

國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士在職專班碩士論文

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連繫功能詞與主題推進教學對增進EFL低成就者的寫作連
貫性之研究

The Improvement of Coherence in EFL Low Achievers' Writing
through the Instruction of Cohesive Devices and Thematic
Progression

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國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士在職專班
碩士論文提要

論文名稱：主題推進與連繫功能詞教學對增進 EFL 低成就者的寫作連貫性之研究

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論文提要內容：

英文作文教學在英語學習上是不可或缺的一環，而實際上在台灣，英文作文教學仍是透過分析文法和句型來進行的，但這樣的方式忽略了英文寫作能夠成功的主要關鍵——連貫性。由於連貫性的晦澀難解，教師與學生皆會認為在教授和學習寫出有連貫性的文章是很複雜的。本文藉由教導學生如何於寫作時運用連繫功能詞(cohesive devices)和主題推進(thematic progression)兩種策略來探究作文中的連貫性，以研究其增進高中生英文寫作表現的可能性。本研究在不影響正常教學進度的前提下進行，研究者的 39 位臺北市高二學生首先接受如何分析課本文章連貫性的指導，並接著應用和檢視連繫功能詞以及主題推進於他們的寫作中。其中有兩位低成就者進一步地被挑選出來，藉由寫作會談(writing conference)以瞭解受試者在寫作時，如何利用以上兩種連貫性的策略於其英文寫作中；同時也透過訪談和日記撰寫的方式，來探討學生的學習連貫性策略的歷程。

由相關的量化和質性資料可看出，本研究的結果顯示受試者在作文整體表現與作文連貫性上的分數明顯偏高；他們也被證明能夠和其他研究中的高成就者一般，運用相同的連繫功能詞(指稱、連接與重述)和主題推進(線性推進與主題連續推進)種類。在這歷時五個月的研究中，受試者也在連繫功能詞與主題推進的協

助下，培養出更注意作文內容以及進行適當修改的能力。此外，也由於受試者對於學習連繫功能詞與主題推進抱持著正面的態度，本研究建議應結合連繫功能詞和主題推進，並將其融入台灣現存的正規作文教學之中，藉著分析作文中的連繫功能詞與主題推進，協助學生理解抽象的連貫性進而使作文表現更進步。



Abstract

As an indispensable element in English learning, writing instruction in Taiwan actually has been given through the analysis of grammar and sentence patterns. This however ignores another primary key to successful writing—coherence. Due to its obscurity, teachers and students both find it complicated to teach and acquire the ability to organize a written text logically and coherently. The current study investigated the possibility to improve the high school students' writing by instructing them how to apply the coherence strategies to their writing—cohesive devices (CD) and thematic progression (TP). In this study, with the teaching schedule unaffected, the researcher's 39 second-graders in one Taipei senior high school were first taught how to analyze the coherence of the reading passages in the textbooks. Then they were required to apply and examine CD and TP when writing. Two low achievers of these students were further selected to investigate their writing development by examining their written texts with CD and TP applied in writing conferences, having interviews with the researcher and keeping journals between classes and writing conferences.

Concluded from the quantitative and qualitative data collected, the results revealed that the two low-proficiency students were able to get high grades in the holistic writing performance and coherence of writing. They were meanwhile found to be able to apply the same categories of CD (reference, conjunction and reiteration) and types of TP (simple linear TP type and TP with a constant theme) as the ones used by the high-proficiency learners in previous studies. During the five-month study, the participants also cultivated the ability to focus more on content level and to revise properly in their writing with the help of CD and TP. Besides, since the participants

held positive attitudes toward the learning of CD and TP, the researcher recommends that the combination of CD and TP should be integrated into the writing instruction in current normal English writing class in Taiwan to help students comprehend the abstract coherence and to improve their writing by analyzing CD and TP in the written texts.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

The focus of interest in writing instruction has been shifted from the product-oriented paradigm to the process-oriented paradigm since the past decades (Cumming, 1998; Emig, 1971; Flower, 1989; Hillocks, 1986; Krapels, 1990; Silva, 1993; Zamel, 1987). Adopted to investigate the writing process, Flower and Hayes's (1981a) three stages of writing—planning, writing, revising—has been widely accepted and applied in the relevant research into the field of teaching writing (Cumming, 1989; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 2003; Goldstein & Conrad, 1999; Zamel, 1985). These three steps may take place recursively and simultaneously in the writing process, so the ideas which are previously generated can be organized or corrected again after revising, and vice versa (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Murray, 1980; Smith, 1982; Zamel, 1983a).

