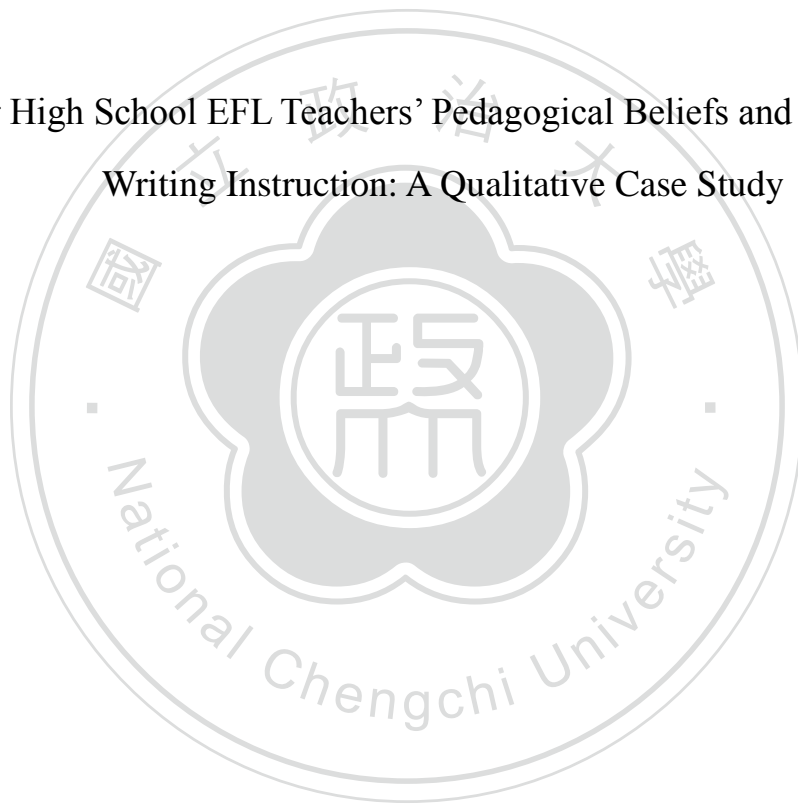國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士班碩士論文

指導教授：黃怡萍先生

Advisor：Dr. Yi-Ping Huang

高中英語教師寫作教學信念及實踐:質性個案研究

Senior High School EFL Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs and Practices on

Writing Instruction: A Qualitative Case Study

研究生：陳閔志撰

Name：Min-Chih Chen

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碩士論文提要

論文名稱：高中英語教師寫作教學信念與實踐:質性個案研究

指導教授：黃怡萍 博士

研究生：陳閎志

論文提要內容：

過去研究著重於教師全方位的英語教學信念，關於英語教師個別技巧方面的教學
信念研究較為缺乏，因此本研究將重心擺在教師寫作信念的研究。本研究旨在以
質化研究方式探討兩位高中英語教師寫作信念及其課堂教學，同時分析學生相關
因素如何影響教師寫作信念及其課堂教學。研究對象包含兩位高中英語教師及八
名學生。資料蒐集方式包含訪談、課室觀察、以及觀察筆記。研究結果顯示教師
信念及其教學並非完全一致。部分不一致的原因主要在於學生行為、學習態度、
英語程度、師生的學習背景不同、時間壓力，以及課堂人數多寡等情境因素。此
外，相較於之前研究所提及的情境因素，學生特質能為教師的教育帶來不同層面
的影響。總之，學生因素以及信念與教學的不一致可以幫助教師們反思教學的本
質，並且藉由情境化的調整，發展出更符合情境的教學方式。

Abstract

In the past, the research focused on English teachers' general pedagogical beliefs while the research on specific beliefs was lacking. Hence, the current research put emphasis on English teachers' pedagogical beliefs on writing instruction. The purposes of the current study were to investigate two senior high school English teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction and how students' characteristics influenced them. The participants were two senior high school teachers and eight students chosen from the teachers' classes. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, classroom observations, and field notes. The results indicated a partial inconsistency between the teachers' beliefs and their instruction, mainly resulting from students' behavior, learning attitudes, students' English proficiency, time pressure, and class sizes. Also, students' characteristics were found to have different types of influence on teachers' instruction compared to other contextual factors mentioned in the previous research. In conclusion, students' characteristics and the discrepancies between teachers' beliefs and practices would help teachers reflect on the nature of their instruction and develop more contextually responsive teaching.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale of the Study

The amount of research on teachers' beliefs, cognition, or knowledge has been increased rapidly over the past decades. In recent years, some studies in the second or foreign language teaching have claimed that teachers' pedagogical systems, such as knowledge and beliefs, do have an effect on their teaching behaviors (Johnson, 1994, Woods, 1996). The English teachers' instruction behavior in the classroom may be guided by their specific pedagogical beliefs in the ESL or EFL context.

Despite the prevalence of research on teacher beliefs, most studies simply focus on teachers' beliefs in general instead of specific aspects of teaching, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Chung 2003; Lai, 2004; Liu, 2004; Lu, 2003). Borg (2003) argues that more emphasis on teachers' beliefs about specific areas should be made, since research related to those aspects is relatively underdeveloped, and most research focused only on grammar instruction. Similarly, in Taiwan, several studies focus on EFL teachers' general beliefs on English teaching (Kao, 2002; Liao, 2008; Lin, 2001), but only a few studies on specific fields of English teaching have been conducted, such as grammar and vocabulary (Chang, 2005; Chuang 2010).

Among all specific English teaching beliefs, beliefs on writing instruction should be given more attention because lots of high school students regarded English writing as their most taxing subject (Li, 1992). This can be shown by the statistics in recent five years from College Entrance Examination Center (CEEC)—all of the high school students could only score an average of about 7 (the total score is 20 points) in English writing. The reason behind the frustrating outcome, according to Hsu (2005), was the modification on high school entrance exam. After the educational reformation

of Nine-Year Integrated Curriculum, the current Basic Competence Test (BCT) for Junior High School adopted multiple choices as the only type of questions. Therefore, this situation would lead to a washback effect that teachers and students in junior high school put their emphasis on reading instead of writing training. In other words, after students graduate, it may be possible that they could only gain the skills of reading instead of writing. After these students enter senior high school, it is difficult for them to write a complete English sentence, let alone an English composition. Thus, the modification in the exam might influence teachers' teaching beliefs and writing instruction. Also, the quest of English teachers' beliefs about writing instruction has received little attention (Wu, C. F., 2002; Wu, S. R., 2002), for writing skills is not as applicable as other three skills used in Taiwan. Consequently, the need for more research on what teachers believe and how their beliefs impact their teaching in the field of writing instruction is necessary.

Although teachers' beliefs are thought to have an effect on their writing instruction, previous research on teachers' beliefs has shown an inconsistency between what teachers believe and what teachers do (Kao, 2002). Major contextual factors causing the inconsistency might include: (1) States' educational policies, including washback effects (Chang, 2007; Hsu, 2005, Wu, 2006), (2) school authority factors, including insufficient class hour (Hsu, 2005; Kuo, 2004), and class sizes (Chang, 2007; Hsu, 2005; Lin, 2009), and (3) students' characteristics (Chang, 2007; Kuo, 2004; Lai, 2004; Lin, 2009; Liu, 2004; Wu, 2006). Borg (2003) argued that contextual factors strongly impacted teachers' beliefs and practices, especially those related to students (Chang 2000). For example, Johnson (1992) mentioned that several factors may influence teachers' instructional beliefs and practices, and that half of them were related to students' involvement, motivation, understanding, affective needs, and language skills. How students' characteristics may impact teachers' beliefs and

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practices on literacy education, though significant, is insufficient (Chen, 2009), let alone the research on teachers' beliefs about writing instruction.

In addition, research on high school teachers' belief mostly used quantitative research methods (Breen, 1991; Peacock, 2001), which have been criticized for not being able to reflect teachers' practical or experiential knowledge (Borg, 2009). Thus, qualitative research methods become important in studying teacher beliefs. Since this study aims to get an in-depth understanding of how students' characteristics might influence teachers' pedagogical beliefs about writing, observations and interviews were adopted as data collection methods.

Given the importance of understanding the influence of students' characteristics on teachers' beliefs and practices, this qualitative case study aims to explore two in-service high school English teachers' teaching beliefs about writing and how students' characteristics might influence their beliefs and practices.

Purposes of the Study

The importance of understanding the relationship between teachers' writing beliefs and practices and discussing the reasons behind it provides the need for conducting this research. In order to have an in-depth understanding of how the students' characteristics might influence teachers' pedagogical beliefs, a qualitative case study methodology was adopted to explore two in-service senior high school English teachers' teaching beliefs and practices on writing instruction and how students' characteristics may influence teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices

Definition of Terms

(1) Pedagogical beliefs about writing instruction

Teachers' pedagogical beliefs about writing instruction were defined as teachers'

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perceptions and knowledge about teaching of writing,

(2) Practices about writing instruction

Teachers' practices about writing instruction were defined as teachers' class

preparation, teaching procedures, teaching instruction, materials used in class and

the assignment.

(3) Contextual factors

In this study, Borg's (1998) definition of contextual factors was adopted to refer to

the social, psychological, and environmental realities of the school and classroom,

such as principals' requirements, curriculum, classroom and school layout, school

policies, students' characteristics and so on.

(4) Students' reaction

Students' reaction was defined as the way students responded to teachers'

instruction or initiation of questions in class, such as verbal responses, facial

responses, and body gestures.

(5) Students' characteristics

Students' characteristics referred to all the student-related factors that would

influence teachers' beliefs and practices, such as students' gender, , motivation,

learning attitudes, English proficiency, learning backgrounds and students' reaction.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, five themes relating to teaching beliefs and practices will be discussed. The first section defines teachers' beliefs. The second section deals with different approaches to conceptualizing beliefs. The third one encompasses various approaches to writing instruction. The fourth one is concerning contextual factors influencing language teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction. Conceptual frameworks of the relationship between teacher's beliefs and practices will be discussed in the fifth section. Finally, the discussion of the literature will lead to the research questions.

Definition of Beliefs and Teachers' Beliefs

Beliefs were considered as a mental conception which consciously or unconsciously guided our behavior or thoughts (Johnson, 1994; Rokeach, 1968, Sigal, 1985). In the previous literature, people's assumptions or conceptions influencing how they interpreted things were regarded as beliefs (Pajares, 1992). Beliefs were formed early and tended to self-perpetuate, and they would not change due to time, schooling, or living experience (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Goodman, 1988; Nespor, 1987; Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Poser et al., 1982; Schommer, 1990). Concluded from the previous research (Johnson, 1994; Rokeach, 1968, Sigal, 1985), beliefs were considered a mental construction which consciously or unconsciously guided our behavior or thoughts.

Teachers' beliefs could be referred to as teachers' attitudes toward education, including schooling, teaching, learning, and students-related issues (Pajares, 1992). As Johnson (1994) mentioned, "teachers' beliefs are considered to have a filtering effect on all aspects of teachers' thought, judgments, and decisions" (p. 439). Tsui (2003)

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defined teachers' beliefs as teachers' conception of teaching and learning, influencing their classroom instruction. In sum, teachers' beliefs could be viewed as teachers' perceptions about teaching and learning, and those beliefs may guide their instruction.

Approaches to Beliefs about Language Learning

Three approaches, according to Barcelos (2003), were adopted to study language learning beliefs. The first one was the normative approach. The term "normative" was originally used in studies of students' culture backgrounds, in which students' culture was an explanation for their behaviors in the classroom. The studies were conducted quantitatively and viewed beliefs on SLA as indicators of students' future behavior. The normative approach usually adopted questionnaires to investigate learners' beliefs. Among those who adopted the normative approach, Horwitz (1985) was credited with adopting the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) to conduct research on beliefs because of its objectivity and generalizability.

According to Wilkinson and Schwartz (1989), though the clarity and precision were two advantages in quantitative methods in the normative approach with the use of questionnaire and descriptive statistics, the researchers could only identify learners' beliefs through the paperwork. The actual emotional state may not be interpreted through the statement in the questionnaire. Besides, there were different reasons behind the same behavior. The criticism led to the adoption of the metacognitive approach. The name of this approach was derived from the framework on metacognitive knowledge advocated by Wenden (1987). He proposed that students' metacognitive knowledge may help them reflect on what they were doing and develop their potential for learning. Those who used the metacognitive approach usually adopted semi-structured interviews and self-reports to collect data. Some of the beliefs elicited through the metacognitive approach were different from those elicited through the

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normative approach, for the metacognitive approach could elicit more information through interviews than that from the questionnaires. Wendon (1987) made a conclusion that various beliefs could lead to the development of "a more comprehensive and representative set of beliefs" (p.113).

However, the meta-cognitive approach only focused on learners' abstract thoughts, not examining beliefs under a certain context, leading to the third approach to explore language learning beliefs, that is, the contextual approach (Allen, 1996). The contextual approach, influenced by situated learning, put much emphasis on the interaction between learners' beliefs and contexts. From this approach, beliefs were considered to be interacted with learning contexts. Qualitative research and interpretation were adopted in this approach. There were multiple ways of data collection, which included case studies, classroom observation, diaries (Hosenfeld, 2003), discussions, and stimulated recalls (Allen, 1996; Barcelos, 2000).

In a nutshell, the normative approach analyzed the data through descriptive statistics, in which beliefs were measured out of context. The metacognitive approach concentrated on the participants' subjective judgment about themselves, inferring beliefs from their intention and statements instead of behavior. The contextual approach described beliefs as embedded in participants' contexts. In this study, the researcher relocated these approaches to examine teachers' beliefs on writing instruction. Since the researcher considered students' characteristics as main contextual factors that influence teachers' pedagogical beliefs, the contextual approach was adopted to uncover the contextual influences on high school English teachers' teaching beliefs on writing.

Research on English Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in Classroom

This section discusses English teachers' beliefs and practices in terms of: (a) teachers' general beliefs about general English teaching and (b) teachers' beliefs about teaching specific skills.

Teachers' Beliefs about General English Teaching

Regarding teachers' beliefs about language teaching, most studies focused on the beliefs in general English teaching (Chang, 2003; Nien, 2002; Yang, 2003). For example, a study conducted by Liao (2003), who explored two senior high school English teachers' beliefs towards Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In this study, different data collection methods were used, such as teacher interviews and classroom observations. The period of observation lasted five months. The findings suggested that both participants held strong beliefs in CLT. However, they had to mix CLT and traditional methods in class instruction due to certain contextual factors, such as limited instructional hours, a large class size, and the pressure of exams. Lee (2004) also conducted a qualitative study to investigate 12 public middle school EFL teachers' beliefs toward English teaching. The results indicated that middle school EFL teachers were reluctant to adopt the intended teaching methods because of the pressure of the monthly exams, students' English proficiency gaps, and a large class size. From the above research, it is concluded that contextual factors could hinder teachers' realization of beliefs. Factors like students' English proficiency, a large class size, or pressure of exams may discourage teachers from teaching in a way consistent with their ideal instruction.

Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Specific Fields of Language

Teachers' specific beliefs on language teaching refer to teachers' teaching

beliefs on a specific aspect of English teaching, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which were regarded as important as general beliefs (Borg, 2003). However, relatively few studies have examined pedagogical beliefs on specific language aspects. Of the research conducted, most focus on grammar instruction (Chen, 2009, Farrell & Kun, 2008; Richards et al., 2001). Regarding grammar instruction, certain factors compelling teachers to teach contrary to what they believed were primarily concerning student expectations and preferences, as well as classroom management (see also Andrews, 2003; Borg, 1999).

In Taiwan, research also examined pedagogical beliefs on specific language aspects. Wu (2002) examined the relationship between English teachers' theoretical orientation and practices on reading instruction. The factors behind the incongruence lied in the exams, students' English proficiency levels and passive reaction from students, which compelled teachers to change from a student-centered approach to a textbook-centered one. Hsieh (2005) conducted a study aiming to investigate junior high school English teachers' beliefs in grammar instruction. The finding suggested the belief-practice inconsistency was due to students' limited English proficiency, which made teachers abandon activities in class. Chuang (2010) conducted another research to investigate English teachers' beliefs and practices in grammar teaching in high schools. The results indicated that there were mismatches between teachers' beliefs and practices because of students' limited English proficiency.

After reviewing both foreign and domestic research dealing with teachers' pedagogical beliefs and their practices, the researcher discovered that the research on the specific field, literacy instruction, may provide unique findings (Borg, 2003). Also, Tsui (2003) stated that while certain type of pedagogical knowledge was general to all subjects, the content of the subject could have an impact on the general pedagogical skills used by teachers. That is to say, previous research has been conducted on

teachers' general beliefs, but the content of writing instruction may be unique, such as "focusing on form" or/and "brainstorming activities." Therefore, it is pedagogically significant to examine teachers' beliefs on writing instruction.

