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Xchanging Ideas through *Xchanges*: Revisiting Selected Articles to Understand Graduate Teaching Assistants' Pedagogical Praxis

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Introduction

As an international graduate teaching assistant at a research university in the American Midwest, I have experienced firsthand the challenges of navigating a new academic culture and pedagogical environment. Teaching writing at the tertiary level in the United States, particularly from a different academic background, can initially feel daunting. I entered the classroom with enthusiasm, eager to teach students who, as I observed, mostly used English as a primary language, while I used it as an additional one like a few of my students. These experiences led me to ask how graduate instructors, particularly international and multilingual ones, learn the practical dimensions of teaching writing. While formal coursework and disciplinary scholarship provided theoretical foundations, *Xchanges* offered a different kind of pedagogical learning because the articles resonated the voices similar to emerging scholars and graduate teaching assistants.

In my article, I argue that *Xchanges* functions as a pedagogical archive that produces and circulates practice-oriented knowledge for graduate instructors, particularly international and multilingual teachers navigating U.S. writing classrooms. To make this argument, I examine selected articles by Nasih Alam, Jennifer Hewerdine, and Elizabeth Bracey alongside my own contribution to the journal. Reading through a reflective lens of my experiences as an international graduate teaching assistant and emerging writing scholar, I explore how these texts address instructor identity, digital multimodality, and revision practices while illuminating the distinct pedagogical concerns multilingual instructors encounter in U.S. writing programs. In doing so, I argue that *Xchanges* serves not merely as a repository of published work but as an informal mentoring space through which graduate instructors move from readers to contributors and participate in an ongoing exchange of pedagogical knowledge and ideas.

My Background and Positionality

To begin with, my academic training had been grounded in literature and cultural studies in a system where rhetoric and composition were not central to English curricula. While my interdisciplinary background and prior experience teaching multilingual students were my strengths, teaching writing, especially process-based writing (Flower and Hayes 367; Murray 4) that is shaped by audience, purpose, genre, and context was an entirely different endeavor from the traditional grammar-translation

methods or English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) method (Sah and Kubota 132) that I had previously encountered as a university teacher. In the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), English is primarily taught through the learners' first language, with emphasis on grammatical accuracy, vocabulary acquisition, and translation exercises. Knowledge is often demonstrated by translating texts between languages and producing grammatically correct written products. As a student, I frequently generated ideas in my mother tongue, Bengali, and then translated them into English during the writing process. Writing was treated largely as a finished product rather than a recursive process of planning, drafting, and revision. Assessment also focused on the final textual content through summative evaluation rather than on the development of ideas over multiple drafts. Although I later experimented with different instructional and assessment practices in my literature and English language teaching courses, my understanding of writing instruction remained influenced by the pedagogical traditions through which I had been trained. Due to the lack of formal exposure to process-based composition pedagogy, I noticed that I myself reproduced many of the assumptions and practices I had inherited from my own teachers.

In my graduate studies in the U.S., my engagement with foundational scholarship of Donald Murray and Linda Flower and John R. Hayes reframed writing for me as a recursive, cognitively complex activity in which planning, drafting, and revision are continuously interconnected. These scholars went beyond the "stage model of composition," which "reflect the growth of a written product" and is organized "in a linear sequence or structure," and focused more on the cognitive process of writing which emphasizes the "mental processes" of writing (Flower and Hayes 367). It was illuminating for me to recognize that writing often begins in the form of "pre-writing" even before "words emerge on paper" (Flower and Hayes 367). This sets the teaching of writing more dynamic as writing teachers become "readers and recipients" and treat "all writing is experimental" (Murray 5-6). Drawing on these insights, I incorporated process-based approaches into my pedagogy, helping students recognize that their writing processes begin long before the act of composing itself. While students came to understand writing as an active and recursive process, I noticed that assignments and classroom activities did not always feel meaningful or engaging to them. The processes led to product, sometimes, without helping students develop confidence in a voice of their own.