Among these three steps, revision is generally considered the most important because this step promises the writing quality through the emphasis on changes in surface and meaning levels of the written texts (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Fitzgerald, 1987; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). The surface-level changes, also called form-level or mechanical/grammatical revisions, are particularly preferred by both teachers (Ashwell, 2000; Cohen, 1990; Cumming, 1985; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1995a, 1999, 2003, 2004; Zamel, 1985) and students with different ages and proficiency levels (Crowley, 1977; Faigley & Witte, 1981a; Fitzgerald & Markham, 1987; Sommers, 1980). The benefit of surface correction in writing instruction is therefore confirmed (Ellis, 1998; Ferris, 1995b, 1999, 2004, 2006; Reid, 1997).

However, the application of too many grammatical corrections may make writers ignore how to organize logical and coherent texts (Mohan & Lo, 1985; Perl, 1980). Truscott (1996, 1999, 2007) even proposed that grammatical corrections in teaching writing should not be emphasized too much so that students would not lose interest in writing. Therefore, besides grammatical revision, content-level/discourse-level revision is indispensable in the writing process. With the content revised appropriately, the discourse becomes comprehensible, which is the key to good writing quality (Cumming, 1989; Goldstein & Conrad, 1999; Saito, 1994; Zamel, 1985). Good-quality writing is commonly rated as “well organized” and coherent; on the contrary, the less successful writing may be described as “fragmentary” or disconnected because its communicative intention is unlikely to be comprehended (TEEP Attribute Writing Scales, cited in Watson Todd, Thienpermpool & Keyuravong, 2004). These comments are all related to coherence, which is usually considered implicit due to readers’ different interpretation (Hoey, 1991).

To analyze abstract coherence, two primary ways are developed: Theme-Rheme/Thematic progression types (hereafter TP) (Daneš, 1974) and Topical Structure Analysis (hereafter TSA), which is adapted from the former (Lautamatti, 1987; Simpson, 2000). The application of TP or TSA is to find out the themes or topics between sentences and further to help identify propositional coherence, whether it is explicitly displayed in a text or not. In fact, a theme or topic includes one or more units, so what actually connects the next theme or topic sometimes is hard to determine (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Therefore, some specific linguistic connectors are needed. “Manifested at the surface level of a text” (Watson Todd, Khongput & Darasawang, 2007, p. 12), these text-forming connectors are mainly based on Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) cohesive devices (hereafter CD), which in some ways are similar to Faigley and Witte’s (1981a) classification of surface-level revision. Due

to its easily-identified quality, CD is highly recommended to help recognize cohesion in a text (Mackay, 1987; Wang, 1998; Weissberg, 1984).

Despite the advantage of CD, a paragraph, with the overuse or misuse of CD, may be seemingly full of cohesion but may be made up of independent and irrelevant sentences—no common proposition. This means there is no coherence in the text at all (Carell, 1982; Connor, 1984). Without propositional coherence, the text is doubtlessly beyond comprehension. Therefore, TP or TSA, combined with CD, is applied in some research to examine the coherence and cohesion in experts' and students' writing (Lan, 2008; Lee, 2002; Liu, 2009).

However, the integration of TP and CD seems to be more feasible when they are taught as revision strategies to analyze coherence due to some problems of TSA. Though TSA has also been applied as a revision strategy to examine student writers' writing coherence (Chiu, 2004; Connor & Farmer, 1990; Fan, 2008; Lee, 2002; Liu, 2009; Shen, 2004), the process of searching for topics and the identification of topical development is vague (Knoch, 2007; Lautamatti, 1987). Unlike TSA, TP, with more complete topical progressions, has been conducted to help improve students' coherence in previous research (Alonso & McCabe, 1998b, 2003). In the meantime, if students have the chance to learn how to analyze writing coherence on their own, content-level revision might be possibly achieved.

