portfolio of short story or an extract of a longer piece of fiction.
  - 2. Your contribution should be original, and must not duplicate work that has already been submitted as part of the course (including your in-session activity worksheets, as well as the amended / modified version(s) of your pre-portfolio of creative work).

#### *Or, Route ‘b’*

- b) You may also take this module following a different structure which allows you to contribute a ‘twin’ short story portfolio as follows:
  - 1. At the very end of the course, you may opt out of ‘a single piece submission’ and hand in two pieces of creative writing instead.
  - 2. This route requires you to submit an edited / altered version of your pre-workshop narrative, and a final post-workshop piece.
  - 3. All work in the portfolio must be original and must have a word count of no more than 2,500 words.

Please note that contrary to the feedback on your formative work that will be offered in tutorials, seminars and workshops, feedback on your summative work will be delivered with comments on feedback sheets. The evaluation will allow you to reflect on your creative practice and learning.

### The Final / Post-Workshop Portfolio of Critical Commentary (Contextual Analysis)

At the end of this training course, you must also submit a prose commentary detailing your means of drafting the final piece of creative writing. This should include your critical reflection upon your self-generated post-workshop narrative, or your transparent response to your end of the module creative submission.

#### *Route 'a'*

- a) If you are taking this module following 'route a', wherein only one piece of creative writing is to be submitted, then you should follow this assessment structure:
  1. Draft a single contextual commentary on the aims and processes involved in the composition of your post-workshop creative writing sample, without incorporating any information on work that has already been submitted as part of the course.
  2. You can make reference to your own fiction extracts to illustrate your analytical reflections on your narrative (you can include drafts of a piece if you wish). You might like to reflect critically on any difficulties or problems you have encountered in your writing.
  3. Please make sure the final word count of your commentary does not exceed 1,500 words, and maintains a minimum count of at least 1000 words.

#### *Route 'b'*

- b) You may also take this module following 'route b' which allows you to format your final contextual study according to a variant structure.
  1. Write two pieces of contextual study, one for each short story.
  2. A major part of what you write in the prose commentary should be about the changes / amendments / modifications you might be suggested to incorporate in your pre-portfolio of creative work, during the workshop.
  3. You can make reference to your own fiction extracts to illustrate your analytical reflections on your narrative (you can include drafts of a piece if you wish). Again you might like to focus closely on the development of your pre-workshop sample, or consider how your writing has developed over the whole module. You might also like to reflect critically on any difficulties or problems you have encountered in your writing.
  4. Present the final portfolio of contextual analysis (1,500 – 2,000 words). Each piece of contextual study should maintain a word count that does not exceed the maximum number of words in unison.

Regardless of what structure you chose to follow, in the second half or towards the end of the module the instructor will suggest that you get all your writing together, and read it through again. Think about what aspects of your workshop experience have motivated you. Some of you may now, therefore, want to rework some of your writing in the light of your practice. Others may want to try something more unconventional now that you have an existing body of work behind you, as well as revising earlier pieces.

### Post-workshop Portfolio Format

Your portfolio should be in accordance with the format used in the corresponding MS Word template file attached to this document. Your manuscripts must be typed, double-spaced, and on one side of the paper. Use 1.18 inch margins (30 millimetres) Top, Bottom & Right; 1.57 inch margin (40 millimetres) Left; a legible font, such as 'Ariel' or 'Times New Roman' (10/12 pt.); and fully justified paragraphs. Please review the next page for details pertaining to 'route a', and page 7-14 for details on 'route b' content composition.

Creative Piece – Short Story (Title of Your Work) / Novel Extract (Title of Your Work) – XYZ

Words

Begin your text here. Your portfolio must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, and fully justified. Use 1.18-inch margins (30mm/Normal/Standard size for this project) at the top, bottom, and right sides of the page; 1.57-inch margin (40mm) at the left; and a legible font (such as Times New Roman, 10/12 pt.). Indent the first line of all subsequent paragraphs 10mm from the left margin. Please follow the same format sequence as outlined in your Pre-Workshop Portfolio Style Template, and review the given manuscript sample for further assistance, as texted below.

“No way to break the news gently, Mike.” Jeremy Stein came around his desk and sank into the armchair next to Mike Henderson’s. Awkwardly, he patted Mike’s shoulder. “You’ve got advanced pancreatic cancer.”

Mike looked into Jer’s eyes. But Jer seemed to be at the end of a long tunnel, very far away. Mike felt far away from himself. Familiar stress response.

“That’s what I suspected,” he heard himself saying. “The symptoms were getting pretty obvious.”

“It’s stage three, T3, which means it’s spread to your stomach and colon as well as your pancreas. I’m really pissed off that you didn’t see me way before this. You’re as bad as a doctor about ignoring your health.”

“Worse. But I’ve been a little busy lately.”

Jer shook his head and rolled his eyes. “Hey. How long have we known each other? First year at McGill?”

“Yeah. September ’95. Thirty-five years almost.”

“And you were always an asshole about your health. You smoked for what, ten, fifteen years? Thought you’d live forever.”

“Twelve years, actually.”

“What I said, you’re an asshole. An unlucky asshole, because usually people get this when they’re sixty-five, seventy. You’re way ahead of the pack.”

“Okay, what can I do about it?”

Jer shrugged. “We can try a couple of therapies, mostly chemo, but pancreatic cancer is still a bastard.”

“So I’ve got about seven months.”

“Done your homework! Actually, that’s just an average from the time of diagnosis, so you could last a lot longer.”

Mike drew a long breath. “Or a lot less. Well, I’d rather hear it from a friend than some flunky in an HMO.”

“Hey, my pleasure.” Jeremy reached out and patted Mike’s shoulder again. “Mike, I am so sorry. You sure didn’t deserve this.”

“No one does.”

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Critical Piece – Contextual Study (Commentary on ‘Title of Your Work’) – XYZ Words

The first paragraph of each section and subsection should be non-indented left and fully justified. Use Times New Roman (or similar font) 10/12 points (Style: Normal); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Top, Bottom & Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left). While referring to your short stories within the text, enclose the titles in single inverted commas, and put all other quoted material (for instance, your own dialogue from your correlating narrative) within double speech marks.

*“An extra line space should immediately precede and follow a quotation, and all quotes must be italicized.”*

Subsequent paragraphs use the same font but the first line is indented by 10 mm (Style: Normal Indent); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Right; ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left); and the length of each paragraph should be in accordance with your terrain of thought. While referring to your short stories within the text, enclose the titles in single inverted commas, and put all other quoted material (for instance, your own dialogue from your correlating narrative) within double speech marks.

