Making (and Not Making) Connections with Web 2.0 Technology in the ESL Composition Classroom

Sarah Nakamaru

This essay describes one ESL instructor’s motivation for and experience with implementing a class wiki.

It is amazing to me how in all the hoopla and debate these days about the decline of education in the US we ignore the most fundamental of its causes. Our students have changed radically. Today’s students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach.

Marc Prensky, “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants”

Marc Prensky’s quotation resonated with me as a community college teacher of English as a second language (ESL). ESL teachers have been saying something like this for a long time about the nature of the U.S. education system and its ability to effectively teach linguistically and culturally diverse students. I’m a believer. I understand the ways that disconnects between classroom and institutional spaces, on the one hand, and the experiences of students, on the other, can affect the teaching and learning that happens in those spaces. But Prensky wasn’t referring to ESL students. He was talking about students he calls “digital natives,” or those students who have been brought up surrounded by digital technology. As such, they’re “native speakers” of the digital language of computers and the Internet. Prensky claims that their experience of growing up in such an environment has caused them to think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors—“digital immigrants”—including me and, most likely, all their other teachers.

According to Prensky and his enthusiasts, an important way that digital natives are different from digital immigrants is in their experience of the World Wide Web. Web 2.0 is a term that describes a paradigm shift in the way that individuals view and use the Internet. In the early days, the Web was a place to get information or entertainment—a place to consume content. Increasingly, though, the Web is now a place to create and share content. Instead of just downloading, users are uploading. Instead of just reading content, users are creating content—so the Web itself has come to be shaped by those who use it. Perhaps the most well-known instantiation of Web 2.0 is Wikipedia. Both loved and reviled, Wikipedia is a multimodal, continually evolving informational text written and edited by its users.
Digital natives find it normal to participate in this Web 2.0 environment. As any college professor can attest, they turn to Wikipedia as their initial source of quick, easily understood, hyperlinked information about a particular topic (Patch). They upload videos, they write and comment on blogs, they post reviews of everything (including their professors), and they construct elaborate online identities through social networking in virtual communities. Some college faculty may engage in these activities to varying degrees as well, but not as “natively” as their students, and according to Prensky, this is at the heart of the disconnect between teachers and students. To bridge or minimize this disconnect teachers are increasingly encouraged not only to become more familiar with these technologies but also to incorporate them into instruction in order to “meet students where they are” and capitalize upon what students already know and do when they come to our classrooms (Patch; see also Corbett; Hayles; Smith).

In this essay, I describe my own attempt at incorporating Web 2.0 technology into my teaching: a wiki project that I used in my ESL composition course. The theme I trace throughout the rest of this essay is the wiki’s ability (or inability) to make connections of various kinds. Like any text, the particular form a classroom assignment takes is shaped by a recursive consideration of its audiences and purposes. As I considered and reconsidered the audience, purpose, and form for my class wiki, the assignment became a draft that went through multiple revisions. This essay describes two drafts of the assignment and the wikis that resulted: the first created in spring 2009 and the second in fall 2009 (with separate classes of students). I begin by explaining my own motivation as an instructor for incorporating a wiki into my classes. The description of the project is followed by a critical reflection on the project’s successes and failures.

Why a Wiki?

A wiki is a Web page or group of linked pages that is created and edited collaboratively by multiple users. When a user edits a page, a new iteration of the wiki as a whole is created. An archive of all previous iterations of the wiki is preserved, such that an earlier version can be restored at any time. Changes are identified by user, date, and time, making it easier to keep track of collaborative efforts. A platform for user participation and creativity, wikis have proliferated recently in professional settings as well as in cyberspace to bring together users with similar interests (e.g., in hobbies, social or political issues) to actively create and shape relevant online content and to promote community (see, e.g., Griffin, Falberg, and Krygier). The medium is uniquely poised to harness collective enthusiasm and knowledge.

Wikis are beginning to be used more in educational settings as well to promote student autonomy and collaboration, enhance learning of course material, and foster attention to meaning and form in writing (see, e.g., Harris; Kessler; Matthew, Felvegi, and Callaway). Web 2.0 applications, including wikis, may be particularly relevant for ESL pedagogy. A major goal of language instruction is providing students opportunities to interact with other language users and participate in particular communities in meaningful ways. Web 2.0, as a participatory...
environment, provides this opportunity as well as motivation to attend to crafting language output to be meaningful and accurate (Godwin-Jones). Bradley, Lindstrom, and Rystedt conclude that the affordances of wikis (i.e., Web-based collaboration on writing) offer particular benefits for language learning, facilitating a “process that allows more revisions to improve text production” (263).