Besides, we can find that certain factors, especially those related to student issues, such as students' limited proficiency or passive learning attitudes, were constantly mentioned as reasons influencing teachers' beliefs. Therefore, it was obvious that students' characteristics play an important role in the modification of teachers' beliefs and practices. But how the students' characteristics may interact with teachers' teaching beliefs needs more investigation.

Research on Language Teachers' Beliefs and Practices on Writing Instruction

Various Approaches to Writing Instruction

English teachers might adopt various approaches to writing instruction, including the product, process, and genre approach. This section discusses these approaches in terms of their backgrounds, the content of courses, and roles of teachers.

Product approach. Influenced by behaviorism, Pincas (1982) regards learning as "assisted imitation, and uses many instruction techniques, in which learners respond to a stimulus given by teachers" (p.153). Therefore, writing is viewed as being mainly about linguistic knowledge, and most of the instruction focuses on the appropriate use of vocabulary, conjunction words, and syntax from the product approach (Pincas, 1982). There are four stages within this approach: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. The familiarization makes learners realize certain features of texts, such as grammatical points and vocabulary usage. Later, learners practice the writing skills from controlled sentence patterns to free writing with increasing freedom. Teachers play the roles of dominators in this approach. In

conclusion, the product approach views writing as the knowledge about the language structure.

Process approach. As for the process approach, writing is viewed as language skill development, such as planning and drafting. This approach includes four stages: prewriting, drafting, revising and editing (Badger & White, 2000). The prewriting enables learners to brainstorm different topics of the text. At the drafting stage, learners select and construct the ideas from the brainstorming stage, leading to the first draft. After the discussion, learners might revise the first draft either individually or in groups. Finally, they edit and refine the text. Teachers play the roles of facilitators to draw out leaners' potential. In the view of the process approach, writing skills are unconsciously developed rather than consciously learned by learners. In conclusion, the process approach views writing as the exercise of linguistic skills, and the development of writing is an unconscious process in which teachers serve as facilitators.

Genre approach. The genre approach regards writing as linguistic knowledge and emphasizes the variation of writing within different social contexts, such as sales letters, research articles, and reports (Flowerdew, 1993). There are three stages within this approach. The first one is reading and analyzing the genre of the text which learners are going to produce. Later, learners could practice relevant language forms and consider the social context of the text, such as the identity of the reader, or the purpose of the writing. Finally, learners produce a new text by themselves. In sum, genre approach sees writing as the knowledge about the language with the attention paid to the social purpose.

Consistency between Belief and Practice

Most literature has shown that English teachers' beliefs on writing instruction were more or less inconsistent with their practices (Chang, 2007; Lin, 2009). However, not every study had the same results. Some studies showed that teachers' teaching beliefs were partially consistent (Chen, 2009) or fully consistent (Spada & Massey, 1992) with their instruction. The following discusses the reasons behind the inconsistency and consistency. Mitchell (2005) and Feryok (2004) proposed that if teachers had more teaching experience, their beliefs would be more consistent with classroom practices, because the deeply held beliefs would be applied more thoroughly than beliefs acquired more recently. Richardson (1991) also claimed that less experienced teachers might have their beliefs constantly changed in practices. In 2011, Woods suggested that more experienced teachers were likely to have more experientially informed beliefs than relative novices, and beliefs modified by teaching experience might be expected to correspond with teaching practices. The beliefs of experienced teachers in the case studies may have become more firmly embedded in their practices as the time went by. In conclusion, teachers' teaching beliefs would be solidified by their teaching experience. As teachers gained more teaching experience, their instruction would become more consistent with their beliefs.

After the discussion of the reasons behind the inconsistency, the factors influencing either English teachers' beliefs or practices will be elaborated in the following sections.

Factors Influencing Teacher's Beliefs or Practices

After reviewing the previous research, the researcher categorized three kinds of factors influencing teachers' beliefs or practices: schooling, professional coursework, and contextual factors. The following paragraphs would introduce them one by one.

Schooling. Schooling means the teachers' learning experience when they were students. As Bailey mentioned in 1996, in-service teachers' instruction or belief was strongly influenced by their school teachers when they were students. When they taught in class, they would consciously or unconsciously simulate or forfeit certain ways of teaching based on their positive or negative perspectives on their school teachers.

Several studies have elaborated the positive influence of schooling on English teachers' instruction, which means that teachers may adopt the way they were taught when they were students. For instance, Olson and Singer (1994) conducted a study on two secondary school teachers. The methods involved self-report inventories, interviews with teachers, and class observations. From two participant teachers' interviews, both teachers expressed that their pedagogical beliefs and practices were influenced by their schooling experiences. One teacher stated how she taught her students was a reflection of the enjoyable experiences that she had in school, while the other one would ask students to read more because of the influence from her 7th grade teacher.

In addition to the positive impact that school experience may exert on English teachers' instruction, some schooling experience could have negative effects on either teachers' beliefs or practices, making them adopt a new way of instruction. For example, Woods (1996) adopted interviews and class observation to examine eight ESL teachers who taught adult students and found one of the participants implemented communicative approach during instruction because of her early language learning experience. As this teacher's several years of skill-based language learning experience in school had not enabled her to speak French, she formed a teaching belief that communicative approach was more beneficial to students. Another study based on the schooling experience of two female kindergarten teachers was conducted by Thomas

and Barksdale-Ladd (1997). One participant adopted a "whole language" approach because of her negative experience of phonics practice when she had been a student. Another participant believed in "skill-based" instruction, for she had not experience it in her early literacy experience.

In summary, the schooling experience not only has positive effects but also negative ones on either English teachers' beliefs or instruction.

Professional coursework. Professional coursework are courses that pre-service teachers have to take before they teach in class. During the training session, pre-service teachers' teaching beliefs could be influenced by simulating or adjusting instructors' ways of teaching or changing their views toward teaching after training sessions (Almarza, 1996; Brown & McGannon, 1998). Borg (1999) conducted a study in order to understand English teachers' beliefs on grammar instruction. After 15 hours of class observations and interviews, Borg discovered that the most influential factor influencing participants' pedagogical beliefs and practices was the training received in the teacher education program. During the training, the participant had been taught with the communicative and learner-center approaches which were reflected in his instruction in class. Even when he faced students' negative responses in class, these beliefs were not changed. Rueda and Garcia (1996) also conducted a study to examine whether different types of teacher training could cause different teaching beliefs and instruction. Participants included 54 English teachers. After coding the data from interviews and class observation, they found different instruction methods in the area of reading and assessment. The participants with the special education background believed that teacher's responsibility was to pass knowledge to students. On the other hand, the qualified teachers preferred to guide learners to grasp meanings of the texts from their prior knowledge. As for assessment, the special education teachers tended to

adopted a skill-based approach, while the qualified teachers used a holistic approach. From the above literature, we could realize the influence of different types of teacher education on their beliefs and instruction.

Contextual Factors Influencing Teachers' Practices on Writing Instruction

English teachers' writing beliefs are more or less inconsistent with their practices (Basturkmen 2011; Chang, 2007; Lin, 2009), because teachers' beliefs may be influenced by certain contextual factors. Contextual factors, according to Borg (1998), are social, psychological, and environmental realities of the school and classroom, such as principals' requirements, curricula, classroom and school layouts, school policies, students' characteristics and so on. Several studies have claimed the primary of contextual factors in teachers' instruction (Fang, 1996; Borg, 2003; Lee, 2008).This section will list major contextual factors influencing teachers' practices on writing instruction and then narrow the focus to the issues related to students.

The contextual factors influencing teachers' writing practices can be categorized into three main factors: (1) states' educational factors (2) school authority factors (3) students' characteristics. Three categories will be discussed as follows:

States' educational factors. Research has shown that states' educational policies exert a significant influence on teachers' practices on writing instruction. (Chang, 2007; Hsu, 2005; Wu, 2006). Educational policies refer to the official policies implemented by Ministry of Education, including washback effects, which may compel teachers to adjust their instruction to make students perform well on the exam. For example, Chang's study (2007) aimed to investigate high school and junior college English writing teachers' beliefs and practices. The instruments were background surveys for students and teachers, interviews with students and the writing teachers. Results

indicated that teachers' beliefs and practices varied because of the test-oriented

educational policy. As such, English teachers had to forfeit the communicative

approach and turned to the product approach, putting emphasis on explicit vocabulary

and grammar instruction, translation methods, memorization of vocabulary and model

sentences in writing instruction. Similarly, Hsu's study (2005) also showed that the

test-oriented trend in education policy compelled teachers to change their instruction.

School authority factors. Compared to state's educational policies, school authority

factors has less influence on teachers' practices, teachers did not have to substantially

adjust their ways of teaching. School authority factors mean certain policies drawn up

in each school, including insufficient class hours (Hsu, 2005; Kuo, 2004), and class

sizes (Chang, 2007; Wu, 2002; Lin, 2009). Wu (2002) examined the relationship

between English teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices. The factors behind the

incongruence lied in school curriculum design. Teachers had to abandon the process

approach because of limited class hours. Lin (2009) presented a study to investigate

how English writing was taught in high schools in Taiwan. The result indicated that

half of the teachers in the study showed a positive attitude toward the process approach

of English writing. However, few of them were willing to implement it due to the large

class size.

Students' characteristics. Among those contextual factors, students' characteristics are

mentioned in almost every study, and should be viewed as one of the most significant

factors influencing teachers' practices. Students' characteristics are defined as any

issues related to students themselves. The students' characteristics could be further

classified. As Chen mentioned in his study (2005), factors related to students consisted

of several categories: proficiency level (Chang, 2003; Wu, 2002), motivation (Lin,

2001; Nien, 2002), attitudes (Nien, 2002), needs (Chang, 2003), and gender (Chang,

2003). Student's English proficiency is defined as students' knowledge of English and performance on the exam, and their proficiency levels would influence teachers' practices, for teachers have to change their writing approach from a process approach to controlled writing (product approach) to meet students' needs. Hsieh (2005) conducted a study aiming to investigate junior high school English teachers' teaching beliefs and practices. The finding suggested that the belief-practice inconsistency was due to the limited proficiency of the students. Therefore, teachers had to adopt controlled writing while giving up the communicative approach. Likewise, Chuang (2010) conducted another research to investigate English teachers' beliefs and practices in vocational high schools. The results indicated that there were mismatches between teachers' beliefs and practices because of students' proficiency. Teachers asked students to practice sentence patterns instead of telling them to write the whole article due to students' low English proficiency.

As for students' leaning motivation and attitudes, teachers may provide more teaching activities if students are willing to learn. For example, Nien's study (2002) suggested that teachers had difficulty implementing the communicative approach because of students' negative attitudes and low motivation toward it, which forced teachers to adopt a traditional teaching approach, such as the grammar translation method or the product approach. In Lin's study (2001), teachers were supportive of using English to teach in class. However, due to students' passive attitude toward teachers' instruction, teachers had no choice but to adopt students' mother tongue.

When it comes to students' needs, Chang (2003) mentioned that teachers believed the instruction should be adjusted according to students' grade, for they realized students in different grade would have different learning objectives. For example, students in the twelfth grade were facing much exam pressure. Therefore, teachers would put their emphasis of instruction on how to help students get high

scores in the exam. As for the influence of students' gender, teachers would also supply more information in class when teaching girl students, for girls usually behave better than boys in class.

In summary, contextual factors would change teachers' practices on writing instruction, mostly from the process approach to the product approach. Among all the contextual factors, students' characters played the most important role. Despite its significance, most of the previous studies have adopted the quantitative approach for examination, but it failed to reveal the complicated relation between beliefs and instruction. Also, student' characteristics have received little attention when mentioning the influence they had on teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices on high school's writing instruction. However, the educational reformation carried out ten years ago has a huge impact on high school students' English writing abilities, which may probably influence high school English teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction. Therefore, this study aims to explore how students' characteristics may influence English teachers' beliefs and practices in a qualitative way.

Frameworks of the Relationship between Teacher's Beliefs and Practices

Borg's model (2003) is adopted in this study, for his framework puts more emphasis on the influence of the contextual factors. As shown in Figure 1, the central part of the model is teacher's cognition, which encompasses belief, knowledge, theories, and so on. Around the cognition, four factors may influence or interact with it. They are schooling, professional coursework, contextual factors, and classroom practice. Schooling refers to teacher's learning experience. Professional coursework means the courses which pre-service teachers have to take. Contextual factors represent social, psychological, and environmental realities of the school and classroom, such as principals' requirements, curricula, school policies, students'

characteristics and so on. Classroom practice refers to the way teachers teach in class, including their teaching procedure, class preparation and teaching materials, which are influenced by contextual factors. Since this study deals with the contextual factors behind teachers' beliefs and practices, only part of Borg's model, that is the relation among teachers' beliefs, contextual factors and classroom practice will be examined.
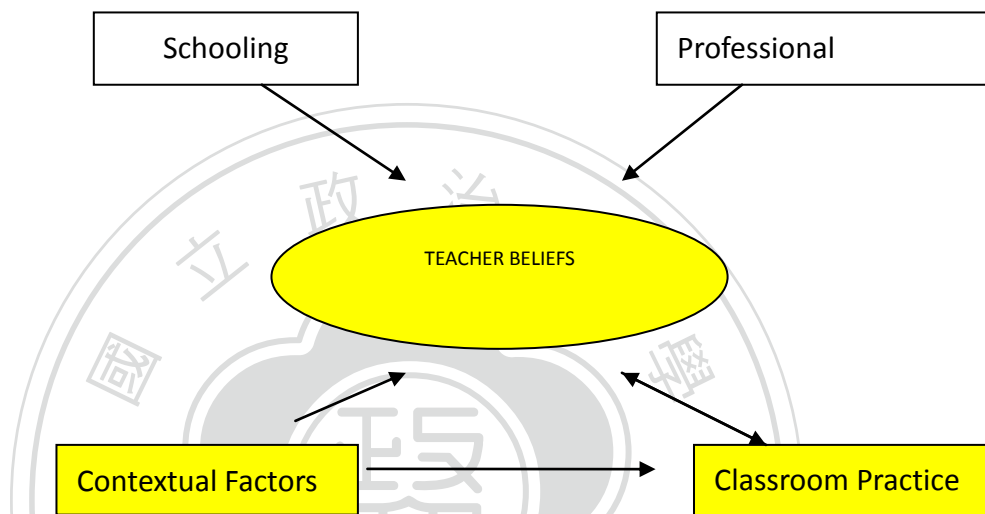
Figure 1. Borg's model of teacher cognition, schooling, professional education, and classroom practice (Figure taken from Borg, 2003, p. 82)

Based on the previous literature, the researcher elaborated Borg's (2003) illustrated in Figure 3. In this framework, the contextual factors include states' educational policies, school authority, and students' characteristics, while classroom practice involves teaching procedures and class preparation.
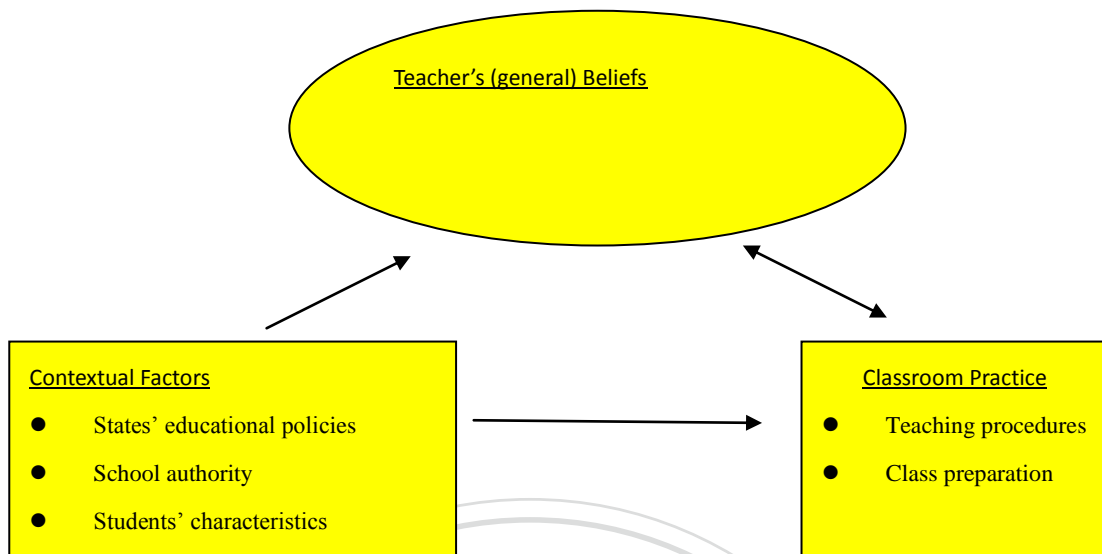
Figure 3. Elaboration of Borg's model of teacher beliefs, contextual factors, and classroom practice

Research Questions

Three research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What pedagogical beliefs about writing instruction did the two English teachers in one comprehensive senior high school in Taiwan hold?