Then, Peter Elbow's emphasis on voice, expressivism, and the importance of allowing writers to develop authority through personal expression further shifted my pedagogical orientation toward valuing student agency and lived experience in writing. I started understanding how "voice" and "self" are interconnected and "attention to voice helps rhetorical effectiveness" (Elbow 177). However, teaching voice is challenging because voice emerges from the "self" and grows out of the "student writing, not from drills or lectures or admonitions, not from workbooks or textbooks" (Elbow 177, Swain 33). The voice becomes more evident when students write on topics they deeply care about, can relate to and use their own language to write about it (Murray 4). Hence, I realized that the personal writing or narrative, for example, brings students' "self" and "voice"

together into their writing, and hence can "create peace in students' minds and hearts" (Ruggieri 48). As Murray writes, "we are autobiographical in the way we write" (67). Whatever matters to the "self" makes more sense to us. I took ideas from Elbow, Swain and Murray to help students deeply connect their identity, selfhood and writing practices and use a voice that feels their own—which may not be standard American English. In the process of teaching voice during the personal narrative assignment, I noticed, when students write narrative essays in their autobiographical voice, they often use a conversational and less academic tone.

Translingual approaches to writing, however, encouraged me and my students to view linguistic differences not as errors but as rhetorical resources, particularly relevant in multilingual and multidialectal classrooms. They developed a sense of freedom to bring their diverse linguistic repertoires into their writing without bearing the pressure to sound "academic" or "standard". This approach changed students' view that "all language users, or languagers, are perpetually producing and experimenting with multiple varieties of language" (Gilyard 284). Sometimes, the monolingual English-only speaking students might not realize, but they also brought a rich linguistic repertoire through accents, place-bound variations of English and its vernaculars. Translingual composition scholarships by canonical scholars greatly shaped my pedagogy and understanding of writing instruction.

Nevertheless, I still kept searching for pedagogical voices that resonated more closely with my own positionality as an international and multilingual instructor. Fortunately, I found that resonance in *Xchanges*, a journal that foregrounds the experiences and insights of undergraduate and graduate student authors. Its praxis-oriented focus offered me a space where emerging scholars in the field reflect on teaching, writing, and learning in ways that are both accessible, transferable and pedagogically applicable. Reading these contributions every now and then became an act of archival revisitation through which I began to revisit, re-interpret and review how other graduate teaching assistants navigated writing classrooms which made me think how I might shape my own pedagogical practice.

Xchanges as Pedagogical Archive

To understand the pedagogical significance of *Xchanges*, it is important to conceptualize the journal as an archive of lived pedagogical experiences. By "archive," I do not refer to the static repository of texts in physical copies. I refer to a dynamic and digital space of knowledge circulation where lived experiences (personal and individually situated life experiences), metacognitive reflections (thinking and writing about thinking), and transferable teaching practices (recommendations and tips that can be replicated by others) are documented, revisited, and reinterpreted over time. As Robert Connors writes, disciplinary journals provide a comprehensive reflection of the discipline's past, present, and the future (348). Jessica Enoch agrees with Connors' notion of the historical significance of disciplinary journals (431) and considers *College English* an archive for practitioners and historiographers. I extend Connors' notion to

interdisciplinary journals and echo Jessica to consider *Xchanges* as an interdisciplinary archive for Technical Communication, Writing/Rhetoric, and Writing Across the Curriculum.