Technology in the field of language teaching has long been considered from this CALL (computer-assisted language learning) perspective; that is, using specific computer applications to help students learn English. These days, however, there is a growing realization of the bidirectional relationship between technology and English language learning. In other words, rather than using technology to learn English, many people around the world are learning English in order to participate in and utilize information and communication technologies (ICT). English language proficiency and new-media literacy are both seen as tools that individuals can mobilize to increase their own life opportunities (Warschauer, “Developmental”). The use of Web 2.0 in ESL classrooms can be seen, then, as a way to help give voice to students who are otherwise marginalized. Cheryl Smith argues that “blogs have a unique potential to free the writer’s voice that can especially empower those students who lack confidence in their language skills or are otherwise struggling” and “give[e] participants equal access to a public voice” (38).

Context

I teach at a community college that is part of a larger urban university system. ESL courses are not credit-bearing and are offered pass/fail. The course in which I implemented the wiki project was the highest of four levels of ESL. At this level, the final exam for the course is a timed essay in which writers must take and support a position on a specified community or school issue. Due to the nature of the assessment, the course is strongly focused on persuasive essay writing. Text-based writing is not emphasized.

Instructors have autonomy in designing their courses, but most try to balance emphasis on several factors including improving English language proficiency, increasing awareness of local community and school issues, and composition more generally (e.g., genres, the writing process, critical reading of texts, etc.). In my case, I emphasize English vocabulary (rather than, say, grammar) as the language focus that links the other two important areas of the course, reading and writing. I incorporate theme-based instruction in order to increase awareness of relevant issues, recycle vocabulary, and provide a coherent context in which to use language. The themes I introduced in 2009, for example, were technology, the economy, and the environment.

Goals for the Wiki: Making Connections

I had three main goals for the wiki, all related to making connections. The first goal was to build on students’ existing digital literacies and reach out across the divide that Prensky described; that is, I wanted to make a connection with my digital
native students that would act as a bridge from their everyday experiences to new classroom experiences, stimulating their motivation to participate and their engagement with the course. Most teachers feel that students learn more when they are actively involved with doing something, and making classroom activities relevant to students’ experiences is often said to be one way to encourage that involvement.

The second goal was to take advantage of the collaborative nature of the medium to facilitate interaction and creativity; that is, I wanted to encourage and help students to make connections with each other as they worked together to make the space their own. In my vision, students would interact virtually, online, as they collaborated to actively create their own digital learning space. I hoped this autonomy, often cited as a benefit of wikis and also a necessary condition of the success of wikis (e.g., Kessler), would foster a sense of ownership of the wiki and the content on it.

Finally, my third goal was to take advantage of the connectivity of the medium; that is, the hyperlinked, connected nature of a group of Web pages to highlight and foster connections among the three main areas of my course (reading, writing, vocabulary). Basically, I hoped that students would learn more by doing the active work of creating and editing pages, finding connections and making links among the main areas. I hoped the connections would be more real to the students if they found them and marked them with the tools uniquely available through the wiki medium—hyperlinks, which are virtual, actionable links that connect one page with another page.

**Wiki Project, First Draft**

Before I introduced the project to students, I created the basic structure of the wiki within Blackboard. In accordance with my vision at the time, I created a home page with three links: a link to student writing pages, a link to a reading page, and a link to vocabulary pages. The home page was the digital nexus of these three conceptual and skill areas that were emphasized in the course (see figure 1).

![Diagram](https://example.com/wiki-diagram.png)

**FIGURE 1.** Wiki home page showing the three conceptual and skill areas.
The reading page was set up to act as a collective blog: users (including the teacher) posted titles, links, and a one-line summary of articles they’d read and found interesting. This was a regular assignment for students, and time was provided during biweekly computer lab visits for this purpose. These self-selected readings were in addition to the theme-related readings I assigned all students to read. To my delight, some students chose and posted articles that were related to the current class theme. Others chose articles about events in their home country, sports stories, or their personal interests.