2. Were these teachers' beliefs consistent with their practice?

3. If not, how were their beliefs or practice on writing instruction modified in the classroom? What contextual factors, especially students' characteristics, might impact such modification?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Since a qualitative case study can provide an intensive, complete description and analysis of a single entity (Duff, 2007), this study adopted the qualitative case study design to explore and observe two senior high school English teachers' beliefs and practices in writing instruction and how their beliefs and practices on writing instruction might be shaped by students' characteristics in the class contexts.

Participants and Contexts

The current research was conducted in a medium-size public senior high school in a metropolitan area in northern Taiwan. This school was chosen because among all the high school students in Taiwan in 2010, the students there got the average score in their high school entrance exams, which made the school a typical case. There were 33 classes and 13 English teachers at this school. Each English teacher taught two to three classes in one semester and had six to seven hours for each class every week. In 2011, there were 20-week course of study and three monthly achievement tests. Each achievement test included four lessons. There were about 35 students in each class. Both boys and girls were included. The students in this school were randomly assigned to each class. In class, students sit in rows and face the teacher in the same direction. There was a blackboard behind the teachers on the stage for them to write down the supplementary notes.

Jocey and Shelly were two public senior high school female English teachers participating in this study. Shelly was chosen because she is a friend of the researcher. The other teacher was selected through snowball sampling (Glesne, 1999). Having

good reputation for writing instruction, Jocey was introduced by Shelly. Both teachers

majored in English in college. Jocey taught more than 20 years in the same school,

while Shelly had twelve years of teaching experiences and had taught in two different

high schools before being transferred to the current school. In 2011, they taught two

classes when the data were collected. Since both teachers taught in the same school,

some conditions related to school, such as curriculum syllabi and school administration,

were almost the same. They agreed to join in this study after the researcher explained

the purpose of the current study. Table 1. shows the demographic information of the

two participants.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Two Participants

	Gender	Age	length of teaching	teaching experiences
Jocey	Female	51	26 years	the current high school
Shelly	Female	34	12 years	3 years in a private high school
				1 year in a public girls' high school
				8 years in the current high school

Aside from two English teachers, eight students were also interviewed to serve

as a form of triangulation. Two students were chosen in each class based on teachers'

recommendation. Their name, sex, English proficiency, and the experience of learning

English are described in Table 2.

Table 2

Profile of Participating Students

	Class	Name	Sex	English Proficiency	Experiences of Learning English
Jocey's Class	Class A	Howard	male	high	12 years
		Peggy	female	low	10 years
	Class B	Jennifer	female	medium	9 years
		Jeremy	male	low	11 years
Shelly's Class	Class C	Edward	male	medium	10 years
		Iris	female	high	11 years
	Class D	Katrina	female	low	12 years
		Jane	female	high	9 years

Data Collection Method

Data collection was derived from three main sources: (a) two semi-structured interviews with each English teacher individually before and after the class observation, (b) one individual interview with two students from each observed class and (c) classroom observation and field notes. Before data collection methods are discussed, the schedule of data collection is presented in Table 3:

Table 3

The Schedule of Data Collection

2011

3/27	Pre-observation interview with Jocey (60 min)
4/04 ~ 5/13	Classroom observation (Class A, 39 hours) (6.6 hours on writing instruction)
4/05 ~ 5/13	Classroom observation (Class B, 38 hours) (5.9 hours on writing instruction)
5/21	Post-observation interview with Jocey (30 min)
5/22	Pre-observation interview with Shelly (60 min)
5/23 ~ 6/24	Classroom observation (Class C, 30 hours) (4.7 hours on writing instruction)
5/23 ~ 6/24	Classroom observation (Class D, 30 hours) (4.3 hours on writing instruction)
7/02	Post-observation interview with Shelly (30 min)
7/09	Students' interview Class B (20min each)
7/10	Students' interview Class C (20min each)
7/16	Students' interview Class A (20min each)
7/17	Students' interview Class D (20min each)

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with two participating teachers were conducted before and after the class observation in 2011. Before the interview, two participating teachers' course syllabi were reviewed to decide the time of the observation and interviews. There were two interviews with each teacher, one pre-observation interview and one post-observation interview in 2011. Each interview lasted about sixty minutes and was conducted individually to avoid interference between two participants. Besides, all interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The purpose of the pre-observation interview was to know a) the participants'

learning and teaching backgrounds, b) their pedagogical beliefs toward writing

instruction, and c) the students' involvement during the class. The first teacher

interview protocol was developed based on Carspecken (1996), including four topics,

each of which contained one lead-off question and a few follow-up questions. Lead-off

questions were served as a guide for later follow-up questions. The topics of the first

interview were based on Glesne's interview techniques (1999), (See Appendix A).

They included teachers' personal backgrounds, beliefs about writing, opinions about

students' influence on teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices, and techniques to

writing instruction.

On the other hand, the post-observation interviews were conducted after the

whole observation. The purpose of this interview was to understand teachers'

decision-making processes, and how students and other factors might influence these

processes. Each interview lasted about thirty minutes. Based on the suggestions made

by Hsu (2005), Kao (2002), Wu (2006), the topics of the interview included some

incidents happening in the classroom, the decision made when both participants were

teaching, and some questions derived from the pre-observation interview. (For the

questions of this interview, please refer to Appendix A)

After two interviews with the teachers, interviews with students from both

teachers' classes were conducted for the purpose of triangulation. The purpose of the

interview was to understand students' impression on teacher's writing instruction. Two

students from each observed class were chosen based on the teachers'

recommendations. In this study, eight students from four classes were interviewed after

the class observation was done. One student was interviewed at a time to avoid

interference from other classmates. Each interview lasted about 20 minutes. The reason

why students' interview was held in July was that they had much free time during

summer vacation. The topics of this interview were adapted from Nien's (2002) study. A student interview protocol (see Appendix B) was developed based on Carspecken (1996). All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Classroom Observations and Field Notes

In this study, two English teachers were observed from April to June, Monday to Friday, in the spring semester of 2011 (137 hours in total, in which 21.5 hours belonged to writing instruction). To avoid the conflicts between both teachers' course schedules, the researcher observed Jocey's class from April to May and then observed Shirley's class from May to June. Both classes of each participating teacher were chosen for observation because each teacher taught two classes. Therefore, there were total four classes (Class A, B, C and D) observed by the researcher. Class A and B were taught by Jocey, while Class C and D were taught by Shelly. The whole class observation was recorded through video camera and field notes. The researcher did not participate in the process of instruction, only as an observer, recording those events related to the research questions. The field notes included any events and activities happening in the classroom, especially those related to the students' characteristics when writing was taught, without any personal interpretation.

Data Analysis

Data gathered from the interview with teachers and students were audio-taped and transcribed and then coded based on content analysis proposed by Lieblich (1998). The purpose of using content analysis was to analyze interview data and investigate participants' perspectives. After the verbatim transcription, the researcher translated the data from Chinese to English and then picked out the data which were related to the teachers' writing beliefs and practices. Those data were categorized after the contrast

and comparison, and then recurring themes would be chosen. After that, the recurring themes were classified into certain content categories. As for the class observation, the researcher wrote down field notes during the class and watched the recording after class to gather the information related to (1) teachers' instruction, (2) what teachers said in class (such as initiating questions), (3) students' responses, and (4) students' expression. Finally, compare and contrast the data from the observation and the content categories from the interview data to get several new content categories to reach a conclusion.

Validation

To establish the trustworthiness of this study, several procedures were adopted (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, pre-observation interviews with both participants were triangulated with class observation and the interview with the students. Through the pre-observation interview, the researcher knew the pedagogical beliefs on writing instruction held by the teachers. Then, the class observation of teachers' writing activities was used as the evidence to prove the beliefs that teachers mentioned in the previous interview. Also, the data gathered in the field notes, post-observation interviews with teachers, and the interview with students could be used to realize the students' involvement and the reasons behind the decision making process. The interview with the students could also be a supplement for the researcher to understand the influence of students' characteristics on teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction from another perspective. The second procedure was member check. The selected data from the field notes and the interviews were checked by the participating teachers to see if there was any misunderstanding between the researcher and the teachers. Finally, peer debriefing was also involved in this study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), a debriefer is an individual who keeps the researcher honest and asks

questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations. From an outsider's viewpoint, the debriefer checked the research process to clarify the ambiguity or something inappropriate. Jeremy, a classmate of the researcher, was asked to be the peer debriefer in the whole study.

Role of the Researcher

During the observation, the researcher played the role as an observer to avoid interfering the teaching process in class; meanwhile, he also tried to learn from the participants instead of being an expert or an authority figure. The learner's perspective enabled the researcher to reflect on all aspects of research procedures and findings.
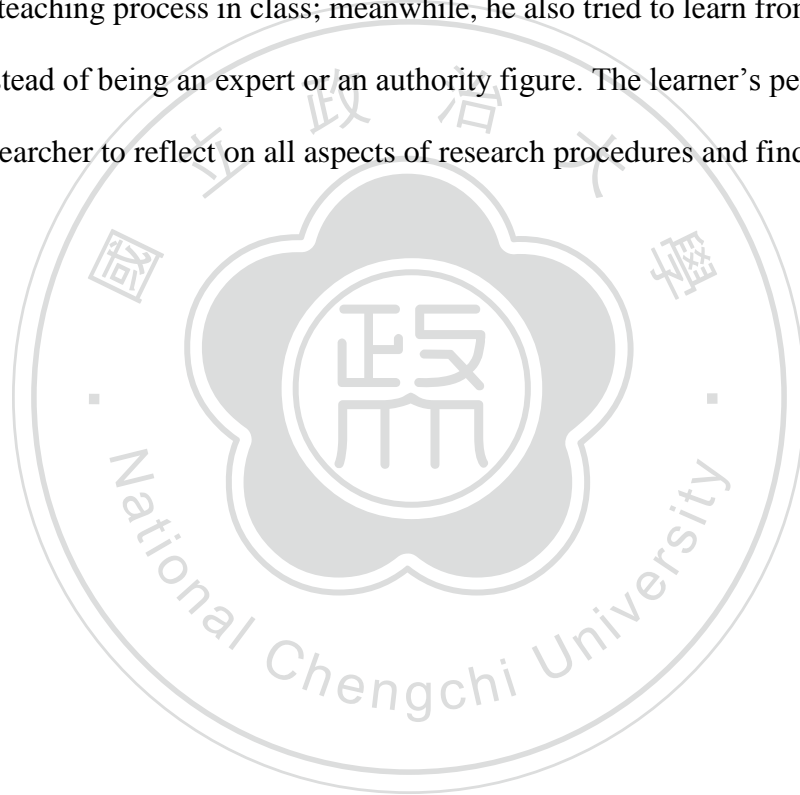
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND CASE ANALYSIS

The purpose of the study is to gain an in-depth understanding of two senior high school English teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices on writing instruction and how students' characteristics may influence their instruction. The analysis of Shelly's and Jocey's pedagogical beliefs and practices is presented in the following sections. Also, students' opinions are included to realize how they viewed the instruction. Finally, factors that would influence teachers' instruction will be discussed.

Shelly

In this section, Shelly's pedagogical beliefs on writing instruction and the way she taught in the classroom will be discussed.

Course Preparation

Shelly used the textbook and several articles extracted from English magazines as materials. In her first year of teaching, she spent a great amount of time reading the textbook, analyzing texts, searching the supplementary information from reference books or the Internet, such as synonym, relative word groups, and derivatives. After years of teaching, Shelly has spent less and less time on the textbook, for she had been familiar with the content in the textbook, and the content has been taught over and over again. However, the preparation of supplementary materials was another story. Since Shelly hoped that the materials could make students realize the events happening in the world and connect what they have learned in class with their daily lives, she found the related articles from the latest magazines. After reading them, Shelly pinpointed certain key points, such as word usage, sentence patterns, and derivatives for students to notice.

In sum, the textbook was used as the main source of writing instruction, while articles related to the current events served as the supplementary materials to improve students' writing abilities.

As for the development of the instructional procedure, Shelly admitted that she did not spend much time on that because of her years of teaching experience in high school. Before stepping on the platform, she completely had in mind what she was going to teach. The only thing she insisted on was that sentence patterns must be taught bottom up, which meant they should be disassemble at first, and then each segment would be explained. Finally, each segment was combined to form a complete sentence pattern. By doing so, Shelly believed it was easier for students to follow her instruction.

In sum, Shelly did spend a great amount of time preparing writing materials, including the content in the textbook and English articles in the past. However, the time for class preparation has decreased as she becomes more and more experienced.

Writing Instruction in Class

When interviewed, Shelly said that she had a fixed writing instruction procedure for every lesson. First, she explained the sentence patterns and then asked students to finish the drills on the textbook. Next, the articles Shelly gave students in the previous class would be discussed and key points were pinpointed. For the teacher, the article reading was thought to be helpful in learning writing, which will be elaborated in the next section. After class, an assignment was assigned to each student to make three sentences based on what they have learned today. However, she also acknowledged that there was an inconsistency between her beliefs and practices on writing instruction. Ideally, Shelly thought that certain activities should have been included, such as brainstorming, group discussions and revising. The activities could make students

realize that language could be served as a tool to communicate with others (e.g. writing a letter), rather than merely a subject learned in class. However, she had difficulty carrying out her ideal teaching methods because of students' inappropriate behavior and time limitation. The goals of her instruction, according to Shelly, were to enable students to understand the connection between the language they learned and their surroundings. For her, writing instruction included extensive reading, sentence-pattern teaching and practices.

Beliefs and Practices on Writing Instruction

Data collected from Shelly's statements could be categorized as the following teaching beliefs and practices on writing instruction: (a) Learning L2 is like learning L1, (b) sentence patterns should be taught by using bottom-up strategies, (c) practice is essential when teaching sentence patterns, and (d) instruction should be adjusted according to different students.

Learning L2 is like leaning L1: Reading comes before writing. Shelly believed learning English is like learning Chines, which meant reading came before writing. Therefore, she thought the key to successful writing instruction was extensive reading across various topics, which was correspondent to Borg's model (2003) that teachers' beliefs could influence their instruction. During the interview, she told the researcher that the process of learning a second language should be similar to that of learning our mother tongue; that is, we learned how to listen before we knew how to speak. Further, through learning letters, words, and sentence patterns, we could read. After accumulating enough input, we could write. Likewise, for Shelly, the situation remained the same when we learned English in Taiwan: reading should be learned before writing. Therefore, according to Shelly, "lots of reading materials should be

provided before asking students to write an article." In the following paragraph, how Shelly realized the importance of extensive reading will be discussed.

Shelly realized the importance of extensive reading when she was in college. There were lots of reading assignments each class. Most of the students did not finish them. But Shelly did the assignments every time, for she loved reading English, which also indirectly improved her writing skills. She stated the special experience to the researcher.

When I was a freshman, I spent a lot of time reading the textbook. Therefore, professors often reminded me of practicing writing on my own for the purpose of taking the mid-term exam, which was full of open-ended questions. But I didn't. Possibly because I had no interest in writing. When the mid-term came, I thought I was unable to answer the questions. To my surprise, I smoothly finished the test without difficulties. The score of the test was also pretty high. I guessed it was a large amount of reading that made me write smoothly even I did not practice beforehand. (Interview 052211)

According to Shelly's statements, we found Shelly believed the extensive reading could improve writing skills, so she could write smoothly during the exam even though not practicing writing in advance. But Shelly also acknowledged that her personal experience may not be generalizable to others, especially her students. As a teacher, she thought successful writing instruction should include both extensive reading and practice, which will be further discussed in later paragraphs. She did not need to practice, according to Shelly, might be because of her solid foundation of English proficiency in high school as well as her large amount of reading input in

college, which made her a unique case. In other words, her personal experience triggered the thoughts that extensive reading could improve writing, but not everyone could write smoothly without practice as she did.

After becoming a teacher, Shelly did some research and found out how to improve students' writing skills by extensive reading. According to her viewpoint, extensive reading could increase not only students' linguistic knowledge, such as sentence patterns, but also their background knowledge of writing. "If they (students) do not read a lot, they have no idea what to write when randomly given a topic during the exam," Shelly explained. Accordingly, Shelly gave each student an article to read every day, and then she would lead students to review the key points in next class. The following excerpt shows how she utilized extensive reading in class to improve students' writing abilities. (See Appendix C for transcription conventions)

S: Have you read the article I gave you yesterday?
Ss: Yes…
S: It is about Japanese Girl's Day. Take a look at the first paragraph. Here are some words you should notice: the word "observed" in line two, "in celebration of" in the next line, and "do so" in the last line. Let's take a look at the first paragraph, the word *observe* meant celebrate rather than check. The next one is *in celebration of*, the usage of which is similar to *to celebrate* plus verb. Next time, you could try to use that instead of *to celebrate* plus verb in your articles. The final one is *do so*. It replaced *study hard* in the sentence to avoid repetition. Of course, it is correct to write *study hard*, but it sounds a bit redundant. Ok, let's look at the next paragraph…

In the above excerpt, the process of instruction was clearly displayed. Before class, Shelly gave each student an article to read. But because of time limitation, she

could not lead students to read the whole article. Instead, Shelly expected her students to read articles on their own. In class, she told them certain crucial word usage they should notice. In the above example, she pointed out another meaning of "observe," another expression of "to celebrate," and the usage of "do so" to represent the mentioned verb phrase. In conclusion, Shelly carried out her beliefs by making students read articles and pinpointed the key points for students to notice.