In fact, the journal's "Archives" section on its landing page reinforces this function by providing open access to its full range of previously published work. A brief examination of *Xchanges'* development since 2001 highlights its longstanding commitment to accommodating and preserving diverse emerging voices. Early issues, such as issues from 1 through 5, featured a broad range of submissions, including cultural, rhetorical, and personal reflections alongside scholarly work, often without a sustained or explicit focus on composition pedagogy. For instance, the inaugural issue (1.1) included both research-based articles and personal reflections, with several pieces grounded more in literary and cultural analysis than in writing pedagogy itself. When readers navigate the issue online, the webpage offers two distinct categories: "Scholarly Research" and "Personal Reflection." Published in September 2001, the issue features contributions from both undergraduate and graduate students. Laura Bommarito, an undergraduate scholar, transforms a class assignment into a scholarly analysis of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, while graduate student Kelly McDowell offers a cultural critique of lesbian pornography and its politics. These examples illustrate the breadth of topics represented in the journal's early years. Rather than centering primarily on writing instruction, the inaugural issue showcases the journal's commitment to providing emerging scholars with a venue to develop and circulate their ideas across a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary interests.

Over time, however, *Xchanges* has developed a more defined emphasis on writing instruction, classroom practice, and reflective teaching experiences, beginning from issue 6.1 which published "a series of essays on topics in the disciplines of Technical Communication, Writing/Rhetoric, and Writing Across the Curriculum, written by upper-level undergraduate students from across the United States" (*Xchanges* 6.1). For instance, Melissa Bugdal brings different perspectives about writing center and writing across the curriculum to argue how humanities and science meet in writing studies. Anthony Perreault, an undergraduate scholar, rhetorically analyzes web content. This thematic shift and narrowed focus indicate an expansion and refinement of the journal's pedagogical and interdisciplinary scopes. The continued coexistence of personal reflection and pedagogical inquiry across issues illustrates how *Xchanges* accommodates multiple forms of knowledge while responding to the evolving needs of its contributors and readers. As I noticed, the recently published articles contain writers' embodied praxis-based existence in their scholarly works which become mentor texts for emerging instructors and composition scholars.

This evolution mattered to me as a reader. When I first encountered *Xchanges*, I was not looking for canonical scholarship but for articles by instructors whose experiences resembled my own. The journal's increasing emphasis on writing pedagogy and reflective teaching allowed me to see how everyday classroom practices could become scholarly knowledge. Reading these articles gave me permission to view my own

pedagogical experiments not simply as classroom practices but as contributions worthy of reflection, theorization, and publication. In this sense, *Xchanges* did more than document pedagogical experience—it reshaped how I understood myself as both a writing instructor and an emerging scholar.

Hence, *Xchanges* now functions as a pedagogical archive that preserves the situated realities of teaching and learning, particularly those emerging from undergraduate and graduate student authors whose perspectives are often underrepresented in traditional academic discourse. While many disciplinary and reputed journals do not restrict or discourage undergraduate and graduate students to contribute their works to those journals, *Xchanges* explicitly solicits and invites submissions from emerging scholars. This way, *Xchanges* becomes an archive of emerging, interdisciplinary knowledge systems.

Learning from *Xchanges*: Key Pedagogical Interventions

As an international graduate student reader, I identified a number of scholarly articles written by other contributors who were graduate students or early-career academics at the time of publishing, such as Nasih Alam, Jennifer Hewerdine, and Elizabeth Bracey. What distinguished their articles for me was their ability to bridge scholarly inquiry and lived pedagogical experience. Rather than presenting abstract discussions of teaching, the authors theorized classroom practices they had personally navigated, making their insights both accessible and transferable. Their reflections resonated with my own experiences as an international graduate teaching assistant and gave me greater confidence to adapt, question, and refine my own pedagogical practices. As a researcher whose work draws on autoethnographic methods, I also found their reflective mode of inquiry intellectually validating. It also reinforces my understanding that lived experience can serve as a rigorous site of knowledge production.

Navigating Identity and Positionality: Insights from Alam's Essay

Nasih Alam's autoethnographic essay, "An International Graduate Teaching Student's First Year as a First-Year Writing Instructor" (April 2024), employs an autoethnographic approach to document his personal and professional journey from enduring a strict education system in Bangladesh to becoming a student-centered First-Year Writing instructor at North Dakota State University. His piece highlights the emotional, identity, and linguistic navigation required of international Graduate Teaching Assistants, advocating for the integration of diverse cultural backgrounds and translingual identities into pedagogies that foster empathy and linguistic justice.