I introduced students to the *New York Times* online, since it offers free access to a reputable news source and voluminous content related to a wide variety of interests. In contrast to many other news sources that are widely available, the *Times* makes less use of slang and puns and so is often more comprehensible to ESL students. The *New York Times* online also allows users to click on any word and receive a dictionary definition and pronunciation. Students were free to post links to articles or resources from other websites as well.

The vocabulary pages were a space to post lists of words related to the themes or topics we discussed in class and wrote about. Each main vocabulary page contained a list of words related to the topic. Each word was hyperlinked to a page containing collocations for the word. For example, on the “Economy” vocabulary page, the following collocations were listed: local economy, stimulate the economy, rural economy, it’s an economic reality that . . ., economic development, giving the economy a boost, economic vitality, the economy expanded/shrank the U.S. economy, Japan’s economy, the economy teeters on the brink, economic growth, economic stimulus program, a soft economy, a prosperous economy, the economic crisis.

Collocations were collected by students from articles I distributed in class. I stressed vocabulary and collocations as the main way to connect reading and writing: Specifically, I wanted students to notice collocations in the texts they read and then try to use those collocations in their own writing. I hoped that the linked nature of the wiki would facilitate this process.

Student writing, the third main component of the course and area of the wiki, was posted on individual student pages. In fact, the first wiki assignment I gave the students was to create and link their own student pages, which gave them a chance to practice actually manipulating the wiki technology. At the computer lab, I projected the wiki onto a screen and clicked through the pages for students to see the infrastructure. I had already posted written instructions on how to create a page and how to link it to another page. After demonstrating the process, I asked students to work individually or together to create their pages and link them to the main “Student Pages” page. These student pages would become a space for students to post their writing assignments for the class, so that their writing would become visible to a wider audience and would exist in close digital proximity (i.e., within a linked collection of Web pages) to the collected vocabulary items that I hoped would appear in the writing.
Reflections on the First Draft

The first discovery I made as I implemented the wiki project is that most of my students were not “digital natives.” This was partly due to the disparity in age of the students, with older students generally being less comfortable with the wiki project. For some of them, the technological aspect represented an additional, heavy cognitive burden—they did not know how to manipulate the technology and did not understand the point of doing so. They labored to click the right buttons and were confused by every pop-up dialogue box that asked them to choose yes, no, continue, cancel, and so forth. They could not remember usernames and passwords and struggled with the online processes for retrieving or resetting them. Therefore, I cannot say that the wiki project achieved my goal of making a connection to these students based on their existing experiences with Web 2.0 or digital literacies—they did not seem to have any.

Some of the students, of course, were closer to Prensky’s idea of digital natives and picked up the project quite quickly. Most of these students, however, seemed to approach the wiki as just an online version of school—not the kind of online community in which they wanted to participate. Once the initial novelty wore off, they were generally reluctant or uninterested in participating. Indeed, my second discovery was that the way I set up the wiki did not give students the freedom to express their identities in ways that might have been more familiar or motivating for them, and that might have resulted in a stronger sense of community. For example, one student posted photos on his student page. Another student had initially posted a link to a website about her country, but then deleted it when it became clear that the student pages were a place to post writing assignments. In other words, this aspect of the project did not make particularly good use of the students’ experiences with composing on the Web and did not seem to function as a bridge from nonschool- to school-based literacies.

My second goal, facilitating interaction and creativity, was more successful. Among those who did participate actively in the wiki, some took advantage of the “comments” feature to interact with each other about their essays (although largely in superficial ways, without reference to the writer’s ideas). Students are likely quite used to commenting on peers’ social networking sites, blogs, online reviews, discussion boards, and so forth in this way. In addition to using the “comments” feature, it was also possible to interact by simply adding text or emoticons directly into the content of a page. For example, one student added at the top of her student writing page a direct plea to her classmates to provide feedback that would help her revise her essay.

As I mentioned above, the structure of the wiki was too rigidly controlled (by me) to allow students to be very creative. Probably because of this, most students did not take ownership, and it did not turn out to be a community space that the students created for themselves. However, in terms of a language-learning classroom activity, the wiki did stimulate a lot of offline interaction and negotiation of meaning. Since many students were not digital natives, they collaborated in the computer
lab to figure out how to complete the assigned wiki tasks. It was a classic example of a task-based language-learning activity, even though that was not an original goal. Since technology is clearly a relevant issue for students in college these days, learning about technology (and the language associated with it) is valuable in its own right. Indeed, through this project, I inadvertently addressed our college’s general education outcome goal #6: Information and Technology Literacy.