When it comes to choosing the articles, there were two requirements for them to meet. The first one was that those articles should meet students' English proficiency. They were selected from English magazines sold in book stores. The other one was that the topics of articles were related to current events. Shelly explained, "Since the content on textbooks was out of date, students had problems understanding the practicality of language learning." Therefore, the topics included festivals, sports events, adventure stories, and some movies currently released in theater. "I think it is a good way to let students understand what they have learned in class could be connected with their daily lives." Shelly's students also have the same viewpoints. Edward, one of students in class C, said to the researcher, "I enjoyed reading those articles, for them broaden my horizons, making me realize what had happened in the world." Another student, Iris, also expressed her thoughts: "I am a moviegoer, and I enjoy reading the movie introductions in the article. At the same time, I could improve my reading ability." From students' points of view, it is clear that interesting topics are served as incentives for students to study English.

Sentence patterns should be taught by using bottom-up strategies. Shelly suggested that sentence patterns should be taught piece by piece and then combined those pieces to form a complete pattern. During the interview, Shelly said that sentence patterns played an essential role for constructing an article, for an article consisted of several

paragraphs, and a paragraph was composed of several sentences. Therefore, being familiar with sentence patterns was indispensable when writing an article. That is, Shelly expected students to be familiar with the patterns taught in class and be able to use them in their writings. When teaching sentence patterns, Shelly broke the whole sentence pattern into several parts, explaining each of them. Finally, she combined each part to form a whole sentence pattern. For example, in Lesson Seven, Shelly set up her goal for writing instruction as making students be familiar with the sentence pattern "what + (S) + V," which meant a noun clause led by *what*. In order to help students easily understand the pattern, Shelly first analyzed the pattern and then elaborated on the noun clause. Next, she described the function of the composite relative pronoun "what." Finally, she combined "what" and "noun clause" as a complete sentence pattern. Shelly explained why she spent extra time analyzing the sentence patterns as follows:

A sentence is combined with several words or small patterns. Like the above example, noun clause is involved in a noun clause led by "what." If students don't understand the noun clause, they definitely have difficulties picking up the whole patterns. (Interview 070211)

In the above statement, Shelly indicated the importance of teaching sentence patterns piece by piece, for students had to initially understand the individual words and then the whole patterns. However, she claimed that there were two main reasons that many teachers did not disassemble the sentence patterns as she did. The first one lied in that teachers thought it a waste of time. Due to the limited time distributed in English classes, teachers had to figure out how to cram their instruction in the intensive schedule. Therefore, they would teach sentence patterns directly by explaining the

target structures. The other reason was that teachers might think students have already learned and realized fundamental sentence patterns embodied in the complex ones. They worried that disassembling the sentences would raise students' impatience and cause an unpleasant learning climate in class. However, according to Shelly's teaching experiences, over half of students in her class did not thoroughly realize the usage of the basic sentence patterns. Take the above excerpt as an example. When teaching the sentence pattern "what + (S) + V," Shelly wanted to confirm if students realized what the noun clause was. To her surprise, lots of students showed confusing expressions by shaking their heads or frowning at her, which reinforced her belief that teaching sentence patterns should start from the basic elements.

Shelly also responded to the doubts raised by those who did not disassemble the sentence patterns because of time pressure and students' impatience. Disassembling the sentence patterns and explaining them was not a waste of time, for it could eliminate students' confusion at the beginning of learning and would not make teachers teach the whole sentence pattern again. As for students' impatience, Shelly also presented her thoughts. Many teachers had a myth that students should understand and memorize all of the content taught in the past. As she expressed, "I don't think that's possible, students need to be taught over and over again." Since there were so many subjects for students to learn, Shelly would seize the moment to help students review what they have learned.

This kind of instruction was also embraced by most students. For instance, Katrina, one of the students in class D, admitted that the instruction was helpful. Katrina's English proficiency was pretty low since she did not have a solid foundation of English in her junior high. If Shelly did not disassemble the sentence patterns and directly taught them, she would have easily lost her attention for not being able to follow her instruction. Although most students appreciated Shelly's ways of instruction,

some students, especially those with higher English proficiency, had opposite opinions. For example, Jane, also from class D, with higher level of English proficiency, complained, "I do not think it is necessary to disassemble the sentence patterns and then explained each of them, for those we have learned several times." Responding to Jane's complaints during the interview, Shelly replied, "Jane said so because she has higher English proficiency. But I have to take care of the majority of students in class. So I cannot change my instruction."

Practice is essential when teaching sentence patterns. According to Shelly's statement, giving students chances to practice is indispensable in writing instruction. From her point of view, extensive reading and practices are inseparable when delivering writing instruction. As Shelly expressed, "some teachers taught writing simply by asking students to memorize sentence patterns or synonym, which could indeed improve students' reading skills, but only a bit on writing." Shelly elaborated on the difference between learning reading and learning writing in the following excerpt:

From my point of view, writing an article is no different from driving a car or swimming. You can not learn those skills simply by reading books or memorizing the techniques. Of course, you have to gain the relative knowledge at first. After that, what you have to do is constant practice to improve your skills. (Interview 052211)

As the above statement indicated, for Shelly, writing was a skill that should be learned through constant practice, while reading ability could be developed through the memorization of vocabulary words and sentence patterns, that is, reading is absorbing knowledge, while writing is practicing skills.

In order to carry out her teaching beliefs, Shelly would give students assignments. In her first year of teaching, she assigned students to utilize the sentence patterns they had learned in class to write a composition. In the first couple of weeks, the condition went well. However, as the first monthly exam was coming, fewer and fewer students finished the assignments because it was time-consuming. After the monthly exam, few students did the assignments. To solve this problem, Shelly modified the assignment by asking students to use each sentence pattern taught in class to make three sentences. Shelly would comment on and correct them. She said this adjustment could make students focus on the sentence pattern usage without spending too much time organizing the whole paragraph. From students' viewpoint, they thought this compromise between teachers and students made their assignments much easier. Edward, one of students in class C, told the researcher his opinion toward this change. In the past, he had to spend a lot of time looking up new words in the dictionary so as to finish the parts that had nothing to do with the sentence pattern practice. After the adjustment, he thought this assignment could make him practice sentence patterns more efficiently. Another student from class C, Katrina, with lower English proficiency, said that this modification could motivate her to finish the assignment, for writing the whole article seemed much more difficult for her. It is obvious that the Shelly's adjustment could carry out her pedagogical beliefs and meet students' demands as well.

In conclusion, Shelly believed that providing chances for students to practice was crucial in writing instruction. When facing students' noncooperation, she would ponder the reasons behind it and adjusted her assignment to meet students' needs. It is clear that the modified instruction was still consistent with Shelly's pedagogical beliefs.

Instruction should be adjusted according to different students . From Shelly's point of

view, every individual should be given appropriate instruction. This belief could be traced back to her college life, when she took tutoring as a part-time job. Shelly narrated the difference between being a tutor and a teacher. "Tutors need to adjust their instruction according to different individuals, while teachers could only adjust their instruction according to different class." The above statement clearly indicated the different ways of teaching between teachers and tutors. When Shelly was a tutor, she would let her student take a test designed by herself in the first class in order to understand student's current English proficiency. Next class, she would give the student suitable materials. For example, Shelly recalled when she was a sophomore, she taught a twelfth-grade student with only seventh-grade English proficiency. Therefore, she used English magazines and junior high school textbooks as materials. It indicated that the materials adopted by Shelly were based on students' current English proficiency instead of their age.

After being a teacher, the situation has changed. Due to the fixed teaching schedule, Shelly had to teach the same content to the whole class. However, when transferred to another school, Shelly had to modify her ways of instruction in accordance with students' English proficiency and learning climate in class. In the first school she taught, the instruction she gave to students was simply finishing the exercises on the textbook. When Shelly was transferred to another high school three years later, her instruction included not only the textbook but also some group activities. Then, when she came to the current school, she used some model articles as well as the textbook as the materials to cater students' needs. The following paragraph will show how she adopted different instruction in different schools.

Shelly tried to employ group activities to teach writing in the first school but failed, since it was a private school where students had lower English proficiency and passive learning attitude. Besides, the climate was joyful but sometimes noisy. In her

first class, Shelly tried to use some group activities carrying out her instruction. However, the situation was beyond her thoughts. Few students paid attention to her instruction. They were just chatting and doing their personal things. In order to control the situation, she turned to be a dominator and abandoned the use of group activities. In order to meet students' English proficiency, Shelly put her emphasis of instruction on the textbook without any supplementary materials. However, the situation changed when she was transferred to another reputable school. It is a girls' high school, students there had higher English proficiency level but the atmosphere in class was inactive. Therefore, the content of the textbook was not the only focus on her instruction anymore, for students would do the preview and review on their own. Instead, Shelly designed several activities for every student to participate. The result was positive, and both students and she enjoyed doing the activities. To meet students' English proficiency, Shelly would prepare some articles extracted from TIME magazines or Readers' Digest as the supplementary materials. In the current school, students' English proficiency was average. For this reason, Shelly would concentrate her instruction on the textbook while provided certain articles from Studio Classroom or Ivy League magazines as supplement materials to enhance her students' English competence. It could be concluded that Shelly gave students the most suitable instruction based on their English proficiency and class climate.

After discussing Shelly's pedagogical beliefs and practices on writing instruction, it can be concluded that Shelly adopted a product-oriented approach, since her instruction focused on linguistic knowledge, such as sentence patterns. Also, we could find that Shelly's instruction was adjustable based on students' English proficiency, their passive learning attitudes, and time limitation.

<u>Jocey</u>

In this section, Jocey's pedagogical beliefs on writing instruction and the way she taught in the classroom will be discussed.

<u>Course Preparation</u>

Jocey used writing handouts she designed as the major materials taught in class. Therefore, she had in mind what she had to teach and did not spend much time on lesson planning. The textbook was served as exercise for students. As she said, *"When I made the handout, I have already known what I am going to teach. Besides, the teaching content has been taught many times in the past; therefore, I do not have to spend much time on the lesson plan"* (post-observation interview). To sum up, Jocey spent little time preparing lessons because of her teaching experiences and the ways she prepared the class.

Jocey's preparation of lessons included reviewing the writing section in the textbook to decide the direction of handout writing. Then she went through several English reference books to extract several sentence patterns that students need to learn in this lesson. For example, in Lesson Eleven, subject-verb agreement appeared in the textbook. To prepare the handout, Jocey went through three reference books. At the beginning of the handout, she introduced the fundamental grammatical concept taught in the junior high that the suffix of "s/es" should be connected with a verb if the subject is the third person singular. Then, she moved on to the advanced part—a sentence led by a longer subject, such as a gerund, an infinitive, or a noun clause. In this sentence, the verb should also be singular person. Take "*Playing video games wastes your time*" as an example. In the handout, Jocey noted that despite "video games" as a plural noun, the plural form of the verb should not be used, given the subject of this sentence is "playing video games."

As for the development of the instructional procedure, Jocey admitted that she did not spend much time on that due to her involvement in the handout making. But she insisted on the order of delivering the instruction. When writing the handout based on the textbook, Jocey always started out with the basic content, even the content had been taught in junior high, in order to make students connect what they had studied with what they were going to study. By doing so, it would be easier for students to follow her instruction.

In sum, Jocey did spend a great amount of time preparing materials of writing class in the past. However, the time for class preparation has decreased as she becomes more and more experienced.

Writing Instruction in Class

During the interview, Jocey claimed that she had a fixed writing instruction procedure for every lesson. In her handouts, she taught the basic sentence patterns at first, and then the advanced ones. Finally, Jocey led the whole class to do Chinese-English translation exercise in the textbook. She also acknowledged that there was an inconsistency between her beliefs and practices on writing instruction. Ideally, Jocey thought that the process of writing should include several activities, such as brainstorming, outlining, drafting, and revising. However, she had difficulty carrying out her ideal teaching methods because of the time pressure. The goal of her instruction, according to Jocey, is to make students know how to use sentence patterns she taught in class and get high test scores. For Jocey, writing instruction equaled sentence-pattern teaching.

Beliefs and Practices on Writing Instruction

Data analysis showed that Jocey's statements could be categorized into five

teaching beliefs and practices on writing instruction: (a) learning English is like learning Chinese, (b) sentence patterns should be taught in a group, (c) sentence patterns must be taught from simple to complex, (d) organization of an article is the core for writing instruction, and (e) different types of errors should be corrected differently.

Learning English is like Learning Chinese: Learning to write should start from memorization. Just like what Shelly believed that Learning L2 was like learning L1, Jocey also had similar teaching beliefs. The difference lied in the way to carry out the beliefs. Jocey believed that learning to write should start from memorization. She mentioned language learners must acquire enough language input before the output emerged. In other words, language learners could not write smoothly without sufficient reading or memorization. She emphasized the significance of memorization before asking students to write on their own:

> From my point of view, learning to write in L2 should be like that in L1. When we learn Chinese in the elementary school, teachers always forced us to memorize the texts on the textbook so as to write the appropriate sentences, even a composition. Now that we have to memorize the text to write a decent article in our mother tongue, not to mention another foreign language. (Interview 032711)

We could learn from the above excerpt that Jocey considered the process of learning to write in L2 was the same as that in L1, and thus she put an emphasis on the memorization of texts—the way she had learned to write in Chinese in elementary school.

Even though Jocey emphasized the importance of memorization, she was unable to carry out her ideal method since students were not assiduous enough to meet her expectations. Therefore, instead of making students memorize, Jocey asked them to read the model articles written by several great high school students during the class. Aside from interpretation of the whole article into Chinese, Jocey also analyzed the essay's organization, such as the effectiveness of introduction, logical sequence of ideas, and conclusion. She also reminded students of some test-taking strategies, such as the number of the words required in the test, appropriate length of the article, and time management. "Most importantly," Jocey said, "I want to encourage students that though model articles are not impeccable, they still got high scores." According to Jocey, since she could not force students to memorize the texts, she had no choice but adopt the article analysis. The following excerpt is an example of how Jocey taught students with a model article from the college entrance exam in the 96 school year:

J: OK, everybody. Here is a model article written in the college entrance exam in

   the 96 academic year— A World without Electricity. First of all, let' brainstorm

   [for the topic]. When you read the title, what would you think of?

John: Darkness.

J: Good. What else?

 Mary: Sleeping.

J: That's great. Anything special?

 Peter: Candles.

J: Great. Actually, there are a lot. You can brainstorm on your own. Remember

   what I have said before? When you read the topic, don't rush to write

   immediately. Instead, write the relevant words and plan what you want to write

   in the first paragraph, in the second paragraph. Don't think that it'll take you a

lot of time. But in fact it only takes you one to two minutes. After making the

plan, you could write smoothly and therefore do not have to write and conceive

the next sentence at the same time, which takes a lot of time and often causes

incoherence between sentences.

J: Next, look at the first sentence [in the model paragraph]: *The word without*

electricity is exciting. Remember what I have said before? There is an obvious

difference between English and Chinese. In English, the first sentence should

point out the main idea. Be careful about that. Do not write the article with a

lot of rubbish at first and then include the main idea at the end of the

paragraph.

((Ss are nodding))

J: Then, there are some supporting sentences, explaining why the city without

electricity is exciting.

((Jocey is explaining each sentence.))

J: The last sentence is the concluding sentence. Actually, the conclusion sentence

is similar to the topic sentence. The function of it is to remind readers of the

main idea in this article. Remember the last thing I am going to tell you. I know

that some cram school [teachers] taught you the number of words should

surpass 170 words, the more the better. But you can see the number in the

lower right corner. That's the number of words in each article. Only one of

them has more than 130 words. So is the word number is not the key point. The

most crucial thing is whether the sentences are coherent or whether the article

is logical. Finally, please do me a favor, write an article—A World without

Water. Imitate the way the author of this model writing. Everybody must write

this article and hand it to the class leader….

From the above excerpt, we could tell how Jocey led students to understand the way of writing an article. First of all, she led the whole class to brainstorm. Then, she told students how to make an outline before they wrote an article. Next, she explained the organization of a paragraph. Finally, she debunked the myth of the number of words in an article and told students what they should focus. At the end of the class, Jocey asked students to imitate the way the article was written. The above teacher-student interaction indicated that Jocey modified her instruction from memorization of texts into article modeling because of students' noncooperative attitudes.