As I read this article, I situate myself as an international graduate teaching assistant (IGTA) navigating first-year writing instruction at a midwestern research university. At the time I first engaged with Alam's essay, I was teaching both first-year and upper-division writing courses within our writing program. Across these contexts, my instructor identity that is shaped by linguistic, cultural, and academic positionalities played a

central role in how I approached teaching. Alam's reflections on navigating classroom expectations, institutional norms, and student interactions resonated deeply with my own lived and embodied experiences. His essay offers both validation and a lens through which I could interpret the challenges and possibilities of teaching as an IGTA.

Alam's reflection on his traumatic childhood experiences seemed familiar to the context I came from. He describes how, like many children in his cultural context, he was physically punished for minor mistakes. This is a longstanding trauma, as he notes, took years to process (1). For international graduate teaching assistants (IGTAs), engaging students in discussions of race and racial oppression in predominantly white classrooms can be similarly daunting. Drawing on the work of Grayson and Inoue, Alam emphasizes the importance of selecting reading materials that "raise awareness of racism and create an engaging classroom atmosphere," enabling students to reflect critically on oppression and "raise their voice against white oppression in writing" (2). He further suggests that assignments such as personal narratives or memoirs can provide students with structured opportunities to develop racial understanding and literacy. Yet, as Alam implicitly acknowledges that facilitating such engagement is neither straightforward nor simple.

Alam's experience with controversial topics such as racism and racial literacy deeply resonated with my own experience as an IGTA. As of early 2026, over twenty states have enacted restrictions or bans on critical race theory (CRT) and so-called "divisive concepts," primarily through legislation, with nearly thirty states having introduced some form of restriction. Although these measures and changes target K-12 education, they have direct implications for college teaching and pedagogical praxis. For international graduate teaching assistants like Alam and myself, this dual responsibility to understand both the content we teach and the legal or institutional constraints that shape how we teach it is particularly crucial.

His caution in avoiding sensitive topics such as "gun violence" or "abortion" (2) reflects this tension. His reflection that "if my students had a more courageous teacher in my place, they would have found more opportunities to develop their critical thinking abilities" (2) underscores a critical concern. His hesitation is not due to a lack of pedagogical skill or capacity to facilitate complex discussions, but rather it stems from the real stakes of his positionality as a non-resident alien navigating U.S. institutional and legal structures for pursuing higher education. This complex context highlights the layered challenges IGTAs face. I completely resonate with Alam's reflection as my own experience as an IGTA caused me imposter syndromes and a persistent sense of dislocation in a culture that simultaneously ignites fear and freedom.

Under the pressure of staying on the safe side, IGTAs often must unlearn the assumption that writing is primarily a product and that grammar constitutes the most important pillar of English composition. This orientation frequently stems from experiences learning English as an additional language. In many educational systems

where English is taught as an additional language, students and even teachers tend to prioritize grammatical accuracy over critical engagement or rhetorical complexity.

Like Alam, I initially struggled with the tendency to focus on students' grammatical and stylistic errors. However, reading his essay helped me recognize that "the academic rapport between graduate teaching assistants and first-year writers is needed to bridge the communication gap" (4). Once I began prioritizing rapport-building, students' grammatical mistakes became secondary in my feedback, and their embodied and affective engagement with writing came to surface. Alam notes that he draws on his own experiences and stories as examples. While I find this approach inspiring, as a female international graduate teaching assistant, I also see a loophole in his article. As his article is written through a personal narrative lens, he could not bring different experiences faced by diverse IGTA. For instance, as a female IGTA, I often feel doubly constrained: first by my gender and then by my positionality as an IGTA. This historical suppression complicates my pedagogical voice, and I am still in the process of making that voice fully heard in the classroom and in my research through feminist pedagogical and research practices.