My third goal was to facilitate students making connections among reading, writing, and vocabulary. The wiki did allow us to create links among pages that contain related vocabulary. For example, students made hyperlinks connecting all instances of the word *digital* that appeared on various pages (including their own essays) to the main page for *digital*, which in turn listed all of the collocations for *digital* in one place. However, I also realized a major flaw in the structure of the wiki that acted exactly in opposition to my goal of connecting reading, writing, and language. The structure, spokes emanating off a static homepage, separated rather than connected the three areas of the course (see figure 1). Conceptually, of course, reading, writing, and language are not isolated phenomena floating in space and connected to a digital placeholder—we don’t read, write, or use language about nothing, and we don’t engage in these activities separately. Instead, we read, write, and use language to accomplish purposes or communicate about meaningful ideas.

Practically, as well, the original structure did not make the best use of the connectivity of the wiki. It was tedious and cumbersome to navigate the wiki in a way that clearly showed connections. For example, in order to see multiple student essays related to a particular issue (thus making use of similar vocabulary), users had to click on each individual student’s page and scroll to the appropriate essay, if it appeared at all. In order to read outside sources on the issue, one had to click on the reading page and scan the entire page to find the relevant articles amid a sea of unrelated articles.

**Wiki Project: Revision**

In fall 2009, I revised the wiki assignment for a new group of students. The biggest change I made was in the underlying structure of the wiki: instead of being organized around skill areas (reading, writing, and language use), pages were organized thematically, according to the topics or issues we discussed in class. The main page for each topic or theme then contained links to the three related skill areas I wanted to connect (see figure 2). This made imminently more sense, since ideas are actually what connect reading, writing, and language use. The wiki allowed me to make those connections visible and actionable (clickable) for students.

In the revised wiki, the readings were all related to the particular issue under discussion in class at the time. This helped build background knowledge for developing ideas, as well as recycling vocabulary in authentic contexts. Students (and I) posted links to and summaries of articles related to the specific topics. Student writing was organized thematically as well in the revised wiki. All students who wrote about a particular issue posted their essays on the same page. That way, with
one click, users could read multiple essays written about the same issue (thus using similar vocabulary, drawn from thematically related readings that were posted “next door” on the reading page). In one example, paragraphs written by groups in response to a common assignment were posted on a single page. Students could immediately see examples of how other groups completed the task, and could edit their writing online at any time.

The vocabulary pages also changed. In the new wiki, students collected examples of relevant vocabulary items from around the Web and posted full sentences, in effect creating a concordance of lexical items. They were also asked to identify and underline key collocations for each word. For example, using simple Google searches, students collected six sentences for the key word *deny* and underlined the following collocations: *deny the crime, deny rumors, confirm or deny, categorically deny, vigorously deny,* and *strenuously deny* (see figure 3).

Posting full sentences, rather than collocations in isolation, made our corpus a richer resource for language learning, allowing a more focused look at the ways that vocabulary and grammar interact. For instance, seeing the sentences collected in one place allowed students to observe that the word is always followed by an object: *deny* is a transitive verb. We could notice, further, that the objects seemed to fall into two patterns: Sometimes *deny* is followed by a noun (*the crime, rumors*), and sometimes it is followed by a noun clause or *that* clause. It also became clear that

![Diagram](image-url)
the word is used with negative quantifiers (*any, ever*). This feature of the wiki made it easier to put specific, relevant language items (i.e., items that we chose based on what we wanted to read and write about) under focused observation. It also put students in charge of creating the materials. In fact, student sentences (from their essays on our class topics) went into the vocabulary corpus as well, as students linked the key words they had used to the vocabulary pages for those words.

**Reflections on “Community”**

An important lesson I learned about wikis is that they don’t “create” community, and the community doesn’t exist within or around the technology itself. Any “community” must already be connected by some real shared goal or interest, and the wiki merely facilitates sharing, documenting, and so forth. One of the most used wikis is the Second Life wiki, a how-to wiki about how to make objects within Second Life. In non-academic contexts wikis often exist for this kind of activity: helping a community learn another technology, or replacing a FAQ (frequently asked questions) section of a website. In other words, for wikis the community already exists; it’s a business, a class, users of a particular game, and so forth, who want a quick way to collaborate with each other and a record of the results of that collaboration. The wiki is merely a useful tool for a community to use to achieve its goals. A class wiki created in one semester cannot generate or replicate the kind of online communities in which students might already participate.