From students' viewpoints, they thought this adjustment was a more efficient way of learning writing. Howard, a students in class A, said memorization of texts was a great way to improve writing abilities in junior high school, for the texts were much shorter. But in high school, the texts were much longer, which took too much time for him to memorize. Another student, Peggy, at the same class, also agreed that memorization of texts was time-consuming. "Since we had difficulties understanding the organization of grammar and sentence patterns in junior high school, we had no choice but to learn them by memorizing texts" In high school, after acquiring basic sentence patterns and grammar in junior high, it was much easier for her to understand teachers' instruction. Therefore, memorization would not be necessary. Compared to memorization of texts, both students shared the same opinion that analyzing articles could let them learn more English usage in the same amount of time.

Sentence patterns should be taught in a group. In addition to the teaching beliefs and practices mentioned above, Jocey also claimed that sentence patterns should be taught in a group. She thought that limited number of the grammar patterns in each lesson made students have to learn the same concept from several lessons. For example,

relative pronouns as subject, relative pronouns as object, and appositives belong to relative pronouns, but students had to learn those grammar points from three separate lessons. If one grammar concept and the related sentence patterns could be taught at the same time, it would be much easier for students to understand the whole concept.

Moreover, teaching related sentence patterns at the same time also has an advantage. Jocey said, "if we have to teach the "new "(first appeared in the textbook) grammar patterns which I have already taught in the past, I could just mention some of the basic rules of the grammar patterns as a reminder and then ask students to write the exercises in the textbooks." For example, near the end of the class observation of teaching Lesson 12, Jocey quickly went through the sentence patterns—"*Wherever/Whoever S + V, S + V.*" She told the researcher the reason why she taught this sentence patterns with only several minutes:

> When I taught relative pronouns or relative adverbs, like *who, where, what,* I also taught *whoever*, *wherever*, and *whatever* since they belongs to the same grammar point. Therefore, when these words (*whoever, wherever,* and *whatever*) appear in the textbook next time, all I have to do is to mention the basic concept to remind students of what they have learned. (Interview 052111)

Jocey's students also thought that her ways of instruction was beneficial to their learning. Jennifer, a student from class B, acknowledged that it was much more efficient to learn sentence patterns in a group. "That was how cram school teachers taught," she replied. From her point of view, the reason why students went to cram school was that teachers there know how to put things in order. Related sentence patterns or vocabulary words were put together, which would become more efficient

for students to learn. It was clear that "time-saving" or "learning efficiency" was the reason why the instruction could be successful.

In conclusion, the teacher believed the way she taught could not only let students efficiently learn several related sentence patterns but also save some time for her when she taught the same sentence patterns next time. Students concur that this kind of instruction could save their time and make their learning more efficient.

Sentence patterns must be taught from simple to complex. After we realized Jocey's practices of learning several related sentences at one time, she also believed that sentence patterns must be taught from simple to complex within a group. Jocey admitted that although many teachers understood the idea, few of them could follow it. There were three major reasons. First, some teachers considered it a waste of time to repeat the basic content in class. Second, some students would be impatient because they thought they had already learned that. Third, teachers thought students should have been familiar with the fundamental sentence patterns in their junior high or even earlier. Yet the truth was that over half of the students in Jocey's class could not follow her when she taught the advanced sentence patterns directly without reviewing the basic ones. Therefore, Jocey believed that reminding students of what they had learned before was much easier for them to learn new information. For example, in Lesson Eleven, Jocey taught the sentence pattern of subject-verb agreement. The way she realized her beliefs would be shown in the following excerpt.

J: Before the class, let's review the basic concept. The third-person singular should be added with…

Ss: S~

J: Alright, let's take a look at the sentences on the handout. *The sun rises in the east*

and sets in the west. The *S* is added with *rise* and *set*. Underline! Next, take a look at the handouts, when the subject is V-ing, to-V, or a noun clause, it should be viewed as, well, a singular form. Help me fill out the space. Therefore, the verb should also be in a singular form. The following sentence is *Playing video games wastes your time.* This kind of sentence deserves more attention because lots of students in Taiwan make such mistakes. Help me underline *games*. Many people consider the verb plural form when they see the plural noun *games* because they do not read the whole sentence. Please underline *Playing video games* and read the whole sentence again, Playing video games wastes your time. Therefore, it is playing video games that takes time rather than the game itself. That's why *Playing video games* should be the subject in this sentence. Since the subject represents an event, the verb should be singular form. Got it? The next section is more difficult. It includes the prepositional phrase, inserted phrase, and subject-verb agreement. You can see some phrases in you handout: *together with, along with, rather than, accompanied by, including, no less than, as well as, except, besides.* If these phrases are inserted between two [different] nouns, the form of the verb in this sentence should be consistent with-- help me fill in the blank [of the handout] — A. Look at the following sentence: *The bat together with the balls was stolen.* Although *balls* is a plural noun, it becomes a modifier when led by *together with.* I have underlined it in your handout, see? So, the subject in this sentence is *the bat* and the verb should be used as singular form— *was*. OK?

In the above excerpt, first Jocey mentioned the basic sentence patterns taught in junior high school—if the subject is the third person singular, "s/es" should be served as the suffix of the verb. Making sure students understand the basic sentence patterns, Jocey then went through more complicated ones by replacing the general subject with

different forms, such as a gerund or an infinitive. In this phase, the subject was not confusing since there was only one subject in the sentence. However, in the final section, there were two "subjects" in one sentence, for one of them was the modifier led by the propositional phrase, making this sentence structure more difficult for students to learn. The above progressive instructional process clearly showed that Jocey believed that sentence patterns must be taught from the simple to the complex and she carried it out in reality.

As for students' opinions, two students with higher and lower English proficiency appreciated this kind of instruction. Jeremy, one of Jocey's students in class B, believed that teaching from simple to complex was suitable for him, for he had lower English proficiency. "Since I did not study well in junior high, if teachers taught the advanced sentence patterns directly, it was hard for me to follow. I knew that because that was how teachers taught in cram schools" On the other hand, Howard, a higher English proficiency student in class A, also had a positive view toward this type of instruction. Although the content in the textbook was not difficult for him, he thought that teaching from the basic patterns could make him thoroughly understand the organization of the advanced patterns and laid a solid foundation on his English learning.

Organization of an article is the core for writing instruction. Jocey emphasized the importance of organization of an article, which was very different from what she had learned from her cram school teacher in her senior high. As for the Jocey's primary expectations on her students, she hoped they were able to write an organized article. Her cram school teachers had always asked her to write more words, which was not different from what those cram school teachers did. The number of words was always put more emphasis than the logic or organization of an article. In Jocey's students'

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mind, the more words they write, the more scores they get. "I totally disagree with it," Jocey said. After being a teacher, Jocey realized the important role of organization in an article. When she corrected students' compositions, she found out that it was a torture for her if students wrote a composition full of "meaningful sentences" without any organization. Jocey said to the researcher:

When I say meaningful sentences, I mean sentences that are grammatical and understandable. In students' compositions, you can realize the meaning of each sentence. But without organization, it can't be called a composition; it should be named as a collection of sentences. Therefore, I have to reorganize those sentences on my own to figure out what my students try to express. In this situation, they surely won't get a high score on the composition. (Interview 032711)

In the above statement, Jocey clearly indicated the importance of the organization in an article. She also implied that the unorganized articles would be confusing and made bad impression on readers. Also, Jocey found out most students could not express their ideas around a central idea, which also influenced her viewpoint toward organization and made her think it the most pivotal element in an article. The followings are three paragraphs selected from three students' writings in Jocey's class in order to indicate how unorganized they were.

S1: Paragraph 1. Today is my birthday. My father took us to a restaurant. That day is (was) a dark day, and I felt cold at that time. Since I was afraid of cold, my father gave me a sweater as a birthday present. I love (loved) that sweater very much. It is my favorite present. When I went to the restaurant……

S2: Paragraph 2. There are many ways to protect the environment. If we want (to)

protect the environment, we should try our best to do it. We can carpool with other

people. Or we can take a bus or MRT rather than drive a car. It is very important to

protect the environment because there is only one ~~global~~ (globe) in the world…

S3: Paragraph 3. If a city without water, it is hard for people to live. Therefore, we

need to save water in our daily lives. Water has a lot of functions: The first one is…

All of the three paragraphs indicated three students' narration problems when writing articles. The first paragraph is about the experience in a restaurant, as the topic sentence went, "Today is my birthday. My father took us to a restaurant." If this was the case, the followings should be related to what happened in the restaurant. Nevertheless, the Student One wrote her feelings of coldness and the present her father bought for her. This does not meet readers' expectations. The second paragraph is the same case. When reading the first sentence, it was reasonable for readers to predict there were certain ways to protect the environment. However, it was confusing to read the following conditional sentences. The third one wandered off the point. This article should have discussed how the world without water would influence us. To readers' surprise, the supporting sentences described the importance of water and the functions of it. Obviously, this article did not clinch the central idea.

According to Jocey's observation, there were two main reasons that caused students' illogical thinking. The first one was that it took a long time for students to cultivate logical thinking. "The biggest challenge students have to face is not their ungrammatical sentences or word spelling, but their illogical thoughts." The reason lay in that students could quickly improve their English at the linguistic levels, such as

grammar and vocabulary, by drilling exercises. In contrast, it took a long time to cultivate logical thinking by extensive reading and thinking, which was not appreciated by students.

Besides, Jocey blamed this phenomenon for the media nowadays. In her childhood, the TV program she had watched mainly aired by wireless TV stations. The comments the reporters made were as organized as written language. However, as cable TV boomed, the number of reporters skyrocketed. The problem was that the wording the reporters used was not appropriate because they wanted to raise the audience rating. Most importantly, the wording was unorganized and colloquial, like the way people talked in their daily lives. Bombarded with the news day by day, most teenagers would be greatly affected. They wrote like the way they talked, without using appropriate transitional words or central ideas to organize their thoughts. "Therefore," Jocey said, "I often told students instead of writing more words or using some sophisticated but inappropriate words, you should focus on the organization of your composition." In conclusion, even she was told to write with more words when she was in school, Jocey realized what really important in an article was organization after being a teacher herself.

Different types of errors should be corrected differently. Influenced by her college education, Jocey believed, "different types of errors should be corrected differently." She said most teachers corrected students' local errors (i.e., an error does not cause problems of comprehension) simply by providing the correct answers or reformulating students' sentence patterns with the corrected sentences. "That's not enough," she told the researcher. In college, Jocey's professor once told her, "correcting students' errors only let students understand the right answer, but it could not make students write one on their own." Jocey further elaborated this idea to the researcher

Unless there are some careless mistakes [local errors], such as third singular

"S" or the past tense "ed," which could be corrected by students themselves.

Otherwise, some polished sentences [reformulation] you wrote for them

[students], they could understand the sentences you wrote at that time. But

next time, when they have to write on their own, they would use the same

way to write again. (Interview 052111)

Realizing reformulation did not equal to instruction, Jocey adopted another way

to correct students' compositions, which was different from what most English

teachers did. She showed the researcher how to correct students' errors by using one of

the sentences in a student's composition as an example: *My father is a businessman,*

and he seldom goes home for dinner:

J: The two sentences can be combined with a relative pronoun or even simplified by

participial construction. But because of students' English proficiency, [it's too hard

for them to understand]. I would correct it with the relative pronoun.

((Jocey corrected student's error with: *My father is a businessman who seldom goes*

home for dinner. The two sentences can be combined with relative pronoun.))

J: But that's not enough. You have to make students practice the sentence patterns

before they really know how to use them on their own. So, I would give students

some key words to practice. In this case, I would give them three exercises. The first

one is *My sister, teacher, go to work by bus.* The second one is *John, student, play*

video games. The third one is *My brother, basketball player, enjoy playing basketball*

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very much. And then students would write three sentences and asked me for correction. But not everyone. Since I have told everyone how to do the exercises in the class, they should know how to write the sentences. Take the first one for example. *My sister, teacher, go to work by bus.* Written with a relative pronoun, it should be like this —*My sister is a teacher who goes to work by bus*.

This excerpt showed that unlike most teachers who simply provided direct correction or reformulation, Jocey believed and demonstrated different ways of correction. She also offered opportunities for students to practice the target sentence patterns. The above example clearly indicated that Jocey would adjust her way of instruction in accordance with students' different errors.

In sum, Jocey adopted a product-oriented approach when she taught, since she put emphasis on linguistic knowledge, such as sentence patterns and grammar rules in her instruction. Nonetheless, she also admitted that the process of writing instruction should include several activities. Because of time limitation, she could only teach sentence patterns instead, which clearly indicated the inconsistency between Jocey's pedagogical beliefs and practices on writing instruction.

Summary

After reviewing both participant's pedagogical beliefs and practices on writing instruction, we found that teachers' beliefs could influence their instruction, such that Shelly's beliefs about the learning sequence of English writing made her adopt extensive reading activities. Also, both teachers' classroom practices were substantially influenced by several contextual factors, such as time limitation, which forced them to abandon the process approach and adopted the product approach instead, and students' negative learning attitudes not only made Shelly change article writing into sentence

writing, but made Jocey change memorization of text into article modeling. The above findings confirm Borgs' model (2003) that classroom practice could be influenced by both contextual factors and classroom practice.

Contextual Factors Influencing Teacher's Beliefs and Writing Instruction

Contextual factors influencing their teaching beliefs and instruction are presented in the following paragraphs.

Shelly

After the discussion of Shelly' pedagogical beliefs and practices, the researcher categorized several contextual factors that could influence Shelly's instruction in class. Those contextual factors will be discussed as follows.

Time pressure. Shelly explained that time pressure was the main reason why she could not carry out her ideal methods of teaching. Ideally, the process of writing instruction included extensive reading, brainstorming, drafting, revising, and practice. However, due to the intensive course schedule at each school, Shelly had to compress the process instruction into extensive reading, sentence pattern teaching, and practice. She explained how she modified the process as follows:

Writing instruction should be a step-by-step process, which is different from that of vocabulary teaching. You cannot skip certain steps and get to the final goal directly. However, because I do not have enough time to do the whole process, I have to give up brainstorming, drafting and revising. Instead, I taught sentence patterns to enhance their writing ability. (Interview 052211)

According to Shelly's point of view, limited time distributed to English classes was the major reason she could not realize her teaching beliefs. Therefore, she had to make good use of her time on writing instruction. As Shelly expressed, teaching writing was different from teaching vocabulary. Vocabulary could be taught by directly translating it into Chinese. But writing instruction would involve more phases. Each phase should be connected to each other. However, time pressure made her abandon her ideal way of teaching writing. She had to adopt extensive reading to make students accumulate input, teach sentence patterns which could be used in writing articles, and distribute assignments to let students practice what they had learned in class. Those modifications indicated that time pressure would make Shelly adjust her writing instruction.

Students' characteristics. Shelly deeply believed that students' characteristics also influenced her writing instruction, that is, how students responded in class would directly influence the way she taught. These factors included (a) class climate, (b) students' English proficiency, (c) students' reaction, (d) students' facial expressions and (e) students' body language:

Class climate. Class climate refers to classroom atmosphere and is characterized by interactions within teachers and learners (Gazelle, 2006). The following paragraphs introduced two types of class climates that had impacts on Shelly's writing instruction: students' behavior and incidents.

Students' behavior. During the interview, Shelly claimed that students' behavior could be influenced by their gender, and therefore, directly influenced her writing instruction. Staying in different schools, Shelly realized how students' behavior would influence

teachers' instruction. For example, in the first school, the class she taught was a boys' class and thus the class atmosphere, though joyful, brought her teaching problems. When Shelly initiated a topic or a question, what students responded usually wandered off the point. Worst of all, this situation could not be controlled with ease. Shelly had to spend a large amount of time getting students back to the textbook. Realizing this situation, Shelly turned herself into a dominator in the next semester and changed the way she taught by minimizing interactions with students to make sure that she could catch up with the schedule.

Similarly, Shelly's writing instruction was also influenced in the second school, which was a girls' school. Students there were shy and obedient. If she taught the same way she did in the last school, the class climate would become boring and spiritless. As she explained, "Sometimes I feel unenthusiastic to teach in class, because the content in the textbook has been taught several times." To improve this situation, Shelly designed several group activities and served as a facilitator or mediator to help students complete them, "which injected energy into the class." The group activities, modification in Shelly's writing instruction, not only improved class climate but also increased the interaction between teachers and students.

In the current school, her class was mixed with boys and girls. Therefore, students' sex and behavior would not strongly influence her instruction. However, Shelly mentioned that one of her class was a unique example. In their first year of senior high, the whole class had a fight with their English teacher, which in turn caused their hostile reaction toward teachers. Besides, their English proficiency was also below the average level of high school students. When Shelly took over the class, the first thing she did was not pleasing students or desperately enhancing students' English proficiency. Instead, she did her best to build good rapport between students and her, making students be willing to listen to her. After the rapport was build, Shelly put her

focus of instruction on the basic sentence patterns on the textbook, hoping that students could catch up with the average students before the end of the semester.