Motivation

In fact, research on revision and coherence analysis primarily lays lots of emphasis on the comparison of the writing performance between high- and low-proficiency students. On one hand, the former are found to revise more in the content level or more frequently when writing than the latter whose focus is always on the surface level (Fitzgerald, 1987; Matsumura, Patthey-Chavez, Valdés & Garnier, 2002; Perez, 2000). Besides, these high achievers are also found to revise both the

surface and content levels at any time in the writing process; therefore, the high-proficiency learners' writing quality is quite remarkable (Beach, 1976; Bridwill, 1980; Faigley, Cherry, Jolliffe & Skinner, 1985; Faigley & Witte, 1981a; Hall, 1990; Heuring, 1984; Monahan, 1984; Sommers, 1980; Stallard, 1974; Zamel, 1983a).

On the other hand, as far as the content level is concerned, certain CD categories and TP types are also found to happen more frequently in skilled writers' writing than the unskilled ones' even though there was no instruction of CD and TP in the research on CD and on TP (to name but a few: Alonso & McCable, 1998a, 1998b, 2003; Chao, 2002; Faigley & Witte, 1981b; Jalilifar, 2010; Lee, 2002; Li, 2009; Mustaffa & Aman, 2007). In other words, the above-mentioned studies keep reinforcing the self-evident fact—the high achievers inherently possess the ability to investigate more beyond the form level in their writing process. Compared with the writing quality of their counterparts, the low achievers' writing performance is always found to be inferior since they tend to ignore the content level and their form-level problems remain unsolved (Porte, 1996, 1997; Vann & Abraham, 1990).

With the high achievers' writing skills identified in the research into revision and coherence analysis, Oxford (1990), Rubin (1975) and Wenden (1991) suggested that this finding should be feasible to improve the writing ability of the poor-skilled writers. That is, these poor-skilled writers could enhance their writing by replicating the entire writing process that their counterparts go through. Nonetheless, little research follows the relevant suggestion to further examine the specific ways that teachers could use to help these poor writers. What is worse, it is also implied that these low-proficiency writers could not further apply certain CD categories and TP types as well as the high-proficiency ones (Chen, 2002; Faigley & Witte, 1981b; Ferris, 1994; Tseng, 2008). Based on the above-mentioned, more studies need to be conducted to see if the instruction of coherence analysis could also save

underachievers from being trapped in surface-level problems and help them to examine cohesion and coherence in the discourse level of their own writing as high achievers (Chao, 2002; Crompton, 2004; Faigley & Witte, 1981b; McCarthy, 1991; Reid, 1993; Scott, 1996). As a result, it is necessary for the present study to explore whether low achievers can make their writing better by learning to apply CD and TP to make more content-level revision than surface-level one.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to guide low-proficiency students to focus more on the discourse level in the writing process by instructing these students CD and TP as revision strategies to help them examine their writing coherence. Furthermore, whether it is possible for the instruction of CD and TP to facilitate these low achievers' writing performance is also another concern. Therefore, this current study picked the senior high underachievers as its participants to examine: 1. the effect of learning CD and TP on writing; 2. the students' development of writing coherence by examining CD and TP in their own writing; 3. their views of learning CD and TP.

What this study investigated is of great importance because teachers often focus on such form-level issues as word substitution, sentence structure drills, grammatical mechanics, and so forth, instead of focusing on content-level problems (Silva, 1990). Besides, according to the College Entrance Examination Center (CEEC) in Taiwan, over half of all the examinees scored less than ten points and over ten percent of them got zero in writing in recent years' exams (Lin, 2009). Some Taiwanese senior high students apparently have difficulty composing coherent passages. The findings of the study can not only help teachers develop different ways to teach writing beyond surface-level focus but offer a promising solution to students' problems of writing coherence as well.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with the importance of revision in the writing process. Then the literature reviewed presents two main concerns of revision—what should be revised and what difference is in the revising patterns between skilled and unskilled writers. It is found why the skilled writers' writing quality is better lies in their focus on coherence. Then the subsequent sections center on the coherence instruction: cohesive devices and thematic progression. In the end, the requisite for doing the research is presented with the research questions raised to verify the possibility of enhancing low achievers' writing coherence.