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Creative Piece – Short Story Portfolio (‘Title of Your First Narrative’ and ‘Title of Your Second Narrative’ – The Overall No. of Words / XYZ Words

*Title of Your First / Pre-Workshop Narrative (Modified Version)*

Begin your text here. Your portfolio must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, and fully justified. Use 1.18-inch margins (30mm/Normal/Standard size for this project) at the top, bottom, and right sides of the page; 1.57-inch margins (40mm) at the left; and a legible font (such as Times New Roman, 10/12 pt.). Indent the first line of all subsequent paragraphs 10mm from the left margin. Please follow the same format sequence as outlined in your Pre-Workshop Portfolio Style Template, and review the given manuscript sample for further assistance, as texted below.

“No way to break the news gently, Mike.” Jeremy Stein came around his desk and sank into the armchair next to Mike Henderson’s. Awkwardly, he patted Mike’s shoulder. “You’ve got advanced pancreatic cancer.”

Mike looked into Jer’s eyes. But Jer seemed to be at the end of a long tunnel, very far away. Mike felt far away from himself. Familiar stress response.

“That’s what I suspected,” he heard himself saying. “The symptoms were getting pretty obvious.”

“It’s stage three, T3, which means it’s spread to your stomach and colon as well as your pancreas. I’m really pissed off that you didn’t see me way before this. You’re as bad as a doctor about ignoring your health.”

“Worse. But I’ve been a little busy lately.”

Jer shook his head and rolled his eyes. “Hey. How long have we known each other? First year at McGill?”

“Yeah. September ’95. Thirty-five years almost.”

“And you were always an asshole about your health. You smoked for what, ten, fifteen years? Thought you’d live forever.”

“Twelve years, actually.”

“What I said, you’re an asshole. An unlucky asshole, because usually people get this when they’re sixty-five, seventy. You’re way ahead of the pack.”

“Okay, what can I do about it?”

Jer shrugged. “We can try a couple of therapies, mostly chemo, but pancreatic cancer is still a bastard.”

“So I’ve got about seven months.”

“Done your homework! Actually, that’s just an average from the time of diagnosis, so you could last a lot longer.”

Mike drew a long breath. “Or a lot less. Well, I’d rather hear it from a friend than some flunky in an HMO.”

“Hey, my pleasure.” Jeremy reached out and patted Mike’s shoulder again. “Mike, I am so sorry. You sure didn’t deserve this.”

“No one does.”

XYZ Words

*Title of Your Second / Post-Workshop Narrative*

Begin your text here. Your portfolio must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, and fully justified. Use 1.18-inch margins (30mm/Normal/Standard size for this project) at the top, bottom, and right sides of the page; 1.57-inch margins (40mm) at the left; and a legible font (such as Times New Roman, 10/12 pt.). Indent the first line of all subsequent paragraphs 10mm from the left margin. Please follow the same format sequence as outlined in your Pre-Workshop Portfolio Style Template, and review the given manuscript sample for further assistance, as texted below.

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“That’s what I suspected,” he heard himself saying. “The symptoms were getting pretty obvious.”

“It’s stage three, T3, which means it’s spread to your stomach and colon as well as your pancreas. I’m really pissed off that you didn’t see me way before this. You’re as bad as a doctor about ignoring your health.”

“Worse. But I’ve been a little busy lately.”

Jer shook his head and rolled his eyes. “Hey. How long have we known each other? First year at McGill?”

“Yeah. September ’95. Thirty-five years almost.”

“And you were always an asshole about your health. You smoked for what, ten, fifteen years? Thought you’d live forever.”

“Twelve years, actually.”

“What I said, you’re an asshole. An unlucky asshole, because usually people get this when they’re sixty-five, seventy. You’re way ahead of the pack.”

“Okay, what can I do about it?”

Jer shrugged. “We can try a couple of therapies, mostly chemo, but pancreatic cancer is still a bastard.”

“So I’ve got about seven months.”

“Done your homework! Actually, that’s just an average from the time of diagnosis, so you could last a lot longer.”

Mike drew a long breath. “Or a lot less. Well, I’d rather hear it from a friend than some flunky in an HMO.”

“Hey, my pleasure.” Jeremy reached out and patted Mike’s shoulder again. “Mike, I am so sorry. You sure didn’t deserve this.”

“No one does.”

XYZ Words

Critical Piece – Contextual Study – Total No. of Words / XYZ Words

(Optional Intro.) The first paragraph of each section and subsection should be non-indented left and fully justified. Use Times New Roman (or similar font) 10/12 points (Style: Normal); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Top, Bottom, & Right; and ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left). While referring to your short stories within the text, enclose the titles in single inverted commas, and put all other quoted material (for instance, your own dialogue from your correlating narrative) within double speech marks.

*Commentary on ‘Title of Your First / Pre-workshop Narrative’*

The first paragraph of each section and subsection should be non-indented left and fully justified. Use Times New Roman (or similar font) 10/12 points (Style: Normal); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Right; and ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left). While referring to your short stories within the text, enclose the titles in single inverted commas, and put all other quoted material (for instance, your own dialogue from your correlating narrative) within double speech marks.

*“An extra line space should immediately precede and follow a quotation, and all quotes must be italicized.”*

Subsequent paragraphs use the same font but the first line is indented by 10 mm (Style: Normal Indent); (Paragraph Spacing: ‘0pt’ Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: ‘1.18 inches = 30 millimetres’ Bottom & Right; and ‘1.57 inches = 40 millimetres’ Left); and the length of each paragraph should be in accordance with your terrain of thought. While referring to your short stories within the text, enclose the titles in single inverted commas, and put all other

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XYZ Words

*Commentary on 'Title of Your Second / Post-workshop Narrative'*

The first paragraph of each section and subsection should be non-indented left and fully justified. Use Times New Roman (or similar font) 10/12 points (Style: Normal); (Paragraph Spacing: '0pt' Before & After); (Line Spacing: Double); (Margins: '1.18 inches = 30 millimetres' Top, Bottom & Right; and '1.57 inches = 40 millimetres' Left). While referring to your short stories within the text, enclose the titles in single inverted commas, and put all other quoted material (for instance, your own dialogue from your correlating narrative) within double speech marks.