In summary, students' gender had an impact on their behavior which definitely influenced Shelly's writing instruction.

Incidents. Aside from students' behavior, some unexpected incidents also influenced class climate and thereby affected Shelly's instruction. For example, as Shelly recalled, one day when she taught in her first school, students lost a crucial sports competition. The whole class seemed depressed, which was far from the way they usually behaved. To cheer them up, Shelly unexpectedly held a group game to help students review the vocabulary words they learned in the previous class. During the interview, Shelly expressed that she usually did not do the review, for the time limitation. However, due to the negative class climate, she broke her rules to hold the activity. Shelly was satisfied with the results because the game not only soothed students' depressed emotions, but also reached the goal on reviewing the content taught in class. Another example also indicated that positive climate would influence Shelly's instruction. On the day of the researcher's arrival, the whole class got pretty excited. Taking advantage of students' good mood, Shelly taught lots of supplementary information, inclusive of synonym, related sentence patterns and vocabulary words. Shelly explained she usually prepared more supplementary information than she could teach in class, and then selectively taught some of it based on students' responses. On that day, students were in a good mood, which created an efficient learning climate. Therefore, she taught all she had prepared, and the result was satisfying. In conclusion, class climate does not change constantly. However, teachers have to adjust their instruction when some incidents directly influence class climate.

Students' English proficiency. Shelly acknowledged the students' English proficiency could also be a reason why she modified her ways of instruction. Although she believed that students could improve their writing through extensive reading, modeling, planning, revising and practice, she had to cancel or increase certain activities to cater students' English proficiency. For example, Shelly cancelled all of the activities in the first school because of students' lower English proficiency. But she included extensive readings that were slightly beyond high school standards to meet students' proficiency in the second school, where students had higher English proficiency. Shelly also gave appropriate instruction based on students' English proficiency in the current school. Students were given materials extracted from English magazines for high school students, for students' English proficiency was average compared to other high school students in Taiwan. Given their medium English proficiency, related activities were canceled. Shelly explained the reasons as follows:

The reason why I canceled the activities is that students' English proficiency is not good enough to realize the function of doing those activities. If you have to do the modeling, planning and revising, the prerequisite is that students have already been familiar with the fundamental sentence patterns. (Interview 052211)

According to the above statement, it was clear that students' English proficiency was the key for Shelly to carry out activities related to writing instruction. From Shelly's point of view, students must be equipped with basic sentence patterns before they were capable of doing those activities. It indicated that students' English proficiency was a crucial factor mediating teachers' ways of instruction.

Students' reaction to teachers' instruction . Shelly emphasized students' reaction in her instruction. She hoped that students would follow teachers' instruction while at the same time gave appropriate response. From her point of view, there were two types of reaction that would make her adjust her instruction in class: facial expressions and body language.

Students' facial expression on teachers' instruction . Shelly described the instruction is an "interflow process" between a teacher and students. Hence, how students reacted to the teacher and vice versa would influence this process. Although there was not much verbal interaction between Shelly and her students in class, Shelly claimed that students' facial expression would have an impact on how she taught in class.

> In class, I always keep eye contact with students. After I read and explain the texts of the textbook, I always check students' faces. If they nod or show satisfying expressions, I would continue my instruction. On the other hand, if I see someone, especially a good student, shaking heads or showing confused expressions, I would explain the concept again or in another way. (Interview 052211)

If students comprehended her instruction, Shelly would continue; if not, she would adjust her instruction by repetition or paraphrase. The reason she paid particular attention to those with high English proficiency was that, if a concept was too difficult for them to understand, it might also cause trouble to other students.

According to the student's viewpoint, the class' reaction would surely influence Shelly's instruction. For example, Iris from class D expressed that "When our teacher finished a sentence or a paragraph, she usually stopped for a second and asked if we

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had any question about that." However, according to Iris, since there were no students in class wanted to seem stupid, when the teacher posed questions, those who did not catch up with Shelly's instruction would not verbally express their confusion in public. Instead, students in class D would nod or slightly shake their heads. "And I am the one who showed a naughty expression to let her (Shelly) know that I have a problem for what she just said," Iris said. Sometimes when Shelly had to teach in a rush to catch up with her schedule, she did not have time to confirm students' understanding. But she still paid attention to the whole class to see if there was any facial expression shown among them. And if anyone showed a confusing expression, Shelly would stop, checked his/her confusion and explained what she just taught once again. According to the student's viewpoint, the class' reaction could surely influence Shelly's instruction.

Various facial expressions, as Shelly mentioned, made her reflect on her own instruction and then adjust it to meet students' needs. For example, in Lesson 11, Shelly explained a grammar point—subject-verb agreement. During the class, Shelly found students had difficulty understanding it. Therefore, she explained the grammar point in another way in the following excerpt:

S: Alright, next. [When] the subject is Ving, to V, or noun clause, it should be viewed as a singular noun, [and] the verb should be in the singular form, understand?

((Ss have no response))

S: OK.Let me explain [it]. We've talked about it before, a gerund is a kind of nouns, [and] an infinitive could also serve as a noun, so does a noun clause. The only thing is that a noun clause is a bit longer. My point is [that] these three kinds of nouns are not like the general nouns such as *boy* or *girl*, in which singular forms are different from the plural forms. These three kinds of nouns represent one event or one action, got it? So, the form of the verb should be singular.

((Some of the Ss are nodding))

S: OK. It will be clearer [for you] if [we] read the following sentences. Number One: *Teaching English is an interesting job.* Number Two: *To see is to believe.* Number Three: *That the earth is round has been proved true.* Could you please underline *teaching English*, *to see*, and *that the earth is round* and then noted "Subject" on them? Take a look at the underlined parts. Do all of them [respectively] represent one thing? Since it represents ONE thing, then we should use singular form. Got it?

According to the above excerpt, we could tell that Shelly's instruction had been influenced by students' non-verbal feedback. In the beginning of the instruction, Shelly explained different forms of subjects when dealing with subject-verb agreement. However, she seemed to discover that students had difficulty following her due to their silent reaction toward her initiation of questions. Therefore, she paraphrased this idea by using what students had learned before. Shelly made them connect their known knowledge with their unknown knowledge to promote their understanding. After assuring some students' comprehension, she made the concept clearer by showing the sentences on the textbook. During the post-observation, Shelly explained that she had been aware of students' confusion at that time, so she had taken some necessary steps to solve the problem.

Students' body language on teachers' instruction. In addition to facial expression, body language also plays an important role in the teaching process. When speaking of her interaction with students, Shelly also mentioned that she would adjust her instruction when students adopted certain postures or gestures:

Being a teacher for many years, I could "read" students' mind when they

adopted certain postures or gestures. When using elbows to hold their heads,

playing with their hairs or pens, scrubbing their foreheads or necks, students

might have been annoyed by certain things. When students used their hands

to cover their mouths, it indicates that they might have had something to say;

however, certain reasons, such as peer pressure, may forbid them to

expression their opinions. (Interview 052211)

As Shelly mentioned above, certain body language the students showed

indicated that they might have difficulty understanding teachers' lectures. If that

happened, Shelly would initiate questions to confirm if students realized what she just

taught. But she also explained that body language could only reflect one's emotion,

and the reason behind it could not be understood. For example, when a student

scrubbed his/her head, there was a possibility that he/she had difficulty understanding

teacher's instruction or simply worried about the exam he/she had just taken. Therefore,

Shelly would make a confirmation only when a number of students showed the

confusing gestures at the same moment. From the above statement, we could tell that

students' body language had an impact on Shelly's instruction.

From Shelly's statement, she was a teacher who wanted to build a friendly

relationship between students and her. Therefore, the factors influencing her instruction

would mainly be students' characteristics, such as their behavior, English proficiency,

and students' reaction.

Jocey

Like Shelly's case, several contextual factors also influenced Jocey's instruction

and they will be discussed as follows.

Different teaching philosophy between teachers and textbook editors. Jocey's

statements clearly revealed that her teaching philosophy was different from textbook

editors. During the interview, Jocey expressed how grammar instruction presented in

the textbook was the major reason why she made her own handout. She practiced

form-focused instruction, which focused on the formal aspects of language, such as

grammatical features, but the textbook adopted topic-based instruction, in which

content was centered on certain topics or themes and other aspects of the course (skills,

grammar, etc.) were all linked to the core topics. As Jocey said, "It would easily

confuse students that the related sentence patterns scattered in different lessons."

Therefore, she made handouts to solve this problem. Related sentence patterns would

be categorized as one group, which as believed as an efficient way for students to learn.

To sum up, the difference between Jocey's belief about the teaching of sentence

patterns and that of the textbook's could influence her ways of instruction.

Limited time (allocation of time) and the class sizes . Jocey explained that limited time

and the large class sizes were main reasons why she could not carry out her ideal

methods of teaching. Her ideal teaching approach was the process approach, including

brainstorming, planning, drafting and revising. However, because of the limited class

hours and the large class sizes, she didn't have enough time to do such activities.

Under this circumstance, Jocey had no choice but to adopt the product approach, which

would put more emphasis on the structure of the language.

Student-related issues. Jocey deeply believed students' issues were the most important

factors influencing teacher' instruction. "Because the process of instruction is the

interaction between teachers and students," Jocey claimed. Therefore, how students

reacted in class would directly influence Jocey's instruction.   Student-related issues

could be further classified as the followings:

Student's passive learning attitudes. Students' passive learning attitudes were, according to Jocey, the most annoying issue she had to deal with. She pointed out: "Their [students'] passive learning attitude is one of the leading factors that not only impede students' academic performances but also affect my instruction in class." As the researcher mentioned before, students' passive learning attitudes were the reason why Jocey modify her instruction, such as substituting article modeling for memorization of texts. In Jocey's opinion, if students were unwilling to learn or did not follow teachers' instruction, teachers must adapt their instruction to a certain point that could be accepted by students to reach a win-win situation.

Different learning backgrounds between teachers and students. In addition to student's passive learning attitudes, Jocey also mentioned how different learning backgrounds between teachers and students would gradually modify her writing instruction:

Over the past thirty years of teaching, I gradually believed that memorization may not be suitable for students nowadays since there are too many incentives in their lives, such as the Internet, smart phones, even Facebook. Those interesting gadgets do not exist in my youth hood. So, it is hard to require students to study as hard as I did in my junior high. (Interview 032711)

According to the above excerpt, Jocey admitted that her instruction should be adjusted in accordance with students' learning backgrounds. As Jocey mentioned, compared to the students in the past, students spent less time on studying and more

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time on leisure nowadays. That was the trend which could not be changed. Therefore, senior teachers should also change their instruction that were the most suitable for current students. In other words, teachers should notice students' different learning backgrounds and adjust their instruction.

Students' responses toward teachers' instruction. Another factor influencing Jocey's instruction was students' responses toward her instruction. "What I taught in class depended on students' reaction," Jocey said. She further elaborated on the idea to the researcher. In class, she always initiated several questions to students. If students well responded, she would supply more related information. If students had no responses, she would only teach the fundamental content without mentioning any supplementary information. For instance, when she taught Lesson Nine, Jocey introduced the researcher to her students before class. The whole class seemed excited about the newcomer. Therefore, the atmosphere during the course was joyful. The following excerpt showed how Jocey adjusted her instruction according to students' reaction.

J: OK, let's take a look at the word "say." When you write an article, you usually use "say" or "tell" to express your thoughts. Today we are going to learn other words that could substitute "say" or "tell." Anyone want to give it a shot? Will!

Will: speak??

J: Good, we've mentioned it before. We usually use this word [speak] on the phone or [use it with] a language. Anything else?)

Jill: reply?

J: Good. And there is another word which is similar to it is…….

Angela: answer.

J: Good, Angela. Besides these, what else?

((Jocey began to write on the blackboard, including *express, utter, and present*))

George: It seems that there is a bit difference among them.

J: Pretty good, [you are] attentive. What's the difference?

Ashley: Well, *express* means say something.

J: Good! *Express* is a transitive verb, [which means] say something. It is usually followed by abstract emotions, such as happiness or sadness, not with concrete object. Anything else?

((Students are silent))

J: OK, let's take a look at others [what we have learned before—reply]. *Reply* means respond, [which we've] mentioned before. And it is similar to *answer*. *Utter* means pronounce a certain voice. *Present* means bring up or hand in, belonging to the formal usage. OK?

As the above excerpt goes, it is not difficult to observe how Jocey interacted with her students. With joyful learning climate, students were more willing to respond, and some responses included further questions to the content taught in class. In order to answer students' questions, Jocey had to teach more supplementary content. As Jocey recalled:

Class's atmosphere was pretty good on that day. Usually, they [students] do not respond that much, they just take the notes and make me talk to myself. Therefore, I would not tell the difference among those words [in this case]. That's not because I forget, I just don't think of that [tell the difference among those words]. But since they brought up the question [the difference among those words], I would certainly tell them the answer. (Interview 032711)

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According to Jocey, teachers' instruction was easily influenced by students in class. "Teachers' instruction is easily modified by students' reaction, especially when they ask questions," Jocey said. She also told the researcher that the key to invited more student-initiated questions was the learning climate of the classroom. When the atmosphere was relaxing and pleasant, students would have more interaction with teachers, usually by popping up with more questions. In contrast, if the atmosphere was gloomy or unpleasant, there was less interaction between teachers and students.

In addition to the content taught in class, Jocey also presented another influence that the students' reaction had on her. If students brought up questions, teachers had to figure out a reasonable explanation, which would compel teachers to study hard in their instruction field. Jocey narrated her personal experience as an example:

When I was a rookie teacher, a student asked me the differences among *speak, talk,* and *tell*. Since I had never thought of this question before, I was stunned and had no idea what to say. I could feel students' sense of mistrust, which depressed me a lot. Since then, I used my free time to enrich my knowledge of high-school English, whether it appeared in the textbook or not. (Interview 032711)

In the above statement, Jocey told the researcher the reason she increased her knowledge in English, for she needed students' trust to teach effectively. She mentioned that students would not ask questions only related to the content covered by the textbook, such as the content taught in the cram school or the content in their personal materials. As she concluded, "I have to try my best to absorb the knowledge as much as possible." As such, Jocey read several magazines or reference books

compiled based on high school English curriculum. In conclusion, students' reaction in class not only influenced teachers' instruction but also motivated teachers to increase their knowledge.

Aside from students' initiation, Jocey also mentioned another type of influence from students: facial expressions and verbal expressions. Jocey would observe students' facial expressions in order to modify her ways of teaching. If students could not follow Jocey's instruction, they may frown at her or shake their heads. When Jocey noticed it, she would adjust her instruction to make sure that most of the students in her class understand the contents. "When they comprehend the content I taught, they would show a satisfied expression by nodding their heads or having a smile on their faces." For instance, when Jocey taught Lesson Ten, she mentioned subjunctive mood. At first, students could not understand Jocey's instruction and thought it was too difficult to learn. Therefore, she changed her way of teaching as shown in the following excerpt.

J: OK, let's review subjunctive mood. We know that if the conditional adverbial clause is past tense, the main clause should *should, would, could, might* plus verb, right?)

Ss : Hmm….

J: Well, what if the adverbial clause is past perfect tense? For example, *If I had met you yesterday*. How do you say the latter sentence in English? Joe!

Joe: *I would be saved by you.*

J: It is correct to use *save* as the verb. Anyone want to try again?

((Ss are silent))

((Some students were frowning while others revealed impatient and confused expressions, with a student slightly shaking his head.))

J: Haven't we learned if the conditional adverbial clause is past perfect tense,

the main clause should be used with *should, would, could, might,* and then

connected [them with] present perfect verb, right? So, the correct answer should be:

I would have been saved. Alright?

((Ss are silent.))

((Only a few students were nodding, while others did not change their expressions,

  i.e., confusion and impatience were still on their faces))

J: Any question?

((Some Ss are nodding))

J: Don't you understand? Which part?

Ray: It's hard to remember.

Anthony: That's right.

Larry: It's hard to memorize the sentence patterns in the textbook.

J: Ok, then I will explain it in a different way. Have you heard of parallel structure?

In short, that means the whole sentence is consistent in tense and grammatical

forms. As the sentence we've mentioned: *If I had met you yesterday, I would have*

been saved. You see, *had met* is past perfect tense, so that [*would have been*] should be

past perfect, too. *Would* is the past tense and *have been* belongs to the perfect tense, put

them together should be past perfect, right?

Ss: Oh….

In the above except, Jocey showed how she changed her way of instruction when

facing students' reaction. In the beginning of the instruction, Jocey taught in a way in

correspondence to her teaching beliefs: basic sentence patterns should be taught first.