Many of my students (and yours, probably) are active social networkers through sites like Facebook or MySpace. When given the freedom to contribute to the wiki in their own ways, some students in my class interacted in ways familiar and interesting to them from their experiences with social networking—posting quick, friendly greetings punctuated with smiley faces or images. In the revised wiki, I left the student pages as open, non-academic spaces. Many students left their pages blank, but some did post content (links, short texts, poems, etc.). A few
of them posted photos of themselves that I considered inappropriately provocative for the particular community of users. I interpreted this (in part) as their desire to express their identities as young, attractive people and their comfort in using images rather than text. My attempt to connect to them through technology failed because I had not anticipated this, and my project was too overtly academic to act as a bridge from what they knew. In order to use Web 2.0 to generate intrinsic motivation or build on what most already know and do, projects might incorporate social networking principles or applications.

What the Wikis Were Actually Good For

Through this project I realized what more experienced wiki enthusiasts have known for a long time: wikis are most useful as a repository for collaboratively created, contextually relevant content—in this case, classroom learning materials. Although it did not create the kind of connected community I had hoped for, the class wiki served as an online space to scaffold and document the reading, writing, and language work of our class, transforming the ordinary components of my ESL composition course into more useful, more productive materials from which everyone could learn.

In that sense, the wiki functioned as a new, improved way to do old things. Instead of cajoling twenty-five students into keeping individual spiral-bound vocabulary notebooks (that must be physically collected and checked), the wiki allowed us to create collaborative online vocabulary pages that could be updated, linked, and accessed easily. Instead of commenting over and over on individual hard copies of essays that are only seen by one student and one teacher, I could comment publicly on essays visible to the entire class, turning student work into contextually relevant classroom material for discussion and study.

This public feedback was especially beneficial for addressing rhetorical aspects like development, logic, and organization with which most new college writers struggle. But the online nature of the feedback also allowed me to turn student writing into language-learning material particularly useful for ESL students. For example, I could highlight all instances of a particular (commonly made) error to alert students to patterns of error. Because any user can edit any page of the wiki, students could then be made responsible for making the corrections. One student, in fact, chose to show his editing process by leaving errors (marked with strikethroughs) in the text and inserting corrections directly after the errors. Thus, actual writing and language generated by the particular students in the class, rather than decontextualized textbook lessons, became the object of study and directed instruction.

Perhaps the most dramatic enhancement afforded by the wiki was in the reading component of the course. In addition to allowing students to choose their own articles (which could be accomplished without the wiki), the wiki provided scaffolding and models to help them do so. This was especially helpful for students who were less experienced with this kind of assignment. A link was posted so that
students could easily access the homepage of the newspaper from within the wiki. The collective reading log provided numerous models in one location of what to do and what kind of language to use, as well as links to articles that other students had identified. In other words, students had many opportunities to see and explore how peers had completed the assignment before they tried it themselves.

In addition to the scaffolding function, the reading log page also allowed students to share with the class the kinds of issues that were important to them. One student who posted frequently on the reading page went beyond simply summarizing the articles and expressed her own opinion on the issues in the articles, in one case inserting an angry-face emoticon and using ALL CAPS AND MULTIPLE EXCLAMATION POINTS!!!!!! In addition to posting their own opinion about what they had read, users could also interact with each other by adding comments about their classmates’ posts.

Finally, asking students to post to the reading log shifted the responsibility to them for choosing appropriate, interesting materials. This shift required them to learn how to navigate an unfamiliar resource (the New York Times online) and develop or hone skimming, scanning, and searching skills. Reading the articles online, as opposed to in the actual paper or printed in hard copy, allows readers to access the interactive features of the resource, such as related visual or audio content or readers’ comments. Again, this could be achieved without posting to the wiki, but the post itself serves as a concrete, other-directed product of what might otherwise be a solitary receptive activity.