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XYZ Words

2013 - ANSARI, K - Course Module: Creative Writing I (Timeframe: 10 Weeks) Appendix H  
 Venue: Inst. of English Language & Literature (USJP) B.S. Level 2 (Lit.) / 3 Units (29 Sessions)

**PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT FORM**

Validated Sources: Cole et al. (1999) and <http://lrhc.sasked.gov.sk.ca>

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Assessment:** End of Project Module / End of Creative Writing Workshop

**Rating Scale:** To a Great Extent - 1, Somewhat - 2, Very Little - 3, Not at All - 4

Criteria	Rating	Comments
Student selected appropriate material.		
Portfolio showed evidence of student's understanding of project/module/course objectives.		
Portfolio showed evidence of student's pride in own work and commitment to writing projects/experiences.		
Portfolio showed evidence that student completed assignments.		
Portfolio showed evidence of student's understanding of the process of developing and organizing ideas.		

Other comments:

THE UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR MEDIA, ART & PERFORMANCE  
Ph.D. SESSION 2011-2014  
Module / Workshop / Learning Outcomes Evaluation Questionnaire

MODULE: Creative Writing I IDENTIFIER: 1022805 (RIMAP, UoB, UK) YEAR: 2013

Please spare some time to complete this simple questionnaire. The researcher would like to have feedback from their students on the overall impact of what we are doing. In case some aspect of the project has gone amiss, once informed we can then set about reviewing our aims and methods and improve things for future research. The results of this survey will be included as substantial evidence in the data collection process pertaining to the present study on developing your creative writing skills. Try to answer the questions as fairly as possible. By completing this form you will be making an important contribution to the deliberation on the future of creative writing practice / training / studies / education and, ultimately, the future of teaching and learning Creative Writing in our public sector university(s) in Pakistan, or abroad.

**SECTION 1: Module/Curriculum**

1. To what extent do you believe the aims, objectives, and preliminary information about the module were clear / unclear?

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2. Which aspect(s) of this module did you find especially useful and helpful, if any?

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3. What were the factor(s) which made these aspects of the module particularly interesting and / or enjoyable? Please leave the space blank if you did not find any factor fascinating.

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4. Which aspect(s) of this module did you find least useful and helpful, if any?

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5. What were the factors which made these aspects of the module least interesting and / or enjoyable? Please leave the space blank if you did not find any uninteresting aspect(s).

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6. To what degree do you believe the amount of work (reading, writing, etc.) required for the module was manageable and/or acceptable?

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7. How far do you believe the material (reading extracts and activities, etc.) covered in the module was challenging and interesting / uninteresting?

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8. What changes might the module developer make which would improve the effectiveness of the least interesting, least enjoyable, unmanageable & unacceptable aspects of the module?

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9. Are there any other additional / specific / general comments on the module you would like to make? Please use the remaining space to raise any issues which you do not feel are covered adequately by the foregoing questions. (Continue overleaf if required).

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**SECTION 2: Lectures and Workshop Seminars**

10. How far were the lecture and workshop sessions clear / unclear and comprehensible / incomprehensible?

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11. Which aspects of the lectures and the workshop seminars did you find most informative and thought provoking (if any)?

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12. Which aspects of the lectures and the workshop seminars did you find least informative and thought provoking (if any)?

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13. To what extent were you and your peers encouraged to participate? What was the experience like?

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14. Were handouts and/or other supplementary material helpful? Point out why so, or why not?

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15. What was your favorite writing assignment (if any)? Why?

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16. What was your least favorite writing assignment (if any)? Why?

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17. Did the overall course structure (two short story portfolios, emphasis on revision before re-arrangement, and delivery) help your writing practice?

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18. Would you have liked more specific instructions on genre conventions (e.g. historical narrative, etc.) or were you comfortable with the genre-less approach to writing? Explain.

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19. Did keeping a journal and/or notebook help your writing practice? Explain your answer.

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20. What are your views on the formative evaluation / summative assessment processing for this project?

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21. Discuss the researcher's performance as an instructor. Did you find the way the workshop was conducted satisfactory? Would you have liked the instruction to be different? Explain.

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22. Please offer some advice or helpful hints for students taking this course in the future.

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23. Are there any other additional / specific / general comments on the workshop and lecture sessions you would like to make? Please use the remaining space to raise any issues which you do not feel are covered adequately by the foregoing questions.

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**PTO**

**SECTION 3: Learning Outcomes / Objectives**

24. When it comes to using writing skills to explore creative ideas in an original, innovative and/or imaginative way, comment on where you see yourself at the beginning of this project, and towards its end?

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25. Measure your growth and progress in terms of exhibiting a beginner level ability at using the elements of craft (e.g. character, conflict, dialogue, plot, point of view, etc.) to produce comprehensible pieces of work.

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26. When it comes to acquiring an introductory awareness of the many formal techniques available for composing fiction (ideas/content, organization, voice, language conventions, etc.), comment on where you see yourself at the beginning of this project, and towards its end?

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27. Comment on how successful you think you have been so far at making constructive (oral and written) critical responses to your own and your peers' composition, offering analysis and logical practical suggestions for improvement?

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28. Comment on how successful you think you have been so far at formulating opinions on works by the researcher and professional authors in an objective fashion?

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**Sec 4: Please provide the following information. Thank you for completing this questionnaire.**

Your name:

Your signature:

Date:

## **REPENTANCE**

*"All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds awake to find that it was vanity; but the dreamers of day are dangerous men. For they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible."*

- Lawrence of Arabia

## PART ONE

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**FIRE**

*From the ashes a fire shall be woken, A light from the shadows shall  
spring; Renewed shall be the blade that was broken: The crownless  
shall be king.*

*— John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, Return of the King*

## Prologue

**Khushaalpur**

**Wednesday, June 7, 2006**

WARDAH'S HEAD SWAYED and she fluttered her eyes open in the Eden of her past life. The child she saw in her dreams was no more - her life taken away by the ones she'd treasured, the ones she had adored. The angel of death had come and gone, had snatched the child's physical presence away. But inexistence hadn't made her world any less troubled than it earlier was. Seven years of extinction could not compensate fourteen years of a miserable life. And even though she was long gone, a part of her soul still survived. How big that part was, she knew not. But she did know one string, she did know one chord. She was done spinning her life in circles, looking for answers unknown - answers connected to the girl's past - answers connected to her own. She wanted to know what the child had been like. How passionately she had loved. Loved and had lost. But perhaps more than that she'd wanted to discover her own path - the path that she was destined to follow - the punishment she was obligated to inflict. And so she dreamt of the past. She envisioned the child, happy and carefree. Who she was and what she would have been. Muddled sounds of laughter, free and musical, soon made their way towards her ears, the morning sun's rays shimmering before her sight. It was the girl again - the dead spirit who streamed before her eyes.