After being sure about students' comprehension, Jocey moved on to complex sentence

patterns. When she elaborated on complex sentence patterns, she noticed students'

confused and impatient facial expressions. As Jocey expressed, "After I taught this

sentence pattern (complex subjunctive mood), I noticed some students revealed

confused facial expressions, such as frowning or pouting." After realizing students'

having difficulty learning, Jocey adopted another way of instruction. She replaced

traditional explanation in the textbook with the parallel structure, which were

embraced by her students. In conclusion, students' facial expressions did play a crucial

role in Jocey's instruction.

Besides, Jocey admitted that she incorporated the memorization technique into

article modeling partly because of different learning background, partly because of

students' impatient expressions on their faces, which caused a negative interaction

between students and her. Jocey stated when she adopted the memorization for the first

time in her class:

When I announced this assignment (memorization of the texts) in the first

class of my first year teaching, over half of my students against this

(assignment) by showing impatient expressions or even verbal objection. But

I ignored them. Of course, the result was terrible. Few of them completed

assignments. After that, I decided to change my way of teaching because of

their noncooperation and negative reaction from students. (Interview 032711)

The above excerpt implied that how students' reaction would reshape teachers'

instruction and that teachers had to appropriately make a compromise with students in

order to have the most effective instruction.

In conclusion, there were several factors that would modify Jocey's teaching

instruction. Different teaching philosophies between teachers and textbook writers

made her compile her own handouts. Limited time and the large class sizes made her

abandon the process approach. Students' reaction forced Jocey to increase her English

knowledge to cope with students' initiation of questions.

CHAPTER 5

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the cross-case analysis of both Shelly's and Jocey's teaching beliefs and practices on writing instruction based on three research questions that guided the current study. The writing instructional beliefs will be discussed in the first question. The inconsistency between both participants' beliefs and practices on writing instruction as well as the factors modifying writing instruction will be elaborated in the second and the third questions. Finally, the implications from the study will be discussed

Research Question One

What pedagogical beliefs about writing instruction did the two English teachers in one comprehensive senior high school in Taiwan hold?

Jocey's and Shelly's teaching beliefs on writing instruction are presented respectively in the previous chapter, which shows that there are some similarities and differences between two participants (Table 4). Both teachers believed that learning L2 is like learning L1 because of their learning backgrounds. Jocey benefited from memorization of Chinese texts when she was a student, which made her think the procedure of learning English should be like that of learning English. Likewise, Shelly gathered the thoughts that learning L2 could be like L1 when she took the TESOL courses in college. In addition, Jocey and Shelly believed in the process approach because both of them took TESOL courses in college, which brought tremendous influence on their formation of teaching beliefs.

Table 4

The similarities and differences on the teaching beliefs between Jocey and Shelly

	Jocey	Shelly
Common Writing Beliefs	Learning L2 is like learning L1.	
	The Process Approach	
Individual Writing Beliefs	Organization is the core of an article	Practice is essential
	Different types of errors should be corrected differently	Instruction should be adjusted according to different students

Although Shelly and Jocey had similar beliefs about writing instruction, they also held different beliefs about how to teach writing. For example, Jocey put much emphasis on the organization in writing a decent article, for she realized the difficulty of reading an unorganized article when correcting students' mistakes. Yet Shelly believed that practice, rather than organization of essays, was essential because she thought the memorization of sentence patterns was not enough for students to write articles. Also, Jocey learned that certain types of correction, such as sentence polishing, should not be corrected directly because of her learning experiences in the pre-service teacher courses. Yet tutoring experiences and teaching in different schools made Shelly believe that different students should be taught in a different way.

After the discussion, we could tell both teachers held the beliefs that teaching

should be a process approach, which are not different from previous studies (Borg, 2009; Chang, 2007; Hsieh, 2005). The result of the above studies indicated that English teachers teaching from junior high school to college would believe in process approach. However, what they manifested in class was contrary to teachers' statements during the interview. The following paragraphs would discuss the inconsistency and the factors behind it.

Research Question Two

Were these teachers' beliefs consistent with their practices?

Both teachers' teaching beliefs on writing instruction were partially consistent with their practices, which was not different from the previous studies (Chuang, 2010; Hsieh, 2005; Lai, 2004; Liao, 2003; Wu, 2002): Most of the teachers implemented the product approach while having the process approach in mind because of time pressure or students' English proficiency. Also, teachers had to adjust their instruction when facing different students and different teaching contexts. In this study, on the other hand, some consistencies were also found. The followings will discuss the consistencies and the inconsistencies between beliefs and practices on both participants.

The Consistencies between Beliefs and Practices

In this study, the consistencies between both participants' beliefs and practices on writing instruction were elaborated in Table 5. Shelly believed that practice is essential, and therefore sentence writing was served as an assignment. Also, Shelly thought instruction should be adjusted according to different students. Therefore, she adjusted her instruction while teaching in different schools. On the other hand, Jocey believed that the organization of an article is the core in teaching writing. Hence, she

kept emphasizing the importance of the organization in class, and dissuaded students from focusing on the number of words. In addition, Jocey conceived the idea that direct correction was not beneficial to students when she had received instruction in college, which made her provided drills for students to practice when she polished sentences in students' articles. In conclusion, both teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction were consistent in certain aspects. The inconsistencies will be discussed in the next section.

Table 5

The Consistency between Jocey and Shelly's Beliefs and Practices on Writing

Instruction

	Beliefs on Writing Instruction	Practices
Shelly	Practice is essential	Sentence writing assignments
	Instruction should be adjusted according to different students	Implementing group work →Adopting textbooks only → Textbooks + group activities→ Textbooks + articles
Jocey	Organization of an article is the core of teaching writing	Emphasizing the importance of the organization in class
	Different types of errors should be corrected differently	Providing students drills to practice

The Inconsistencies between Beliefs and Practices on Jocey and Shelly

In this study, the discrepancy between both participants' beliefs and practices on writing instruction was elaborated in Table 6. Jocey believed that learning L2 is like

learning L1, and thereforelearning writing should start from memorizing of English texts. However, because of students' passive learning attitudes, she had to modify her instruction by asking students to read and analyze model article. Similarly, Shelly thought that reading comes before writing and so she gave students articles as the teaching materials. Nonetheless, because of time limitation, she could not make students read in class. The only thing she could do is analyzing the articles, providing related information, and pinpointing certain grammar points and word usage. Time pressure also exerted great influence on both teachers' instruction, making teachers turn the time-consuming process writing into time-efficient product writing, in which sentence patterns took the central stage. In conclusion, both teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction were partially inconsistent, in which time pressure played a crucial role.

Table 6

The Inconsistency between Jocey and Shelly's Beliefs and Practices on Writing Instruction

	Beliefs on Writing Instruction	Practices
Shelly	Learning L2 is like learning L1	Conducting article analyses
	The Process approach	Teaching sentence patterns through bottom-up strategies
Jocey	Learning L2 is like learning L1 (memorization first)	Analyzing and translating articles
	The Process approach	Putting emphasis on the structure of language

If not, how were their beliefs or practice on writing instruction modified in the classroom? What contextual factors, especially students' characteristics, might impact such modification?

<u>The Modification of Beliefs on Writing Instruction</u>

In this study, the results suggested that teachers' pedagogical beliefs remained the same, while practices were modified on writing instruction. In the current study, though teachers modified their instruction in different contexts, they hardly changed their teaching beliefs, which was correspondent with the previous research that few teachers would change their teaching beliefs even when facing challenges (Borg, 1999; Chuang, 2010; Hsieh, 2005; Lee, 2004; Liao, 2003; Wu, 2002). However, the researcher was suspicious of the results, because the observation period in the previous research only lasted from fifteen hours to five months. Therefore, the researcher speculated that the result might be different if the time of observation could be longer. In addition to the length of the observation time, teachers' taking TESOL courses during their college might be another reason for no modification in their teaching beliefs. Both Jocey and Shelly admitted that they had a positive experience from the instruction they received in college, which would fortify their teaching beliefs. Even after years of teaching, the teaching beliefs still remained the same.

<u>The Modification of Practices on Writing Instruction and the Reasons behind it</u>

When it comes to the modification of teachers' writing instruction, several factors could influence Jocey and Shelly's writing instruction (Table 7). Those factors were further classified as school authority factor and students' characteristics. The

following section will discuss those factors and the way they influenced teachers'

writing instruction.

Table 7

Contextual Factors Influencing Shelly and Jocey's Writing Instruction

Contextual Factors		Jocey's Instruction (Original→modified)	Shelly's Instruction (Original→modified)
School Authority Factors	Time limitation and large class sizes	Group activities →Sentence patterns teaching	Extensive reading →Article analyses
			Teaching activities →Sentence patterns
	Incidents	Jocey's instruction could not be modified by incidents.	Sentence patterns only →Supplementary information
Students' Characteristics	Students' negative/passive learning attitudes	Memorization of the texts →Analyzing and translating articles/ article modeling	Asking students to write an article →Asking students to use sentence patterns making sentences
	Students' English proficiency	Jocey's instruction could not be modified by	Implementing group work →Adopting

	students' English proficiency.	textbooks only → Textbooks + group activities→ Textbooks + articles
Students' facial/verbal reaction	Using the tradition ways of teaching→ paraphrasing the idea	Teaching sentence patterns as usual →Using what students have learned to connect new information
	Teaching the basic content→ Give supplementary information about word usage	

School Authority Factors

    Several school authority factors have been discussed in the previous research, including insufficient class hours (Hsu, 2005; Kuo, 2004), incidents (Hsu, 2005), and class sizes (Chang, 2007; Wu, 2002; Lin, 2009). The following sections will discuss how these three authority factors influence teachers' writing instruction respectively.

Insufficient class hours/ time limitation. In accordance with the previous literature, this study also showed that both of the teachers agreed time pressure was a crucial contextual factor influencing their instruction. They viewed writing as a learning process, which needed several procedures to complete. However, because there was a

predetermined schedule that a certain amount of content should be taught in a fixed period of time: twelve lessons in eighteen weeks in this case. Teachers had to try their best to complete their tasks, and therefore turned the process approach into sentence pattern instruction. Besides, according to both of their comments, several incidents might interrupt their predetermined schedule. Thus, this study supports Wu's (2002) findings that the contextual factors lying behind the belief-practice incongruence is time pressure. Teachers had to abandon the process approach because they had to squeeze their instruction into the intense schedule.

Class sizes. Besides time pressure, a large class size also served as a major contextual factor, for both teachers admitted that class sizes were a problem to carry out the process writing approach. As Jocey mentioned, in the process writing, teachers should serve as facilitators to make all the procedures smoothly proceed. The most suitable number of a class, according to Jocey's opinion, was eight to twelve people, which could be divided into two to three groups for group activities. However, in the current school she taught, each class had more than thirty students, which was too large to handle. With such a large class size, both participants failed to adopt group activities.

Incidents. Aside from the influence of a large class size, incidents also cause a great impact on teachers' instruction. Shelly told the researcher that most of the incident derived from school activities, such as certain contests held annually or graduation trip. The winning or the losing of contests had a great impact on students' mood, whether it was positive or negative. During the period of observation, the appearance of the researcher brought delightful climate to the class, which indeed inspired students to learn more in order to show their best to the researcher. Taking the advantage of this situation, Shelly taught much more information than she usually did. However, things

changed if the incident had a negative impact. In Hsu's study (2005), students lost a close game in the annual sports event, which influenced the class climate for the rest of the day, making the teacher spend almost entire class to comfort students and only gave 10-minute instruction on writing exercises in textbooks. The incident seriously influenced the teacher's instruction and postponed her following teaching schedule.

In conclusion, in line with the previous literature, time limitation, a large class size and incidents would influence teachers' writing instruction, either from the product approach to the process approach or decreasing the content taught in class.

Students' Characteristics

Aside from school authority factors influencing their writing instruction, both teachers revealed that students also played a crucial role in influencing their instruction, especially students' attitudes toward learning, English proficiency, and their facial/verbal reaction. The following paragraphs discuss the two contextual factors respectively.

Students' attitudes. Students' attitudes toward learning exerted great influence on teachers' instruction in class. Jocey claimed that students' passive learning attitudes were the reason why she changed her instruction from memorization of texts to article modeling. Also, Shelly mentioned that students' attitudes had impacts on her teaching in class, turning the assignment from article writing to sentence practices.

Students' English proficiency . As the previous research suggested, students' English proficiency was the most crucial contextual factor influencing teachers' instruction (Chuang, 2010; Lee, 2004). In the current research, English proficiency also plays the significant role. As for Shelly's case, she was aware of the influence of students'

English proficiency on her instruction for the first time when she served as a tutor in college. Since tutoring belongs to one-on-one instruction, she had to develop suitable materials for every student based on their English proficiency. If students had higher English proficiency, Shelly would ask students to write a whole paragraph as exercise; with students of lower English proficiency level, she would teach them certain sentence patterns and provide several drills for students to practice. After being a teacher, though the teaching context was different from tutoring, Shelly still adjusted her instruction according to different class, but Jocey did not.

In this study, Shelly would change her ways of instruction while Jocey only slightly adjusted the information she supplied. For example, during the interview, Shelly expressed that she adopted different ways of instruction when teaching two classes with completely different levels of English proficiency last semester: the content Shelly taught in Class D—a class of lower levels of English proficiency— was much easier compared to the students in the same grade. For instance, other classes would do extensive reading after class, but Class D would skip this procedure. Besides, Shelly would omit certain complex sentence patterns in the textbook, such as inverting sentences, to make sure that students could follow her instruction.

As for Jocey, though teaching two classes with similar English proficiency levels during the observation, she claimed that she would still give the same instruction when facing classes with different English proficiency. During the interview, Jocey told the researcher that although realizing students' English proficiency was an important factor to consider when carrying out instruction, she couldn't help but teach what student "should learn" at their age instead of what they "could understand" with their current English proficiency. She certainly realized that even the class with the lowest proficiency had a few proficient learners and vice versa. If she taught simpler content, then those students' learning rights would be sacrificed, for they would not learn what

they should learn in class. Therefore, the only compromise she did was that Jocey would skip the supplementary information and put her emphasis on the textbook.

At first sight, the results of the current study confirmed the previous studies that English teachers gave more/less information or taught more/less difficult content when students' English proficiency was higher/lower. For example, Chuang's (2010) study discussing vocational high teachers had to adjust the content based on students' English proficiency. Lai's (2004) study suggested that junior high school teachers had to slightly lower the level of the content once in a while when they faced students with lower levels of English proficiency.

However, after a thorough analysis, the researcher found the reasons behind the extent to which English teachers modified their instruction deserves more discussion. In the above cases, Jocey and the English teachers in Chuang's (2010) and Lai's (2004) studies only slightly modified their instruction by increasing or decreasing certain supplementary information, while Shelly made a big change by cancelling the reading materials or the entire activity. The reason behind such a difference, as the researcher speculated, lies in teaching contexts and teachers' learning/teaching experiences. As for teaching contexts, Chuang's study discussed vocational high school, in which students' English proficiency was similar to each other and lower than general high school. Besides, strengthening English proficiency was not the major goal in vocational high school, which may cause teachers to teach easier materials and slightly modify the instruction if necessary. In Lai's study, students were junior high school students. Because students had learned English for six years before entering junior high, many of them gained enough English knowledge to cope with the content taught in class. Therefore, English teachers simply had to follow the teaching schedule and slightly changed the supplementary material in different classes. In the current study, the participants were senior high school students. Though they studied in the same

school, students' English proficiency could be various. Shelly had taught in several schools before transferred to the current school, so she realized how beneficial the appropriate materials were for students. In Jocey's cases, though she also realized the impact of students' various English proficiency on instruction, she rarely modified her instruction, for she learned the importance of learning rights in college, which emphasized that each students should be treated in the same way. The above learning/teaching experience explains the reason why teachers teaching in the same school had different extent of modification on their instruction.

In conclusion, students' English proficiency had influence on English teachers' instruction in different levels of schools. However, due to different teaching contexts and teaching/learning backgrounds, teachers would respond with different ways.

Students' facial/verbal reaction. This study also suggested that students' reaction played a crucial role in modifying teachers' writing instruction. The following paragraphs will discuss how, and why, the students' facial and verbal reaction would influence English teachers' instruction.

As for the instruction, both teachers claimed that the amount of information they provided would be different based on students' verbal reaction. In other words, the ways students responded to teachers' instruction would determine the amount of information teachers gave. The more students responded, the more information teachers would give. Jocey also emphasized that if students brought up some questions, teachers would be motivated to provide more information to students. Otherwise, teachers would only focus on their predetermined teaching procedures.

Besides verbal expressions, both teachers admitted that facial expressions and body gestures could serve as signals to make them realize when they should help students before they opened their mouths. Because of peer pressure, only a few

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students were willing to initiate verbal responses with teachers, such as asking questions. In class, as two participants mentioned, they would adjust the pace of instruction according to students' facial expressions or adjust the way of instruction via recognizing students' confused expressions. Therefore, it is clearly that students' reaction had influence on teachers' instruction. The more responses students gave, the more information students could get from teachers.