Writing Process

To understand the complete process of how students produce texts, the attention has shifted from the product-oriented paradigm to the process-oriented one. Focusing on the development of how a written text is formulated rather than on the analysis of the one-draft written product, the “processing” (Myers, 1983, p. 19) is comprised of two primary features. First, the writing process that a writer goes through is definitely beyond the practice of imitating grammar and sentence patterns due to the complexity of the composing process (Faigley & Witte, 1981b). The next concern is the recursive progression among these stages—prewriting, writing and revision (Connor, 1987; Flower & Hayes, 1986; Myers, 1983). Considered linear in the product approach, the three stages have been verified to be mutually and recursively intertwined between and within paragraphs at the time of writing. In other words, writers move back and forth in the writing process (Flower & Hayes, 1986; Hyland, 2003; Zamel, 1982).

Revision in Writing

Among the writing stages, revision has long been viewed as the most crucial

part (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Elbow, 1981; Lowenthal, 1980; Sommers, 1980; Zamel, 1983a) because of its potential for improving the writing quality (Ash, 1983; Bamberg, 1978; Bracewell, Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1978; Bridwell, 1980). It is thus a must to first grasp what revision is and how it happens in writing. Then what to be revised is displayed and the previous research on revision is also discussed.

The Characteristics of Revision

The prospect of improving writing quality through revision lies in the following features. First, conceived as both goal- and problem-oriented processes, revision enables writers to rethink the written texts, to alter words or phrases and then to approach the meaning as much as possible (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1986; Bridwell, 1980; Nold, 1981; Sommers, 1980, 1992). Second, revising may be initiated by any rough ideas at both the end and start of sentences and the whole draft; therefore, revisions made are likely to be trivial or crucial (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1986; Bridwell, 1980; Cohen, 1990; Faigley & Witte, 1981a; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Nold, 1981; Williams, 2004).

In addition, the way revision is conducted goes in a certain sequence. To begin with, writers, after finishing the first draft, read through the whole text to identify the inconsistency between the assigned topic and their own intentions to write down what they want to express. It is then essential for writers to choose the words, phrases or sentences for a change to make up for the discrepancy. Lastly, to improve their writing, writers further need to consider replacing the inappropriate words or phrases with preferred and feasible ones. The first two steps may simultaneously occur once in a while. In the last stage, writers manage to revise by substituting the alternatives for the problematic units in the text (Fitzgerald, 1987; Williams, 2004). In general, revising enables writers to move backwards and meanwhile forwards to check what may be missed so that the writing quality can be reassured.

What to be Revised

Revision occurs repetitively at the time of composing texts while writers are unlikely to alter anything arbitrarily. Otherwise, the corrections in different stages may cause the disconnection throughout the writing process. A series of systematic entries used to modify anything inappropriate in the writing is thus required. One set of the revision entries formulated by Faigley and Witte (1981a, 1984) has been implemented to assess writing in plenty of research. In the revision measurement are two principal categories: changes in surface/form and content/meaning. The difference between the two changes is the existence of adjustments made for the given information and new one. In other words, even if some surface changes are made, such as spelling, tense, punctuation, and so on, any information related to the conveyance of meaning remains still. On the other hand, the modification of any idea and opinion is called content change. The alternation consists of two more subcategories: micro- and macro- changes. The former includes any discrete perception, and the latter symbolizes the main information of the whole text.

In fact, plenty of studies corroborate that surface revisions predominate the content ones when writers at different ages and with different language proficiency go through the writing process (Bridwell, 1980; Crowley, 1977; Dennett, 1990; Faigley & Witte 1981a; Fitzgerald & Markham, 1987; Hall, 1990; Stallard, 1974). Besides, most teachers, considering themselves as “language teachers not writing teachers” (Zamel, 1985, p. 86), are still inclined to stress surface-level accuracy (Ashwell, 2000; Cohen, 1990; Cumming, 1985; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1999, 2003, 2004; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Zamel, 1985). Ferris (1997) found that large amounts of students’ revision can be elicited and thus their errors will be decreased through teachers’ particular feedback on grammatical issues (1999, 2003, 2004, 2006). The weight of surface correction may result from the long-predominant notion that writing

is rated as a product regardless of its implicit developing process and the need to train students to identify errors (Ferris, 2003; Lee, 2008b). Besides, most students have also been found to favor grammatical comments from their teachers (Leki, 1991; Oladejo, 1993; Saito, 1994). This may stem from their previous experiences of learning second language and the need to be assessed as academic performance and to pass the entrance exams (Hyland, 2003).