*"Diya, stop! You're too fast! I cannot keep up with you."*

*The girl's companion panted, wiping streaks of sweat on her forehead with her embroidered full-sleeve. And as she did, the patch-work of small round mirrors on her long, baggy umbrella-frock deflected sun's rays on the grassy mould beneath her knees. It had been five hours since the two sisters had set out*

*for their breakfast picnic, half an hour since they had been scurrying like dazed nymphs in the open fields. Nadia was exhausted, it was getting late, her mother was probably frantic with worry wondering where the two had disappeared off to, and hence about time they headed back home.*

*The daughter inside the dead girl told her to stop, bounce back towards the hills. To her grand house, one that had been built by her royal ancestors as an ancient prison made of stone, with fortified towers connected by several spiral stairs leading to the battlements that gave off peaked tunes in the windy howls of the dark night. It was against the rules to be out for more than a couple of hours a day. The woman knew that. But the rebel within the child told her to move on, escape the agonies and turmoil of life, leave everything behind, if only just for a little while.*

*For her rebel inside, rules existed only as an entity to break.*

*'Go home... just listen to your sister, and go home...'*

*'Oh please, don't listen to anyone except your heart...break, break, break...'*

*It was the rebel within her that won. It always did.*

*Diya continued coursing away, further and further into the greens, feeling dried yellowed leaves rustle beneath her feet, the last drops of morning dew on the grass tickling her bare skin. She darted and dashed and puffed, amidst the dense crops, amidst the wilderness of weeds, touching the yellow flowers with her flying hands, the curvy waves of her white frock flowing in the wind, until she finally fell sideways into the tall grass, and burst into an uncontrollable fit of childish giggles*

*"Roses," she whispered, head propped up on her arm, sniffing the scent of flowers growing untamed in the fields. Eyes sparkling with excitement, her face radiated with pleasure as she took in the enchanting sight that surrounded her.*

*Sharp, rejuvenating rays had permeated the morning air with an exhilarating freshness. The fertile fields of Khushaalpur countryside were steeped in a bright angelic luster, exuding dazzling shadows that illuminated the suburban town's surroundings. At a great distance she could see heavenly birds flying past the stretching plains. Horses were merrily feasting in the pastures on both sides of the highway. And as the breezing vehicles roared along the lonely road every now*

*and again, their rumbling wheels sending off dust ridden clouds amidst vague marks on the road behind, she could easily make out the village folk as they went about their duties nearby.*

*Diya was lost to the world - one with her realm of thoughts. Ever since a child she had dreamed of living in a place far away from the shackles of her family life. A place she could spend an eternity in as unrestrained as a bird; where she had a right to breathe when she wished, a right to stop when she didn't. A place where no one questioned her gender, caste, or creed. Where who she was and where she had come from were irrelevant. Somewhere her folks would never be able to find her, or harm her soul. A place where she could grow and blossom as do the flowers manifold.*

*A place like the greens, she thought.*

*It wasn't that the child had been ashamed of her family. On the contrary, hers was one of the richest lineages of Pakistan. Her grandfather, Raees Ahmer Shahab, was the mayor of Khushaapur District. He was rich; so filthy rich that he could buy an entire town if he ever wanted to. Corruption was in his blood, hatred in his soul, violence in his genes. Destroying people's lives was his passion. But Diya knew better. She'd always been able to sense a weakness in her grandfather's eyes; the cowardice that he was able to hide behind his veneer of ruthlessness.*

*No... she had never been afraid of him. Not when he had forced the young child, so many a times, to gobble whole spices down her throat, to the point of choking her, with a burning sensation in her windpipe. Not when he had locked the teenager, every other night, in the gloomy underground cellar of an abandoned warehouse, teeming with crawling creatures of the dark, prickling on her blood and bare flesh. Not even when he had mercilessly flogged her back with canes, again and again, until the delicate bones of her thirteen-year old body had finally fissured beneath the sticks.*

*'Scream girl! I want to hear the devil's cries through you!'*

*Oh no...not even then. The only thing that she'd forever been scared of, that she was running away from, was her future ... her intended future that had been pre-planned by her family.*

*“You know when it comes to others I usually don’t care, but for some reason I hate being left unanswered by you like this – you, my baby sister, who claims to be my sole soul-mate in the whole wide world,” drifted a smooth milky voice.*

*Eyes still closed, Diya’s face gleamed into an innocent smile.*

*Lying beside her on the grass, Nadia’s arm went around her sister’s neck, gently nudging her, placing her head peacefully on her shoulder. And as her tender fingers began stroking the stray strands of hair, hair that had come out loose from the child’s long dark braid, her gaze skimmed over the beautiful plains and pastures to the rising hill, until finally flickering on the urbanized township of Khushaalpur.*

*Their mansion!*

*“You know you really don’t have to do this, sweetheart. All you have to do is say no, and the rest will be taken care of,” Nadia continued amidst her sister’s stony silence.*

*“I’ve finally been able to manage quite a lot of savings this time around. Mother’s jewellery as well. We can always sell it. Somehow or the other I can get you out of here; send you off to another city. Someplace where you’ll be safe, where you can begin a new life, meet new people, make new friends. A place far away from here.”*

*Still smiling, Diya eased herself out of their embrace and got to her feet, the occasional gusts of wind picking up the locks of her hair and tossing them about her face.*

*Standing amidst wild columns of roses dancing to the beat of northern winds, she stretched up her arms, welcoming the beams of the sun as they silhouetted her shape. Behind her green hills rose and fell, bordered with lush, deep forests; the thick, dense waves of neem and palm trees stretching in infinity. The air was warm and peaceful, the birds chirping their familiar songs. Adding to the magic was the cascade of sparkling streams... streams that gushed forth at the foot of the hills, muzzily moving in graceful, spiral curves, surging and rolling until finally bouncing across stones, only to push against them and move on.*

*This was her home... her real home, she thought. She belonged here, in the wilderness, as she had belonged nowhere else.*

*“Do you believe in fate, Nadia apa? In destiny?” she said, turning around, fastening the scarf around her head once again. “Mother says when God was creating the world, He could have weaved us in isolation. Instead, He chose to send all things in pairs. And unless the chosen souls come together, no one can actually walk the path we are destined to follow.”*

*“And you believe marriage to an unknown person, old enough to be your father, who is as much a stranger to you as you are to him, will help you find that part?” Nadia threw her head back in a gesture of disbelief. “Come out of your idealism, Diya. You’re not a naïve young girl anymore. You’re now as much of an adult as I am.”*

*“It will, if that’s what is meant to be. I have complete faith in Him. I know He’ll protect me, won’t allow me to make a wrong decision, no matter what.”*

*Illusions and fantasies, mused Nadia, her hand subconsciously stroking across her swollen belly. It was ultimately a concept she could no longer indulge in, nor something she could ever believe.*