In conclusion, both teachers thought that students' reaction not only changed their ways of teaching, but also made them reflect on their teaching approaches from another perspective.

After discussing students' characteristics, we realized both teachers thought students' learning attitudes, English proficiency and reaction could influence their instruction. Shelly would adjust her assignments based on students' English proficiency while Jocey would take the providing of supplementary information into consideration. As for students' English proficiency, Jocey would only omit supplementary information while Shelly obviously changed her instruction. Finally, students' reaction let both teachers realize students' learning condition and adjust their instruction.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Both participating teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction are elaborated in the previous chapter. In the final chapter, summary of the study, pedagogical suggestions, limitations of the current study, and suggestions for future study will be presented.

Summary of the Study

The current study aimed to explore senior high school English teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices on writing instruction and how students' characteristics and other contextual factors influence the realization of teacher's beliefs. The study adopted a qualitative case study. Data collection methods mainly included semi-structured interviews with participating teachers and students and classroom observation. The collected data were further analyzed based on content analysis. Member checking and peer debriefing were used to establish the trustworthiness of the study.

The results revealed that both teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction were partially consistent. For example, Jocey believed in the importance of the organization in an article and emphasized it in class. Also, she emphasized different ways of correction. Therefore, she realized her beliefs by directly correcting students' local errors and polishing students' articles with providing drills for students to practice. For Shelly, she gave students sentence writing as assignments and adopted different ways of instruction in different schools to realize her beliefs that teachers should provide students with chances to practice writing and adjust their ways of instruction in different contexts.

However, there were also inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and practices.

Both of the participants agreed that learning L1 is like learning L2, but they adopted article analyses and article modeling instead because of time limitation; they also agreed that adopting the process approach was beneficial for students, but time limitation impeded the realization of it.

Besides, three major contextual factors were found to influence teachers' writing instruction but not teaching beliefs: States' educational factors, school authority factors, and students' characteristics did have impact on teachers' instruction. For example, insufficient class hours compelled both participants to adopt the product approach instead of the process approach; students' verbal and facial reaction made teachers paraphrase or include supplementary information in their instruction.

In sum, both teachers' beliefs and practices on writing instruction are partially inconsistent. This study also suggested that different kinds of contextual factors could modify teachers' writing instruction in class but could not influence teachers' pedagogical beliefs on writing instruction.

Pedagogical Implications

The results of the current study have two implications for teaching professions. First, although teachers have taught for years, their beliefs are still not consistent with their instruction. When facing different teaching contexts, both teachers could adjust their instruction and view them as opportunities for improvement. Therefore, instead of viewing contextual factors as obstacles to teachers' realization of their beliefs, we should think of them as opportunities for teachers to reflect on their teaching situations and develop a contextualized adjustment in their instruction.

Second, this qualitative thesis provides detailed description of what happened in these teachers' classroom practices, which may help novice teachers reflect on their future teaching, taking into consideration students' behavior, their learning goals, and

students' reaction. In the past, people believed in process writing, but it could not be implemented in class. Lots of macro-level reasons were mentioned, such as exam pressure, time limitation, and class sizes. However, the current study pointed out that certain micro-level reasons, such as students' characteristics, may have an impact on teachers' writing instruction. Hence, in addition to the macro-level factors, the micro-level factors also deserve teachers' attention, for they have direct influence on teachers' instruction.

Limitations of the Study

There are three limitations in the current research: First, the period of observation should be longer, for the reason that teachers' pedagogical beliefs might have changed if the observation time could be prolonged based on the previous literature. (Chuang, 2010; Lai, 2004).

Second, novice English teachers should be recruited. Both participants recruited in the current study were senior teachers whose teaching beliefs might become more solid and unchangeable than those of novice teachers. If more novice teachers are involved in the study, it is likely the change of teacher's beliefs could be revealed.

Third, more interviews with both English teachers should be taken into consideration. The school in which the participants taught did not have a fixed English writing class and the proportion of time distributed to writing instruction was relatively small. Therefore, if more interviews are conducted, more data related to writing instruction can be collected to see if there are any changes in teachers' pedagogical beliefs on writing instruction.

Suggestions for Future Research

According to the results of the current study, there are some suggestions for

future studies. First, different kinds of teachers' specific beliefs may generate different results. As Tsui and Borg (2003) suggested, the results of studying specific teaching beliefs might be different from those of general teaching beliefs. Fortunately, the current study provides some unique findings which could not be found in the previous studies. It is hoped that other specific beliefs could be probed into in the future, such as English teachers' pedagogical beliefs on speaking, listening, and pronunciation teaching.

Second, in addition to students' characteristics, there might be other contextual factors were not mentioned in the previous studies. Researchers may find ones by examining teachers' other specific beliefs or extending observation periods. The result could not only refine the current framework on teachers' beliefs, but make English teachers realize that there are more different aspects to concern in order to improve their instruction.

Last but not least, more attention could be paid to teachers' learning experiences and professional coursework, because findings of the current study suggested that teachers' pedagogical beliefs on writing instruction could not be influenced by contextual factors and classroom practices. According to Borg's model (2003), teachers' beliefs could be influenced by schooling and professional coursework. Therefore, future research can put much emphasis on teachers' learning experiences and professional coursework.

Conclusion

In this study, two senior high school English teachers expressed their own teaching beliefs and practices on writing instruction as to which writing activities to adopt or how to realize their goals of writing instruction, but the state's education policy, the school environment, or the students' characteristics could compel them to

forfeit their original intention. However, both participants' pedagogical beliefs could not be influenced by contextual factors. During the process of teaching, Jocey and Shelly tried their best to deal with these issues and made certain modification in their instruction to help students learn better.

In particular, the current research discusses the impact of students' characteristics on teachers' beliefs on writing instruction. Compared to other contextual factors, students' characteristics can bring different kinds of influences on teachers' instruction, which made the researcher realize more about how teachers modify their instruction when dealing with students' issues. The result of this study suggests that the teachers' beliefs in writing instruction are different from those in general beliefs, which supports further research on teachers' beliefs on specific aspects.
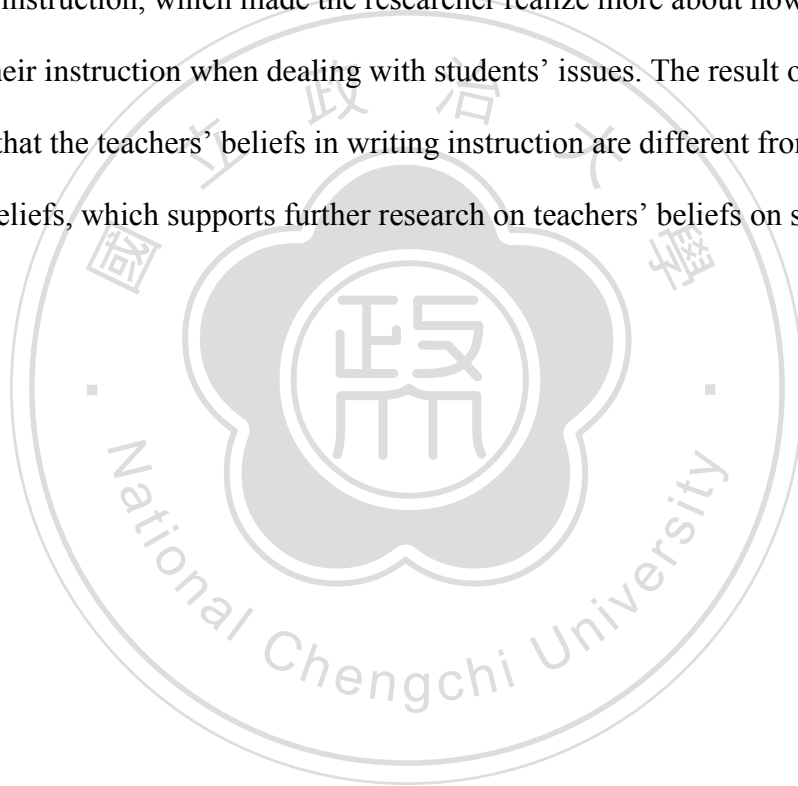
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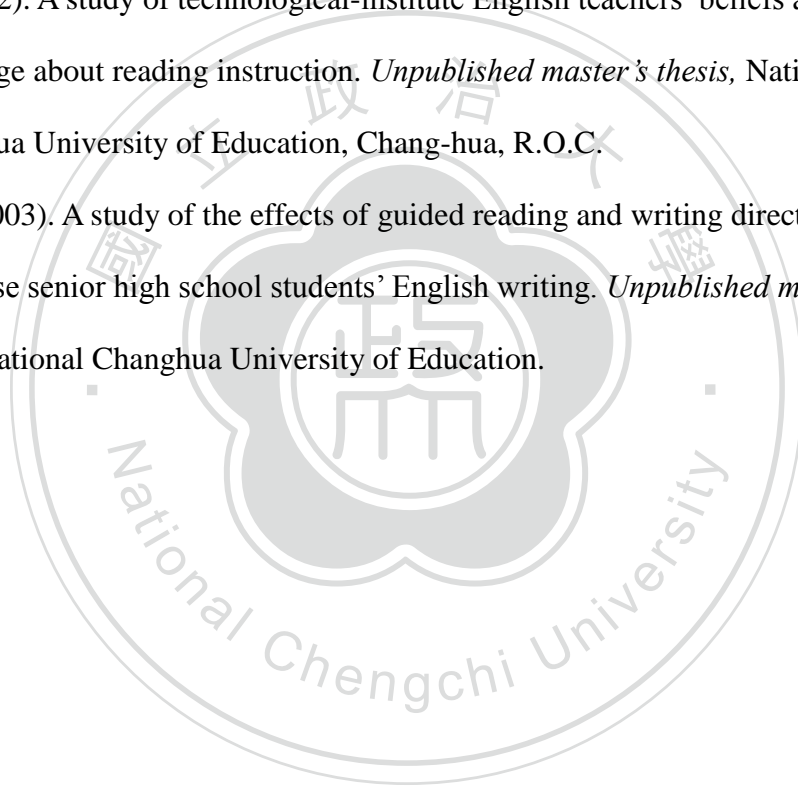
APPENDIX A

Teachers' Interview Questions

Introduction:

Thank you for coming, Mrs. Shelly/Jocey. My name is Chris Chen, a graduate student of TESOL program at National Cheng-chi University. I would like to know the way you teach writing and the beliefs you hold on writing instruction. Today the interview will take approximately 90 minutes. And I am particularly interested in the way you teach English writing and how your students react to your instruction. Please feel free to talk to me and anything you say will be safely stored. Your name will be presented with alias. If you feel uncomfortable during the interview process, please let me know. Are there any questions? Let's begin the interview.

Topic Domain A: Experiences of language learning

Lead-off: I am curious about your English learning experience when you were a student. Can you recall how English was taught when you were a student?

Follow-ups:

1. Which school did you graduate from (both university and graduate school)? What do you think of your department and university? What kind of influence do you think your school have on you?

2. When did you study English for the first time? The later experience (junior high school, senior high school, college…)? Please describe those teachers teaching you before and how did they teach (their teaching focus, material use…)? How does this influence your teaching?

3. What impresses you the most? (teacher, material, or the content…) Why? How do

these courses influence your writing instruction

4. What kind of training in English writing instruction have you received? What influence does the training have on your writing instruction?

5. How long have you been teaching English since you graduated (including other schools)? Are there any requests for writing instruction from those schools? (material, the way of instruction…) What are they? How do you respond to the requirements of different schools?

6. What expectation on yourself do you hold for being an English teacher in the past, in the present, and in the future? Why?

Topic Domain B: *Goals of writing instruction*

Lead-off: I would like to know about your goals of English writing instruction. Can you describe the skills or abilities you want your students to develop when you are teaching in this school?

Follow-up:

1. What kind of writing skill do you expect your students to be able to demonstrate after finishing all the writing courses during high school? Why do you think these skills or abilities are important for students in high school?

2. How do you assess the progress of students' writing proficiency?

3. What writing skills or abilities do you want students to develop? What do you think is the most useful for senior high school students?

Topic Domain C: The School and the class (students) in this school

Lead-off: I would like to know about the way of English writing instruction in your

        class. Can you describe a typical lesson when you are teaching class 202 in

        this school?

Follow-ups:

1. That's how you teach Class 202 here. What about Class 205? How is it similar to or

    different from that in Class 202? What is the reason behind such difference?

2. You also mentioned that you taught in 中山 senior high schools. How is your

    teaching of writing here similar to or different from that in 中山 senior high

    schools? Please tell me the reason behind it?

Topic Domain D: *Writing instructional methods and techniques*

Lead-off: After discussing the way you taught, let's go for some details about your

        teaching method and talk about the feeling when using these methods.

Follow-ups:

1. Please give me some sample classroom activities/tasks representative of your

    current teaching writing method and describe how you use these activities to

    reach your goals on writing instruction.

2. Do you think that the teaching method you adopt is adequate for your students to

    achieve the objectives of English writing you expect? Please explain the reason

    for being able or not being able to achieve the objectives.

3. What other possible classroom activities do you think are more effective, but

    cannot be used? Please explain the reason behind it.

4. Do you think your teaching method is ideal? If not, what are your ideal methods

for writing instruction? What factors make you feel unable to use these ideal
methods?

Topic Domain E: *Inconsistency between ideal activities and in-class practices*

Lead-off: According to what you have told me, it seems that the way you taught in
class is inconsistent with what you have in mind. Could you tell me the reason behind
it?

Follow-ups:

1. Are there any differences between what you want to do and what you actually do in
    the class? Please describe the reason behind the differences.
2. How do you think about these changes and factors?

Topic Domain F: *Teacher-student interaction*

Lead-off: According to what you say, it seems that the issue related to students would
be a reason behind the incongruence between the beliefs and practices. Could you
describe the interaction between you and the students?

Follow-ups:

1   Please describe the interaction between the teacher and students in the class 202
    during the writing course. What is the difference between the class 202 and 205?
    Please tell me the reason behind it?

2   How do you feel about this kind of interaction? Is this kind of interaction ideal in
    your mind? If not, what is your ideal teacher-student interaction in the writing class?
    Why?

Closing Questions:

I think we have covered almost everything I want know. Is there anything else you would like to add to what you have already said? Is there anything that you think it's important that we did not cover?

APPENDIX B

Students' Interview Questions

Introduction:

Thank you for coming. My name is Chris. I am now a graduate student of the TESOL program at National Cheng-chi University. I would like to understand how your teacher's instruction will influence your learning of English writing. Today our interview will take approximately 60 minutes. And I am particularly interested in your learning condition related to English writing and how you react to your teacher. Please feel free to talk to me and anything you say will be safely stored. Your name will be presented with alias. If you feel uncomfortable during the interview process, please let me know. Are there any questions? Let's begin the interview.

Topic Domain A: *English learning background*

Lead-off: I am curious about your English learning background, could you tell me your experience of learning English?

Follow-ups:

1. Do you like writing in English? Why?

2. How well do you think you can write in English?

Topic Domain B: *The writing material*

Lead-off: Let's look at some other areas. I would like to know what you write during or after class. Could you show me some examples?

Follow-up:

4. Please describe your works of writing. Is it required by the teacher or not? Could you show me the example of it?

5. Do you have a habit of writing in English? What do you usually write? How often? Why you want to write these topics?

6. Which part do you think is the most difficult for you when writing in English? (grammar, vocabulary…) Why?

Topic Domain C: *Students' involvement in classroom practice of writing instruction*

Lead-off: Could you tell me the feeling you hold toward teacher's writing instruction?

Follow-ups:

7. Please tell me the way your English teacher teaches writing. Is there any activity or task you have to accomplish during the class? Describe it if there is any.

8. Which part does the teacher emphasize the most in the teaching of writing? What's your opinion about it? Is it helpful for you? In what way? Why?

9. Do you like the way the teacher taught? Why or why not? What do you think English writing should be taught?

10. Could you understand what the teacher taught in class? Is it too easy, difficult, fast, or slow for you?

Topic Domain D: *The interaction between student's and the teacher*

Lead-off: In this topic, I would like to know the interaction between you and the

teacher during the writing class. Could you tell me about it?

Follow-ups: How do you interact with your English teacher in the daily class? What does she usually do? How do you respond? Why? How do your peers respond?

Closing Questions:

I think we have covered almost everything I want to know. Is there anything else you would like to add to what you have already said? Is there anything that you think it's important that we did not cover?

APPENDIX C

Transcript Conventions

Transcript conventions adapted from Atkinson and Heritage (1999)

, a continuing intonation

[] overlapping utterances

? a rising intonation

! an animated tone

(()) an explanation of the circumstance

CAPITALIZATION emphasis

Italic original utterances, not translation

S Shelly

J Jocey

Ss many students