However, with the process approach to teaching compositions proposed, some researchers (Cumming, 1989; Goldstein & Conrad, 1999; Saito, 1994; Zamel, 1985) have suggested the teacher feedback should be given on such content-level concerns as coherence or organization instead of surface-level problems. Moreover, Truscott (1996, 1999, 2007) even contended that grammatical changes might cause the hindrance to the writing improvement by presenting some convincing evidence, so he proposed the form concern should not exist in writing instruction. In addition, it is suggested that teachers provide their students with the feedback on the surface and content problems at the same time instead of paying separate attention to either of the two feedback types (Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 2003; Krashen, 1984; Taylor, 1981). Then, how the form and content comments are under operation has been also under discussion. Fathman and Whalley (1990) deduced that there is no difference between responding to form and content concurrently and responding to form or content respectively. Then Ashwell (2000) investigated which order is effective—form then content or the reverse—and he found the simultaneous application of form and content is the most appropriate way.

To sum up, having been controversial all the time, the surface-level issue is undoubtedly essential in writing as long as it does not predominate over the content issue in the whole revision process. For one reason, the approaches learners adopt to get hold of linguistic knowledge and that they use to comprehend diverse language

correction (Schwartz, 1993; Truscott, 1999) are different. For the other, the unskilled writers tend to make grammatical mistakes continuously (Raimes, 1985) since their language proficiency is not as good as the skilled writers. They are unlikely to solve the form-level problems in a short time. Therefore, it might be plausible for teachers to teach low-proficiency learners to learn how to solve their content-level problems.

Low Achievers' Revision

The low-proficiency writers, especially EFL learners, are found to correct grammatical problems in their early written texts (Heuring, 1984; Nold, 1981; Perl, 1980; Sommers, 1980). They are considered unable to stretch the revising process further than mechanical alternatives, so they are unlikely to make considerable progress in their writing quality (Fitzgerald, 1987; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Perez, 2000). In contrast, skilled writers have been proved to revise more in discourse and surface changes than the less skilled ones (Ash, 1983; Faigley & Witte 1981a; Monahan, 1984; Nold, 1981; Sommers, 1980; Stallard, 1974; Zamel, 1983a). Besides, these skilled writers never start to correct linguistic mechanics until they finish investigating and confirming the previously generated ideas (Victori, 1999; Zamel, 1983a).

The recognition of high achievers' correction mainly implies the possibility of helping low achievers improve their writing by comparing their writing performance with the former's (Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1975; Wenden, 1991). In fact, this series of research just strengthens the self-evident actuality—successful writers' strategies and inclinations to compose good quality writing. This keeps being stressed by the comparison with their mediocre partners. These unsuccessful writers are thus recommended to imitate how and what their counterparts do when composing (Perl, 1979; Zamel, 1983a). The above-mentioned research on the revision preferences is illustrated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

The Distinct Revising Preferences of Skilled and Unskilled Writers

Revision	Skilled/Experienced writers (High achievers)	Unskilled/Inexperienced writers (Low achievers)
Types	Discourse and sentence level changes (Ash, 1983; Faigley & Witte 1981a; Monahan, 1984; Sommers, 1980; Stallard, 1974; Victori; 1999; Zamel, 1983a)	Sentence level changes (Fitzgerald, 1987; Heuring, 1984; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Nold, 1981; Perez, 2000; Perl, 1980; Sommers, 1980)
Timing	Surface changes are mostly initiated at the later stage of writing (Zamel, 1983a)	Surface changes keep interrupted from the start of writing (Zamel, 1983a)

However, the attempt in the relevant research to deal with low achievers' writing by just comparing their poor writing quality with their counterparts' is doubted (Horowitz, 1986) for some reasons. First, little connection between language proficiency and writing ability has been found to demonstrate that low achievers perform more poorly than high achievers because of their less competence in linguistic units (Jones, 1985; Raimes, 1987). In fact, it is students' writing strategies instead of language proficiency that are closely related to the quality of their written texts (Cumming, Rebuffot & Ledwell, 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987). Second, low achievers are unlikely to reach the high achievers' good writing quality because they take the only correction of linguistic mechanics for granted instead of the discourse level in texts (Fitzgerald, 1987; Heuring, 1984; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Nold, 1981; Perez, 2000; Perl, 1980; Sommers, 1980). Besides, it is found that even most young adult writers with low English proficiency, whether they are natives or second language (SL) learners, generally have difficulty dealing with the organization of discourse (Brown, 1981; Nold, 1981; Zamel, 1983a). Third, the comparison with the advanced writers' writing cannot actually help underachievers to make any essential progress in writing; nevertheless, this could have a negative effect on the latter's

writing performance since their writing problems remain unresolved (Porte, 1996, 1997; Vann & Abraham, 1990). Most important of all, less-competent language learners have been proved to be capable of making some contributions to their own writing (Porte, 1995; Vann & Abraham, 1990). As a result, what these unskilled writers need is the specific way—in addition to grammatical correction—to improve their writing quality, which is ignored in most research on this field.