What genuinely stood out to me in Alam's essay is his "recommendation" section, with which I wholeheartedly agree. First, he advises writing programs and associated administrators such as directors and assistant directors to "understand that many of the IGTAs have little experience with the U.S. educational system and are shy of speaking about their hesitation when they begin studying at their chosen graduate program" (6), and cautions against assuming that graduate assistants "are supposed to have a clear understanding of the primary text" (6). I have experienced this firsthand. As IGTAs, we are often perceived as field experts even while we are still learning to teach writing and refine our own scholarly skills. Alam notes, "It becomes mentally draining for IGTAs to start performing well from scratch" (6), highlighting an additional layer in the already complex challenges we face.

Second, Alam's direct acknowledgment of shyness particularly resonated with me. Initially, I hesitated to share my own concerns with my writing program director. His essay encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone, advocate for support, and recognize that while a program may be empathetic, seeking accommodation and guidance remains my responsibility as a member of that community. In this way, Alam's essay exemplifies the unique value of *Xchanges* as a digital pedagogical archive as it preserves experiences that can be reinterpreted through multiple lenses while providing ongoing guidance for fellow IGTAs.

Engaging with Alam's work helped me develop confidence in my identity as an IGTA and strengthened my embodied, intersectional, and transnational pedagogical perspective. Concurrently, I was experimenting with my own writing courses by moving beyond traditional essays toward multimodal and digital projects. In this context, Jennifer Hewerdine's essay on blog-based writing immediately captured my attention.

Multimodal Composition in Practice: Insights from Hewerdine's Pilot Study

Jennifer Hewerdine's essay, "Exploring the Benefits of Blog Use in First-Year Composition: A Pilot Study" (May 2021), offers a compelling framework for integrating blog writing as a multimodal supplement in first-year composition courses. Recognizing that contemporary students are deeply engaged in digital environments, she argues that blogs provide authentic opportunities for students to compose for public audiences while integrating multiple modes of communication, including images, videos, hyperlinks, and audio. Drawing on survey data from students in technology-enhanced composition courses, Hewerdine finds that blogging fosters greater audience awareness, agency, ownership, and metacognitive reflection than conventional writing assignments. Rather than treating digital technologies as supplementary tools, she positions blogs as rhetorical spaces where students negotiate identity, purpose, and audience through multimodal composing, illustrating how digital writing can promote process-based learning and more meaningful engagement with writing.

Writing in the context of the classroom after 2020 COVID-19, Hewerdine observes, as I observed too, that "the current generation of students chooses to spend liberal amounts of time in online environments" (1). This shift, as we have noticed, has significantly reshaped students' expectations of engagement and participation. I have witnessed this transformation as well. After prolonged exposure to digital learning during the pandemic, students increasingly seek forms of writing that feel meaningful, interactive, and worth their time. As Hewerdine notes, students are more likely to participate when they are "mentally stimulated" by activities that align with their interests (1). To help students work on something that matters to them, as Alam suggested in his article, it is important for the instructors to be confident and get rid of shyness and design lesson plans and assignments as Hewerdine did confidently.

To contextualize her study, Hewerdine refers to Ivanic's framework outlining the diverse qualities of students' extracurricular writing, thereby foregrounding the importance of digital rhetoric in contemporary writing practices. Drawing from this understanding, blog writing emerges as a particularly flexible and multimodal genre that "allow[s] writers to incorporate pictures, videos, hyperlinks, music, and other audio elements," enabling communication across multiple modes (2). This emphasis on multimodality expands the definition of writing and invites students to engage with composition as a dynamic and public-facing practice. I agree with Hewerdine's emphasis that "composition instructors can use blogs to take advantage of tools that provide for a variety of communication methods" (2) by highlighting the affordances of blogs as multimodal writing.