*Gazing across the hills Nadia mulled over the corporeality of this so called real world ... a realm where one took birth, grew old, withered away and died. That was about all there was to the mechanism called life. That was the reality...the truth... something which existed only in what one could see, taste, hear, and touch. And all she had ever seen was their life’s hardships... all she had ever been able to touch were her tears... all she had heard was the anguish of her mother’s cries... and the only thing she had ever tasted was the bitterness of hatred consuming her, devouring her!*

*“Yes apa, you are right. I am a teenager, a young adult,” Diya said trudging closer, grabbing hold of her sister’s shoulders as if in a warm embrace. “An adult who should have died while still a child! Don’t you remember anymore?”*

*Seven years... that’s how old the child had been when she saw death loom over her for the very first time in her life. That was the first time her grandfather beat her, his way of thrashing the devil that gave her the seizures. That was the*

*first time she felt the brunt of his wrath. The first time she found herself naked, without the armour of her clothes to protect her, covering her innocence, shielding her virtue. Had tasted the salt of her own tears, submersed in a pool of her own vomit and blood.*

*The first time she'd lost consciousness after being born with it in this world.*

*Yet she had survived.*

*Diya was used to being butchered, slaughtered, as if limb by limb, day in and day out, without any mercy or compassion on the part of her family. She could still remember it - feel it - the ghastly first stroke as the bamboo stick sent tremors of stunning pain rippling through her silent screams. It numbed her, made her body twitch with resistance and jerk in disbelief. Then before the devil within could come to terms with the stinging agony, the second lash would bite into her back, the third ripping shreds of skin and flesh off her body. The fourth would bite into her soul, and the fifth her self-esteem.*

*But she would get it back. Her self-respect. She always would the moment she thought about him...the one who'd nursed her back to consciousness.*

*Something happened to her that night, she thought, still overwhelmed by the haze of the lost time. She did not know what exactly it was, but something had happened all right. Agonizingly painful memories hit her with full force... a recollection of how she was beaten and dragged and caged. She vaguely remembered seeing an apparition in the cellar, during the seventh year of her youthful night. A shadow made its appearance under the moon. With bright shafts coming in through the window grilles above her head, his silhouette was cast in a brilliant white light. The mirage was steady, cold yet warm, whispering soft, deep words of comfort, covering her bruises with balms of oil. A steady hand ran its fingers through her hair, lips kissed her forehead, murmuring her name, promising her the best of life.*

*"I fell asleep, you know, thinking I wouldn't be able to last another night, only to wake up feeling that everything was going to be all right, that I was going to be taken care of. A feeling that has been by my side ever since. It is this feeling that has been protecting me, night in and night out, every time he tortures me. And that's why I still believe."*

*“You’re a passionate one, little sister. But not everyone is as strong as you are. Some of us actually feel the pain when hurt... or broken.” Nadia’s lips, uncoloured and soft, curved inside, accentuating the hint of misery in her cheeks under her dark eyes.*

*“He is gone, Diya,” she continued. “Out of my life for good. He said he couldn’t have any ties with me even if he’d wanted to. Said the essence of his existence served only one purpose... I remind him of their death, you know. His father’s death. I’m sure I do. Was it really my fault, Diya? His father died, protecting him, killed at the hands of my husband? Was it really my fault if I’d wanted to...?”*

*Nadia winced as she realized the mistake she’d just about made by almost confessing her truth. At the age of twenty, she was four months pregnant, divorced, and worse - she’d almost gotten married to the man who’d wanted to kill the father of her unborn child.*

*He was a good man; every fibre of her being was sure of that. She was as sure of that as she’d been of any single thing in her entire life. Had she told him about the life growing inside her, the mercy in his heart would have come to his childhood friend’s rescue, taking up her responsibility as his own, never deserting her when she needed his help. He would have accepted her, coming to terms with their companionship, and would have married her, even if it meant leaving everything behind. But his heart would have plagued him, his conscience would have tortured him. To his heart, she would have been nothing but a mistake... a mistake he would rather put behind his life and focus everything he had to continue building a future; the ruthless future based on his desire for revenge.*

*She didn’t want him to feel that way; had too much respect for him to have him tormented like that. He, on the other hand, was never hers to begin with; he was committed to someone else.*

*Hadn’t he said so last night, just before exchanging their final farewells?*

*And as difficult as it was for her to continue hiding her feelings, she had to accept that. She would rather meet her inevitable doom than force him to marry her and spend the rest of his life cursing her for getting in his way of finding true happiness... God only knew with whom.*

*“Who are you talking about? Is it the same man? The one who’d saved you from grandfather’s wrath a few years ago? When did you see him? Why didn’t you tell me you had met him?” Diya said, impulsively flinging questions at her sister, one after the other.*

*“That’s not important.” Nadia shrugged. There was sorrow in her eyes, but behind it reeled a firm purpose. “Nothing is important to me anymore; nothing, save your happiness. It may be too late for me, and I’m well aware of that, but I’ll never let anything come in the way to your happiness. And that’s a promise I intend to keep.”*

*Moving apart, the two suddenly turned around as they heard a voice coming from the open fields behind them. Squinting at the image coming towards them, Diya moved to Nadia’s side, placing a hand on her shoulder, and squeezed it gently.*

*“I think it’s time. Wish me luck, Nadia apa.”*

*Nadia’s eyes darted as the movement, a blurry shape, slowly came into view. It was their mother. Nadia linked her fingers with her sister’s, and covered her hand. She didn’t want to let go. Not just yet.*

*“There you are. I was afraid I wouldn’t be able to find you in time,” Amma said, her slender face breathless with pleasure and nerves, her long, bony hands hovering over her chest as it swelled and regressed.*

*“They’re on their way over. The groom’s family... they are coming in to see you. Diya, we have got to get you dressed-up. We’ve got to get you home.”*

*Home!*

*Ironically, her home was the very place where Diya had lost her mind. She was still fourteen the day she died.*

\* \* \* \* \*

# *One*

*Khushaalpur*

*Friday, July 19, 2013*

*Seven Years Later...*

MAJID KAKA WASN'T usually taken by his irrational impulses, but today was definitely a superstitious day. Until a few hours ago he'd suspected something was about to happen, as if some bad omen were headed his way. He'd spent most of the entire morning waiting to get hit by a truck, get robbed, shot, or worst, catch people gossiping about him behind his back. Had also deemed the possibility of an unexpected arrival, the inauspicious appearance of an unwelcome guest. He would have given the option of a near-one's demise another thought, that is if luck had foretold his immediate future were headed towards something positive and great. Surprisingly his bad omen never made its appearance, and now it seemed like there was a bit of a twist that was headed towards his fate. As of ten minutes ago Jupiter had moved out of his eighth house, which would explain why the twitch had jumped to his right eyelid instead. So now there was the probability of a possible collision, a confrontation between his Jupiter and the House of Aries. This was what he'd already confirmed from this morning's edition of the newspaper, exactly the way its zodiac had depicted his case.