The wiki not only provided a technological update to the things I’d always done (reading, writing, vocabulary). The collaborative, creative, and linkable nature of the medium facilitated making both digital and cognitive connections among these aspects of the composition classroom. In other words, the interconnectivity of the wiki served as an active metaphor for the interconnectivity among the different aspects of academic literacy. In Vygotskyan terms, the wiki became a (virtual) tool that mediated language and writing development. In order to take the action to link two pages, a student must first make the cognitive link. Thus, the existence of a hyperlink between two pages serves simultaneously as evidence of the cognitive connection made by the original user, and also as a pathway that exists for subsequent users to facilitate their making (understanding) the same connection. The evolving product acted as a scaffold that allowed students to accomplish more as readers, writers, and language users than they otherwise could have, and it facilitated interaction among them as they built and shared new knowledge about the technology itself. Wiki technology offers this opportunity for students to demonstrate the links they’re making in a tangible (clickable) and widely shareable way.

**Conclusion**

Celebratory discussions of technology in education abound these days, as do exhortations to incorporate technology into all aspects of our teaching. I suggest that in this environment, it is more important than ever to approach and document new
projects critically, with the goal of refining our understanding of both the potentials and the limitations of particular forms of technology. For example, the open-access, participatory nature of Web 2.0 offers the potential for more democratic forms of communication and information sharing. However, the potential is not always realized. Chris Wilson points out that far from being a “shining example of Web democracy,” Wikipedia is actually the product of a relatively small number of heavy contributors and is “supervised by a special caste of devoted users”—approximately half of the edits made to Wikipedia originate from only 1 percent of its users.

Others worry that the digital environment limits the complexity of reading and writing. According to Martha Pennington, Web 2.0 has brought about an increase in “talky-skimmy writing” and “scanny-reading” (p. 5) that encourage and require only a surface engagement with ideas. This means that “as writers and as readers, today’s students are boogie boarders in the shallows of a great sea of ideas. Writing and reading web pages and PowerPoints has become the model for all the writing and reading of the present generation” (4). These genres, she laments, “[make] use of only a small part of what writing is good for” (8).

In my own case, my original expectations for what I could achieve by using the wiki were not realistic, though the wiki turned out to be an ideal environment for documenting and sharing the collective work of a group of students over the course of a semester and for generating contextually relevant learning material. Implementing the project also helped me learn a lot about my students and the problematic assumptions inherent in the digital native/digital immigrant metaphor. Technology is constantly changing, and being comfortable with one particular form of technology does not necessarily mean being comfortable with other forms of technology. The idea of “native” implies ownership (as in the contested “native speaker” versus “nonnative speaker”), but among digital technology users in my class (myself included) the issue was less about ownership of technology than it was about particular group affiliations (e.g., Facebookers, gamers, college faculty). Each group has its particular uses for technology and exploits it for those purposes. The “divide” is not always primarily related to comfort with technology. For example, the students in my class who posted risqué photos of themselves were not necessarily more digitally savvy than I was, but they were certainly younger and interested in very different things.

Prensky’s divide, of course, is based on age difference, which often plays a large role in group affiliation. But this focus on age obscures other relevant factors such as disposition and material conditions that affect who has access to digital technology in the first place. I found myself more “native” than some of my students due to the simple fact that I am privileged enough to have an up-to-date, working personal computer and high-speed Internet access in my home. It is easy to take such a circumstance for granted until confronted with students who are not in the same position. Such students may lack basic computer skills like typing, word processing, and navigating Web pages.

And so, taking a techno-realist stance (Warschauer, “Changing”) that recognizes both the promises and limits of technology, including Web 2.0, my expe-
Experience with the class wiki has made me committed to incorporating technology into my courses in a considered way. College students today absolutely must have basic word-processing and Internet navigation skills. In addition, the read/write web has opened up new contexts for interpreting and composing a wide variety of multimodal, nonlinear texts, which in turn require an ever-growing and ever more sophisticated repertoire of skills for critically considering new audiences, purposes, and forms. For many young people today, that includes ways of presenting ourselves online. As J. Elizabeth Clark argues, twenty-first-century students need a twenty-first-century pedagogy.

The TETYC special issue on 21st Century Literacies highlights the imperative to address the increasing literacy demands on students as they navigate new spaces and urges us to reconsider our curricula to include visual rhetoric (Welch, Lee, and Shuman), multimodal composing (Bickmore and Christiansen), information literacy (Corbett; Patch), and new genres like blogs and wikis (Gallagher; Harris). More teacher stories (relating failures as well as successes!) and more research grounded in actual practice will enrich our understanding of the affordances and constraints of the ever-expanding menu of options available for answering this call.

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Sarah Nakamaru is assistant professor of ESL at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, 
where she teaches composition and linguistics; she also teaches courses in the MA TESOL program 
at New York University.