In her pilot study, conducted across two composition courses set in "technology-enhanced computer classrooms," (3) Hewerdine gathered data from thirty-one student participants and analyzed their responses to blog-based writing tasks. Her findings identify four key constructs that students approached differently in blog writing compared to traditional formats: "public audience awareness, agency, ownership, and metacognitive use" (4). These constructs highlight how blogging shifts writing from a

purely academic exercise to a more dynamic, reflective, and audience-centered practice. As Hewerdine's analysis demonstrates, blog writing encourages students to engage with a real or imagined public audience, develop a stronger sense of authorial agency, and take ownership of their ideas. At the same time, the process of composing in multimodal environments fosters metacognitive awareness as it prompts students to reflect on their rhetorical choices and writing processes. In this sense, teaching blogs functions as a pedagogical tool that aligns closely with traditional process-based approaches to writing instruction. Moreover, as she suggests, blogging enables students to represent their identities within digital spaces, designing arguments that integrate textual, visual, and digital elements. This multimodal engagement expands the scope of composition and allows students to experience writing as an iterative, recursive and expressive process rather than a fixed, product-oriented task.

As an instructor who views writing as a means of articulating and circulating ideas beyond the classroom, I found Hewerdine's approach both generative and transferrable. Personally, I began incorporating blog writing assignments in both first-year and upper-division professional writing courses. In first-year writing, introducing blogs as a replacement for traditional final commentary papers was relatively seamless, as students loved the format because it is public-facing, less academic and, in a way, liberating for student writers.

In professional writing courses, however, I found it necessary to more deliberately scaffold the assignment by framing blog writing as a legitimate and widely used professional genre. Drawing on my understanding of digital rhetoric which I developed through my engagement with scholarly works, including Hewerdine's essay, I guide students to make purposeful rhetorical choices, such as selecting appropriate images and embedding credible hyperlinks to produce legible and persuasive public-facing texts. In this context, Hewerdine's essay functioned less as a source to cite and more as a form of pedagogical mentorship, validating my approach while strengthening the theoretical and practical rationale behind it.

While Alam's essay reassured my identity as an IGTA in a U.S. writing classroom, Hewerdine's essay ultimately extended beyond my classroom practice. Building on my pedagogical experiments in blogs and multimodal writing, I later published a teaching-focused article on blog writing as a professional genre in the Journal of Response to Writing. In this way, Hewerdine's work contributed to my development as a scholar. This reinforces the role of *Xchanges* as a space where experience-based pedagogical insights circulate, evolve, and generate new forms of knowledge production.
As my identity as an IGTA became more grounded and my pedagogical innovations took shape, I found myself returning to one of the most critical yet often overlooked aspects of writing: revision. While revision is commonly understood as the final stage in which writers refine their language and argument before submission, Elizabeth Bracey's work reframes revision as an ongoing, recursive process central to writing itself. Engaging with her article prompted me to reconsider how I pedagogically approached revision in my own courses.

Re-centering Revision as Process: Insights from Bracey's Essay

Elizabeth Bracey's essay, "The Will to Revise: Commenting, Revision, and Motivation in College Students," examines the relationship between pedagogical practice and student motivation, with particular attention to how instructor feedback shapes students' willingness to revise. Drawing on scholarship by Nancy Sommers, Barry Zimmerman, Frank Anson, and others, Bracey argues that effective revision depends not only on the quality of teacher comments but also on students' sense of agency and motivation. Through surveys, draft analysis, and student reflections, she finds that many students treat instructor comments as directives rather than opportunities for critical decision-making, leading them to prioritize compliance over substantive revision. Bracey therefore calls for pedagogical practices that encourage students to view revision as a recursive learning process, fostering greater ownership, academic authority, and independence as writers rather than simply satisfying instructors' expectations.