Oh, but to *hell* with his eyes.

Majid Kaka blinked once, then again, and rubbed his eyes with the palms of his hands. With both of his lids flickering at the same time, he wondered what this could possibly represent.

Either his world had suddenly turned metaphysical or it was nothing but nerves – conjunctivitis, allergy, or even enormous amount of stress. Of all alternatives the last seemed the most probable, given he was in the company of that rather infuriating brat. The young master was synonymous with heartburn and

headaches – tension, agitation, *and* loads of distress. Wherever the kid went, whenever he was around, stretches of stress followed him with a galloping bound.

“Trust me when I say this, Kaka,’ said his young master, steeped in deep thought. “Shayaan Khan is a flawless piece of work, who, if I may add, doesn’t need any sort of attachment, whatsoever. He can live his life perfectly well on his own.”

The very conclusion made up the crux of his existence; a fact that the airhead neither stopped reminding himself, nor everyone else around him.

Majid Kaka wanted to roll his eyes. Not only that but he also wanted to give Shayaan Khan a piece of his mind. What kind of a thing was that to say in the middle of a routine exercise? Come to think of it, what sort of a thing was that to say at all? A man pledging his unconditional love, his-heart-felt-devotion to his own self, really! The idea was simply preposterous. But if this was what he was supposed to put up with, if this was the kind of audience that he was going to find, Kaka figured he had no choice. It was such a pity that he was the Khans’ most loyal family servant. And worst; they were the ones who paid his cheques. The rules of propriety maintained that he restrain himself from partaking in any point of view in front of his employers. And so silence was what had to be mimed. All opinions on his employers and their personal affairs were to be stifled in his heart. And ultimately disclosed behind their backsides.

At least, most of the time.

“I’m telling you Kaka, affection has no longer anything to do with marriages these days! It is nothing more than a youthful, immature, middle class fantasy. And since I don’t belong to the middle class, this fantasy is not meant for me.”

“Yes, sir.”

“The way I see it, there are only four categories of people in this life. First category finds someone they love, and who for some strange reason loves them back. Second category finds someone they love, but never have the courage to reveal their true feelings, until it’s too late. Third category never ever finds someone to love, or even if they do, their feelings are merely one-sided, and

therefore quite useless. And then there is the fourth category of people, like yours truly, who are simply not that interested.”

“Relationships do take a lot of hard work, sir.”

“True, old man. Quite true. And what they also require is two people willing to work equally hard. And I am definitely not interested.”

“A very noble decision, saaeen.”

“I knew I could count on you, old guy. At least someone in this house has enough of brains to see what should happen and what should not.”

“Yes, sir.”

“At least someone understands me!”

“Sure, sir.”

“Then I’m not wrong, am I?”

“No sir, I would assume not!”

That Majid Kaka was such good company, Shayaan Khan thought. He’d been sharing secrets with the sponge of a man since the time he had been hired into his household fifteen long years ago. The two had hit it off instantaneously. And today Shayaan was so used to sharing his perspectives with him that he had often feared a loss of conscience otherwise. He was dreading the day the man would have to leave them, the day he would officially be labelled as no-longer-fit to perform his tasks. And with all his sense of loyalty he could not do a thing to delay the inevitable... the rushing tick-tocking of time.

Kaka was about to enter his fifty-eighth year, just a couple of years short of the retirement mark. A lean build standing on legs carved in the shape of hockey-sticks, he was excruciatingly functional for his age, not to mention agile and strong. He possessed quite a lot of contrasting personality traits. While his conduct was at times as rigid as metal, at others it mimicked the softness of a cotton bud that came with a few thorns. Cold as the North Pole, calm and serene most of the time, when Majid Kaka occasionally opened his mouth it was to bark at someone, mostly when they had perpetrated what he considered to be an unethical crime.

He had a head of blazing red hair that he’d dyed by basking under rich, homemade pastes of Mehindi, and cheekbones that were sullen and blotched, yet

somewhat reflexive and beguiled. His eyes twitched every now and then, as if masking strange thoughts of some kind; his lips hardly did anything except curve, flounce and pout, at times spreading out in thin straight lines. His temperament and moods were utterly unpredictable. And so were his opinions. Yet there was something about him, something that encouraged absolute confidence. He was the kind of man one could never distrust, someone you would never want to leave behind.

Shayaan grunted a thirty as he lifted the hand-weights behind his back one more time. His muscles swelled above his elbows and veins rippled through his arms. His teeth clenched under intoxicating pressure, as wafts of breath escaped through his mouth. And as he counted the thirty-one, his intercom chirped two perky beeps. Before he could have a thirty-two, a voice announced an incoming visitor requesting to enter the hall.

“May I, sir?”

“Might as well, Majid Kaka. Might as well.”

Kaka rose from the bench, placing Shayaan’s towel and shirt on its surface before he left. He picked up his tray and turned right to the east stairs. They wound down towards the back of the house, inches away from the main gate. A swift shortcut to reaching the visitors, he reflected, especially Shayaan Khan’s annoying dates!

On his way the old servant shook his head, and gave his life another thought. He knew he was in love with the youth, but had pampered him under the guise of his scorn. He knew the boy was his weakness, but this truth he never wanted to get caught. He resented the fact that he would soon have to leave them, yet was happy for the time being since he was home at least for now.

Shayaan bent over and scooped the weights from the floor. It was too early for the tiles to be mopped, yet they felt slick and gleamed as if shining glass. Comprising of forty pieces of fitness equipment, including treadmills, step-machines, barbells, and spinning bikes, the entire private gym had been constructed especially on his demand, keeping to his likes. As for the mansion, the place in itself was bedazzling and magnificent. Three stories spreading over nearly 500 of the 4000 kanals of land; a gazing sight for sore eyes.

When he and Aayaan Khan had moved into the haveli almost fifteen years ago, it had been but a crumbling frame of pillars, old and worn out. His older brother had decided to turn it into a beautiful castle by hiring multitudes of construction crowds. Walls were renovated, halls redecorated, and rooms redesigned. No longer was it a disintegrating structure of cracked bricks. Hazel glittered stucco now coated the red stone along every side.