Therefore, instead of the constant emphasis on the differences of writing performance between less and more competent writers, more research is needed to investigate the concrete and feasible ways to improve low achievers' writing, especially the EFL learners, who spend more time and efforts dealing with grammatical structure (Porte, 1997). Though it is generally believed that teachers have difficulty teaching the low-proficiency EFL learners to write the complete passages (Cumming, 1989), research into improving these low achievers' writing by the instruction of both surface level and content level in writing is truly required. Since these unskilled writers may leave the linguistic mistakes repetitively occurring (Raimes, 1985), one of the aims of the current study is to prevent the low achievers from being the negative counterparts of the high achievers again by enabling the former to examine the content level and to further improve their writing quality.

In general, content-level revision has been found to take place more frequently in high-proficiency writers' written texts, and these skilled writers tend to make content-level revisions prior to the surface-level ones (Ash, 1983; Faigley & Witte 1981a; Monahan, 1984; Nold, 1981; Sommers, 1980; Stallard, 1974; Victori, 1999; Zamel, 1983a). Therefore, it can be concluded that high-quality writing is supposed to consist of good organization, reasonable sequence, and well-linked development of ideas to construct coherent discourse according to the analytical writing assessments (Hughes, 2003; Knoch, 2007; Watson Todd, et al., 2007; Weigle, 2002; Weir, 1990).

On the contrary, the poor-quality writing is disconnected due to the lack of appropriate connectives, which makes the writing proceed disparately and makes readers unable to understand the writers' intentions (Knoch, 2007; Watson Todd, et al., 2007). The above description of writing quality is mainly based on Faigley and Witte's revision taxonomy (1981a), and its indicators related to content are much more concrete and detailed; besides, though the specific indicators in the revision types and writing assessments are different, their focus primarily concentrates on whether the coherence exists in the written texts.

Coherence in Writing

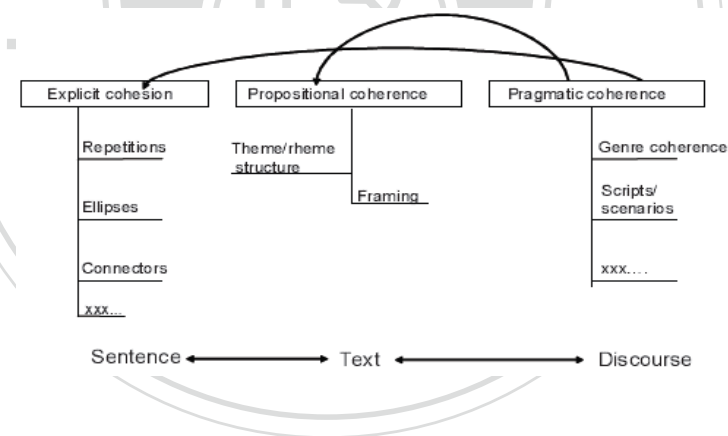
Coherence has been defined in a variety of ways. The most renowned is Halliday and Hasan's (1976) definition that coherence is the connection of the surface text testified by cohesive devices (CD). Their notion of coherence is composed of two features, cohesion and register, which utterly concentrate on CD within and between sentences, though. Owing to their failure to describe coherence thoroughly, many studies have been conducted to tackle with other possibilities of explaining the essence of coherence. Beyond the superficial explanation, coherence is actually found to be an informative structure that allows readers to grasp the texts by the development of the theme-rheme construct and topics (Connor & Farmer, 1990; Daneš, 1974; Firbas, 1986; Lautamatti, 1987; Schneider & Connor, 1990).