Bracey's discussion resonated with my own educational and teaching experiences. Coming from a context where English writing instruction largely emphasized grammatical correctness, I initially understood revision as the process of correcting language and polishing sentences. Feedback, likewise, was often confined to sentence-level or stylistic corrections rather than broader rhetorical concerns. As a result, revision became synonymous with editing instead of rethinking ideas, organization, audience, and purpose. Bracey's essay challenged this understanding by repositioning revision as an intellectual and rhetorical activity rather than a mechanical one. Her work helped me realize that effective feedback should not merely improve a draft but should also motivate students to return to their writing with renewed purpose and confidence.

Bracey's discussion of student dependence on instructor comments captured my attention. She notes that because students often internalize their instructors' expectations, they "may develop a sense of dependence on instruction and commenting that may impede their ability to revise on their own" (1). I have observed this tendency in my own classrooms. While I regularly encouraged students to question or challenge my feedback when it did not align with their rhetorical intentions, many tended to conform to my comments, opting for safer, minimal revisions before submitting their final drafts. In attempting to guide their writing, I realized that I might have unintentionally limited their sense of authority and agency as writers. This pattern revealed an important pedagogical tension. While feedback is intended to support student writers, it can inadvertently diminish their sense of authority if students perceive instructor comments as commands rather than opportunities for rhetorical decision-making.

I feel that Bracey's argument has become even more significant in the era of generative AI. Today, students can instantly turn to AI tools to edit or "polish" their writing, revise grammar, sentence structure, and style with AI-assisted writing tools, making it increasingly easy to equate revision with surface-level correction. These responses further complicate the process of revision, raising important questions about student

motivation, responsibility, and the evolving role of feedback in contemporary writing classrooms.

One of the most valuable contributions of Bracey's study is her identification of a gap in existing scholarship concerning "the role of commenting in creating motivation for students to revise their work carefully" (p. 2, para. 6). As both a reader and a writing instructor, I found this argument compelling. When we comment on student writing, we do not simply point out what is lacking—we aim to encourage students to recognize those gaps and take ownership of revising their work. Bracy shifts the focus from revision as a mechanical process to revision as a motivated, reflective act shaped by both instructor feedback and student engagement. She discusses her observation which resonates with my own classroom experience, particularly her observation that students often interpret instructor comments as "commands" to be followed rather than as invitations to rethink their writing. Revision essentially means "re-thinking" or "re-viewing". I have witnessed similar patterns where students prioritize addressing my feedback over engaging with their own ideas. They write about their revision by addressing how they incorporated my feedback into their writing instead of revisiting their thoughts and words.

This tendency raises an important pedagogical tension. While feedback is intended to guide and support, it can inadvertently undermine students' sense of authority and ownership over their writing. Bracey's findings pushed me to reconsider not only what I comment on, but how I frame those comments. Inspired by her discussion, I adopted Bill Hart-Davidson's "describe-evaluate-suggest" feedback model to provide students with actionable guidance while leaving space for their own rhetorical choices. Rather than prescribing revisions, I ask open-ended questions that encourage students to explain, reconsider, and develop their arguments. I also shifted my assessment practices by awarding points for sustained engagement with the revision process rather than emphasizing grades on final products. These changes reflect three enduring pedagogical commitments that I drew from Bracey's essay: (i) revision should be understood as rhetorical inquiry rather than grammatical correction; (ii) instructor feedback should cultivate student agency rather than compliance; and (iii) assessment should motivate reflective revision instead of rewarding only polished products. These commitments have reshaped how I teach writing and how I understand revision as the core of process-based composition.

From Reader to Contributor: Locating Myself Within *Xchanges*

As I engaged with *Xchanges* as a reader, my engagement not only informed my pedagogical practice but also gradually positioned me to contribute to the very archive that shaped my development. As I implemented ideas drawn from articles such as those by Alam, Hewerdine, and Bracey, I began to recognize recurring patterns in my own teaching that demanded articulation and theorization. Alongside this pedagogical development, I also felt a growing urgency as an emerging scholar to contribute to the field and support graduate instructors through praxis-based scholarship.