The exterior fabric of the mansion had been renewed with new aluminium windows, and huge oak doors lined the entrance and exit around the spacious hall. All doors were internally double steeled for protection, in case robbers felt like taking a tour in the middle of the night. Fifteen traditional bedrooms and a massive swimming pool reflected their state-of-the-art tastes. While new floor coverings, electric upgrades, and enhanced information technology facilities had also added to their remade lifestyle.

Paintings from Italy adorned the walls, sculptures from France attracted throngs of gaping individuals inside. Pottery was imported all the way from Iran, while handmade rugs from the deserts of Thar were spread over a glossy surface of marbled tile. Rising through the floor was a spiral staircase, tiled with polished limestone and fenced by a hand-carved marble railing in white. Afghani silk curtains fanned over windows - windows that opened to cultivated grounds, and stood tall, bright, airy, and wide. Where wild trees once lingered haphazardly in the courtyard below, now a properly trimmed and maintained garden where colours red, yellow, white and purple reigned.

The Khans were rich. They'd always been rich. Only now they had a posh lifestyle!

Two whole years had been spent renovating their house, turning the place into a splendid and flashy isle.

Those were the days, thought Shayaan as he lowered the silver dumbbell slowly, and set it on the floor. His fingers had gone stiff and needed a few seconds to adjust before he rushed outside for a quick morning jog. Curving his arms he let them loose again, and repeated the same for a few more times. This was all for the sake of keeping fit, he knew, but honestly, that was about all that could at present be withstood by his might. Whatever body mass had been shed, the abs that had

been built were more than enough for now. All he had to do was think about his burning shoulders, which he tried rotating and simply whined.

Grabbing a towel from the indoor bleachers Shayaan wiped his face first, then his bare chest. He was reaching for his track shirt when Majid Kaka returned to the gym holding a small package in his hands. The parcel appeared to be four inches long and four inches wide. It was wrapped in a shiny silver paper that gleamed multi-coloured spikes of light.

“This was just delivered for you, sir. I believe it’s from an unknown source.”

Shayaan took the package and inspected the box. His name was marked in bold, black capital letters on the top, but there was no card sticking to the glossy surface on any side. Cramps of scepticism pulsated in his heart and all sorts of phenomena began ruffling through his mind.

“Who was at the door Kaka? Did they say anything about who this was from?”

“It was an agent from the KSP Courier service, sir. He just handed this to me, had me sign a piece of paper, and simply left.”

“That’s strange. Since when have the KSP started delivering stuff by anonymous senders and that too without any forwarding address on them?”

Tilting his head to his right, Shayaan brought the box closer to his ear and shook it slightly. Something swayed, jingled, and tinkled inside. For a moment he thought he’d also heard a strong thud of a sound, as if the item were something hefty and large. Dismissed the same after giving it another thought, as the package felt rather dainty, not heavy but flimsy and light.

“There’s nothing ticking in there. So,” Taking a long hard look at the box, Shayaan deliberated his options out loud. “Unless the package has been sent over by someone who either belongs to the Pakistan navy, the army, central government, or who happens to be a member of an advanced international intelligence agency, which, given that I am an utter nonentity, is highly unlikely, whatever rests inside this package definitely cannot be a bomb.”

“I understand what you mean, saaeen” happily agreed Kaka. Having endured twenty long years of his young master’s nonstop boasting about, Majid felt the kid had finally realized his real worth after all.

“That only leaves us with one other option,” concluded Shayaan. “Do you think it’s drugs? Maybe, due to their resentment of my illustrious achievements, somebody’s trying to bait me... set me up, that sort of thing?”

Kaka had been rendered speechless, yet again. The minute Shayaan Khan would stop self-aggrandizing his achievements would no doubt be the day when pigeons would fly off into deep space.

“Despite being an “unknown nobody,” you still have powerful connections, sir. I’m sure officers of justice will never lock you up even if you were caught red-handed during the very act of murder itself.”

No arguments there, figured Shayaan Khan. Besides, it wasn’t as if he had enemies lined along every other route, waiting for the perfect opportunity to pounce on him and ruin his life. That privilege was his older brother’s department, and he was glad that’s the way it had always worked out.

“Fine then,” he said, motioning Kaka to grab the box from his hand. “What are we waiting for? Go ahead and open it, old man.”

Kaka’s eyes popped wide, a reaction Shayaan Khan had never ever seen. His eyes were still flickering and if Shayaan didn’t know any better, he would have sworn his face had actually turned somewhat green.

“You want *me* to open it, sir?”

“Do you see anyone else around here who fits the description of an old man?”

“But sir, you are my employer. It would be highly inappropriate for me to open a parcel that was clearly meant for you to have. And that too while you’re standing here, right before me, in fact.”

“You mean you would’ve opened it if I weren’t present here by your side?”

“That, sir, is highly debatable. For now, you are indeed present here. And so the line of questioning has no grounds at this point in time.” *And thank God for that.*

“Come on, Majid Kaka. Don’t be so scared. Where is your sense of adventure? Where is your sense of escapade?”

“Sir, I’m afraid the remaining strands of my rather crumbling bones have had all the adventure they can take. Any more adventure and I’m sure my back will just break.”

“And what will you do if I were to insist?”

“I shall then have to desist.”

“You would dare defy your own master. That’s... that’s... wait a minute.” He suddenly spat the words out as his eyes caught sight of something white. It was a letter pasted to the bottom of the box, written by the sender all right.

*Intriguing. Very intriguing indeed.*

Shayaan detached the paper and flicked it open, reading words that made no sense at all. He wondered if the anonymous sender had drafted the unclear message on purpose, and tried reading it again. Maybe it was nothing of grave importance, nothing but a mere prank call.

Oh, but the sender definitely knew how to write.

*This belonged to me, and now it belongs to you. It gives you absolute rights and responsibilities to protect her, and treat her as your own. She needs your help; needs you, just as much as she does me. Without us she has nothing, and no one can set her free.*

*P.S.: Do not worry about the meaning of the lines. You’ll figure it out in due course of time.*

The youth scanned the letter again, and found it to be somewhat mystical - mystical and downright puzzling. It was as if a message had been constructed to be deciphered, the words carrying some hidden secret waiting to be unlocked. His sense of inquisition completely hooked, he just had to see what lay within the box after all.

Shayaan tore at the wrapping, peeled it, and ripped it completely off the cardboard box. Quickly, he flipped open the parcel top and almost whistled as his fingers touched the contents inside.

Either the sender was someone utterly imprudent, or a thief who was downright smart.

Shayaan Khan could not believe what lay there in front of him, in front of his very sight.