Concerning the content level of discourse, the second definition of coherence is that it can help writers/readers identify the connection in the content, and the connection is clarified by the relations between propositions which promote organization of the whole discourse (de Beaugrand & Dresseler, 1981; van Dijk & Kintsh, 1978; Meyer, 1975; Yule, 1996). Based on the above definition, different types of coherence have been developed to analyze the consistency and unity in writing.

Coherence Types

The coherence types are displayed systematically by Carter-Thomas (2008), whose diagram, as shown in Figure 2.1, clearly illustrates the main domains of the textual coherence. The coherence structure starts with the cohesion that primarily focuses on the combination of sentences to form paragraphs (Enkvist, 1978). Then the propositional coherence suggests how writers express their ideas to make readers understand the texts (Yule, 1996). As to the highest-level coherence, it deals with the more implicit communication acts within the discourse (Watson Todd, et al., 2007). However, due to its complexity and uncertainty (Carter-Thomas, 2008; Connor, 1987; Cooper, 1988; Watson Todd, et al., 2007), the last coherence type is ruled out in this study.

Figure 2.1
Carter-Thomas's Three Types of Coherence (2008, p. 2)



Cohesion

In this section, the definition of CD is presented first. The classification of CD categories is subsequently described in detail. Then the previous research into CD is also discussed to pinpoint the need of teaching CD to student writers and of combining the other dimension of discourse coherence.

Cohesion, classified as a sentence-based approach in linguistic text analysis (Connor, 1987), is a rather specific way to detect the textual connection. The surface-level cohesion links the proposition in or between sentences with a series of

linguistic signals which are straightforwardly identified at the surface of a text (Bell, 1991; de Beaugrand & Dresseler, 1981; van Dijk & Kintsh, 1983; Hoey, 1983; Watson Todd, et al., 2007; Widdowson, 1978). With these signals, the sentences in a text are dependent on each other to keep the textual cohesion. Contrarily, without the cohesion linking the propositions in a text, the text will fail to be comprehensible in that the sequences within sentences disappear and the text splits into discrete pieces (Biesenbach-Lucas, Meloni & Weasenforth, 2000; Carreon, 2006; Hinkel, 2001; Zhang, 2000). Besides, since cohesion can be found within a sentence or sentences in a text, the semantic connections expressed through it can be viewed as the meaning of a text and the implication of the text meaning. These connections are called cohesive devices or text-forming ties included in a coherent text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

These cohesive devices, or cohesive ties (Hoey, 1991; Kieras, 1981; Weissberg, 1984), are words or phrases that make it accessible for readers to decode the texts by identifying the relation across sentences and to connect new and old information. These devices are: 1. grammatical cohesion, including reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction; 2. lexical cohesion, such as reiteration and collocation (see Appendix A). However, because substitution and ellipsis mostly appear in conversation, which does not correspond with the aim of the study, they are left out.

Reference. Reference, a semantic relation, can immediately pinpoint what is being mentioned in the previous context. The reference items can function within a context anaphorically and cataphorically—the same reference as a word or words previously and subsequently appearing in one discourse. Halliday and Hasan (1976) divided the referential cohesion into three sub-types: personal references (e. g., he and they), demonstratives (e. g., this) and determiners (e. g., the).

Conjunction. Conjunction indicates how the clauses or sentences should be connected to the previous or subsequent ones. According to Halliday and Hasan

(1976), a five-category scheme connecting sentences is based on the specific meaning: additive (e. g., besides), adversative (e. g., however), causal (e. g., because), temporal (e. g., when) and continuative conjunction (e. g., after all).

Reiteration and collocation. The two categories of lexical cohesion deal with the connection based on the words used. Reiteration is relatively complex because its five types required a teacher to teach step by step and to help learners to recognize them carefully. They are: 1. repetition, often including reference; 2. synonym, or near-synonym, also including reference; 3. antonym (e. g., “white” vs. “black”); 4. hyponym (e. g., the relation of “flower” and “tulip”); 5. metonym (e. g., part vs. whole), and 6. general words. Then collocation refers to the regular co-occurrence of certain words. For example, the following pairings, evening/dark, doctor/hospital, garden/dig and boat/row, tend “to appear in similar context when they occur in adjacent sentences” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 286).