I began my journey as a contributor to *Xchanges* in Spring 2025. I published an article on the Identity Narrative Assignment which I designed for my first-year composition courses to help students develop their writerly voice. Writing this piece marked a significant step in articulating my pedagogical commitments to identity-focused and voice-centered writing instruction. Drawing on feminist and translingual pedagogical orientations, I sought to foreground how students negotiate identity through writing in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

In my article, "Identity Narrative Assignment: How Writing About Students' Identities Shape Their Writerly Voice," I argued that when students write narrative or reflective essays, they write more comfortably, and thus use "more colloquial expressions" (Banu 4). Rather than treating this as a deviation from academic norms, I frame it as a legitimate form of linguistic expression and rhetorical choice, aligning with a translingual approach that recognizes students' full linguistic repertoires. My feedback practices similarly emphasize rhetorical effectiveness and audience awareness rather than adherence to Standard American English (SAE) as a fixed norm. In this way, my pedagogical approach invites students to revise their papers toward greater clarity, intentionality, and communicative effectiveness within their own rhetorical contexts.

Writing for *Xchanges* allowed me to theorize my classroom practices and situate them within a broader community of emerging scholars. In doing so, I became part of the ongoing exchange that defines the journal. When readers engage with articles published in *Xchanges*, they do not simply retrieve stable pedagogical facts. Rather, they actively reinterpret experience-based accounts through their own teaching contexts, identities, and institutional locations, much as I did. I consistently reinterpreted authors' experiences through the lens of my own embodied positionality as an international graduate teaching assistant by translating their insights into my classroom practice in ways that were both situated and evolving.

Through this pedagogical archive, emerging scholars like myself find a platform to contribute to and shape ongoing conversations in the field. This is essential to the development of scholarly identity and pedagogical voice.

Recommendations and Conclusion

As a reader and contributor, building on my idea of *Xchanges* as a pedagogical archive, I now offer a few recommendations for sustaining and further strengthening its role as a space for emerging scholars. First, the journal could continue to foreground the experiences of international and multilingual graduate teaching assistants, whose pedagogical perspectives are often shaped by transnational educational trajectories and linguistic negotiation. Creating more dedicated and themed space for these voices would deepen the journal's commitment to inclusivity and broaden its pedagogical reach. Any special issues dedicated to contributors from special interest groups of second language writing or transnational composition scholars might be useful for international graduate teaching assistants and multilingual scholars.

Second, *Xchanges* may benefit from further emphasizing reflective accounts of pedagogical challenges, uncertainties, and failures, alongside successful teaching practices. While much of the existing work highlights innovation and effective strategies, narratives of difficulty are equally important for building a more honest and sustainable pedagogical archive for early-career instructors. After all, failure is the pillar of success!

Third, expanding multimodal and digital forms of publication could further align the journal with contemporary writing pedagogies and student-centered practices. While journals such as Kairos already publish multimodal scholarship, *Xchanges*, as a journal by and for emerging scholars, is uniquely positioned to make such forms more accessible and pedagogically motivating for its primary audience. Incorporating occasional multimodal or digital contributions could enhance engagement.

As the performance scholar and archival theorist Helen Freshwater argues that archives "cannot offer direct access to the past," and therefore "any reading of the contents will necessarily be a reinterpretation" (738). Freshwater's insight is particularly useful for understanding how *Xchanges* functions as a dynamic and interpretive space in which pedagogical meaning is continually produced through reading and re-reading. Through this archive, emerging scholars like myself find a platform not only to contribute to disciplinary conversations but also to shape them, developing a sense of voice, authority, and belonging within the field. This process of participation is essential for graduate instructors navigating the complexities of U.S. academic environments, as it transforms teaching from an isolated practice into a shared, reflective, and continually evolving form of knowledge production.

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