Dangling from his fingers was now a piece of jewellery, a chain made of gold that shimmered brightly under the morning sunshine. There was something like a ruby attached to the centre of the chain, but was definitely some other kind of stone – stone that seemed genuine and intricately fine. Whatever it was it was something that he had never come across before. There was something about that chain, thought Shayaan; something that pulled at his eyes. He wanted to tie it across his wrist, yet for the time being put it back untried.

Then he read the letter again and found it as puzzling as the inscription beneath the centre of the chain. Flipping the stone, he continued gawking at the bottom of the huge oval pendent. He scratched his head as he'd read the Sindhi engraving five times, yet neither he nor his angels could understand either of what appeared to be a duo of ten-syllabic versified lines.

*Dangerous are the elements, dangerous is their wrath; Earth, air, fire  
and water will set you in a trap. Princess Sasui of Bhanbor had been  
protected while she wore what was hers to be worn; without it her life  
crumbled, her body submerged under sand, rock and stone!*

Majid's eyes narrowed on his young master and the chain hanging from his hand. Grabbing hold of the jewellery, he peeked owlshly at it. The imprinting on the massive stone seemed to be referring to an ancient legend - a folk tale he'd grown up listening to - that of the late Princess of Sindh.

It was a myth everyone he knew had been intrigued by. The tragic story of unrequited love of a beautiful maiden who'd met with an earthquake while on her way to save the love of her life. As if an unknown force were bent upon reuniting

them, her prince had encountered the same fate and passed away without catching so much as a glimpse of his beautiful bride. What amazed many even more was their mysterious disappearance in the very same desert ... and that too around the same spot. The two were never heard of again. What happened to their families continued to remain an unsolvable mystery of all time. Fact or a mere fable, that was how the myth went. Why someone would send Shayaan Khan the letter and what looked like a rather expensive ancient amulet, was still beyond Majid's wisdom and his perceptive sense.

"Ah, the Princess of Bhanbor!" Shayaan's booming voice had Majid Kaka flung back to reality. "Correct me if I'm wrong, Kaka. But isn't she the same princess who was abandoned by her own father to die, and had gotten married to him instead? What was it; something about her family-astrologers' prediction?"

"Yes sir... and no sir," Kaka said, a set of creases rippling across his forehead. As usual, the young master had gotten his facts mixed up again. Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, one of the greatest poetic saints of Sindh, must've been tossing in his grave, feeling vexed in the spiritual realm, wondering why he'd relayed the story to begin with.

"According to the myth, when a beautiful girl had been born to the King's household, his astrologers foretold that she would bring misfortune of magnanimous proportions to the family, and would cause their ruin. Thereupon, by the king's orders, her body had been sent afloat on the River Indus, meant to be transported to the Arabian Sea."

"Yes, I'm aware of that," interrupted Shayaan wondering how the amulet was connected to all that. As if on cue, Majid Kaka ended up saying something that nicely tied all the loose ends.

"It was an amulet that saved her life."

Now that Shayaan recalled, it was exactly the story he'd heard in eighth grade. Or was it in the ninth? At any rate, according to the folk tale, just before the child had been packed in a wooden casket and sent to drown into the sea, her mother wound a talisman allegedly containing Holy verses around her neck, laden with a spell to protect her throughout the journey. As fate would have it, the quiet child reached a certain point while still floating across the river and started

wailing torturous cries. A fisherman nearby heard her and saved her life. Childless, and having no one to care for, he adopted the princess as his own daughter, and protected her throughout her adolescent life. And that was when tragedy befell.

“But what do you mean, no?” Shayaan continued, still baffled by the worrisome expression masking Kaka’s eyes. “I specifically remember my high school teacher sharing Latif’s poetry in the class. It was definitely a case of mistaken identity.”

Shayaan was sure he’d heard that right. Hadn’t he? Unaware of his daughter’s continued existence, the King had come across the beauty while on a trip athwart the sea. One glimpse of her had him falling head over heels in adoration in an instant. By then, the miserable queen had passed away, unable to bear separation with her daughter. That was exactly how the story went, right?

“Definitely not, sir!” insisted Kaka. “For one thing, the King never actually met the child. All he’d heard were rumours of her heavenly beauty and unspeakable grace. Naturally, he’d sent a proposal to her family for her hand in marriage. Yet he’d forsaken her again the moment he discovered the truth. Shame never let him set eyes on his daughter ever again.”

“So you mean they never got married?”

“No, sir! They most certainly did not. It would be preposterous to think otherwise. Shah Sahib would never have let the story be known if there were some kind of a sin involved. Purity of womanhood, that’s what he liked preaching about the most.”

“Well since I’m not one with your age and experience, I can’t really say I know much about this stuff anyway. But what I do know for sure, Kaka, is that this can’t possibly be the same necklace as he one from hundreds of years ago.” Shayaan Khan shrugged and bent down to pick his towel from the bleacher, wiping his arms and chest. “For one thing the amulet never resurfaced after her death. They never found them; neither Sasui nor her beloved Punno’s dead bodies. At the most, all I can think of right now, is that the gift is someone’s idea of a bad joke. A prank if you may. As I told you earlier, you are worrying for no reason at all. This is not my idea of bad luck, not by a long shot.”

Majid Kaka straightened his back, and placed the young master's towel over his arm. He was not yet ready to believe this was a mere gift. Something was up, definitely up, he could just sense it through his sixth sight. His hair hadn't gone white all of a sudden, under the morning sunshine.

“Luck or no luck something is strange about this gift. It is bizarre, very bizarre, as much as the sudden appearance of that girl who's just came out of nowhere.”

“What girl? Who are you talking about? Don't tell me we're entertaining unexpected guests?”

“Indeed we are, sir. She reached our house six nights ago, during the time we were struck by that terrible storm that blew away even our gates. You were asleep then, almost everyone was asleep, as it was way past midnight when she arrived that day.”

“Then I should greet her, that's what I should do. I would meet her right now. If I didn't, and not that I won't, it would amount to loss of decorum and etiquettes otherwise.”

Setting the chain away back in the box Shayaan placed it on the bench. His face beamed, and his teeth stretched white, as he marched ahead ready to strike.

Indeed wherever there was a beautiful maiden around, there was Shayaan Khan; the mysterious black knight.

Majid Kaka turned around, and picked the box from the bench. He knew he shouldn't have done that but, God's truth, he finally did roll his eyes.

\* \* \* \* \*

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Participant name Abdul Rasheed

Participant signature (A.R)

Date 23-09-2015

Researcher Signature [Signature]

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Participant name Rabia Solangi

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Date 23-Sep-2015

Researcher Signature [Signature]

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Participant name Shazia Halepoto

Participant signature [Signature]

Date 23-09-2015

Researcher Signature [Signature]

Date 23/09/2015

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