Previous studies on CD. With these cohesive ties binding dispersed sentences and paragraphs together to make the whole text a coherent unity (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Zamel, 1983b), the relationship between cohesive devices and writing quality has been confirmed (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Hasan, 1984; Pappas, 1985). Research on the application of CD in writing has been conducted predominantly to examine the amount and frequency of different cohesive ties used in students’ writing (Tierney & Mosenthal, 1983; Watson Todd, et al., 2007; Weissberg, 1984; Zhou, 2007) and to compare different devices applied to the written products between skilled and unskilled writers (Chen, 2002; Chiang, 1999; Faigley & Witte, 1981, 1984; Ferris, 1994; Tseng, 2008). Therefore, Reid (1993), McCarthy (1991) and Scott (1996) proposed it should be of importance for teachers to instruct CD explicitly since SL or EFL learners have more trouble dealing with the textual cohesion appropriately than native ones. However, few researchers, except for Tsao (2004) and Zhou (2007),

explicate the specific procedures for teaching cohesive devices. In view of this, the present study adapts the ways provided by Lee (1998, 2002), Liu (2000) and Zamel (1983b) to teach cohesion through some explicit exercises to be done in and between sentences or paragraphs written by students themselves.

Despite the contributions of CD, some researchers have questioned the definite connection between the cohesion markers and coherence. For instance, Faigley and Witte (1981b) asserted that there are other elements leading to the successful writing, including “a pragmatic unity, a unity of a text and the world of the reader (p. 201).” Connor (1984) concluded that a cohesively bound text is not necessarily coherent; namely, cohesion is not identical to coherence. From the theoretical and empirical aspects, Carrell (1982) demonstrated that the cohesion does not always bring about coherence as the former happens to be included in the latter. Tierney and Mosenthal (1983) found the commonness of CD in text “severely diminishes the usefulness of the cohesion concept as an index of coherence at a global or local level” (p. 228). Therefore, the identification of CD in a text cannot be viewed as coherence. Take the following short passage as an example:

- (2.1) The quarterback threw the ball toward the tight end.
- (2.2) Balls are used in many sports.
- (2.3) Most balls are spheres, but a football is an ellipsoid.
- (2.4) The tight end leaped to catch the ball. (Faigley & Witte, 1981b, p.201)

The ball in (2.1) is the metonym of *balls* in (2.2), which is the hyponym of *most balls* in the next sentence. *The ball* in (2.4) can be referred to *a football* in (2.3) as the referential definite articles. These sentences are cohesively connected at the surface level because of the above-mentioned CD categories, while they are actually independent to each other because of lacking a general proposition. Moreover, Zamel (1983b) attributed the misuse of CD to the only focus on each respective cohesive device in teaching writing. Therefore, Kroll (1990) reported there is no definite connection between the content fluency and surface correctness. Among his

participants with different language backgrounds, some students could write fluently regardless of their poor English proficiency; on the other hand, others with good language proficiency might write incoherently. Due to these problems, the only identification of CD is not complete enough to comprehend the text meaning. To avoid failing to build textual coherence, propositional coherence also need to be taken into consideration.

Propositional Coherence

To solve some problems caused by CD, the main focus on coherence analysis in this section is propositional coherence. According to Connor (1987), the study of propositional coherence in writing is derived from the Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP). In view of this, the fundamental concepts of FSP are described first. Then the method of teaching coherence adopted in the present study is presented to explicate its combination with CD. Furthermore, the previous studies on teaching the coherence analysis are conferred to initiate the research questions of the current study.

Functional sentence perspective (FSP). Developed by Czechoslovak linguists, FSP is defined as “contextual sentence (utterance) organization, theme-rheme or topic-comment structure” (Firbas, 1974, p. 11). It has been perceived to be able to make discourse connection easily comprehended. Besides, the theory has been demonstrated to be closely related to the coherence examination (Alonso & McCabe, 2003; Connor & Farmer, 1990; Goodin & Perkins, 1982; Kopple, 1991; Lautamatti, 1987) because it consists of communicative dynamism, topic and comment, and theme and rheme (Kopple, 1982).

Communicative dynamism is carried by each word with different degrees. In Firbas’s (1974) view, every word in a sentence is “... carrying some degree of [communicative dynamisms]” (p. 19), and each sentence can be divided into different

parts—topic and comment. The former is frequently anaphoric in discourse as it results from the introduced entity in the prior sentence (Bardovi-Harlig, 1990). The latter, on the contrary, expresses new, irrecoverable, or relatively less accessible information of the preceding sentence (Kopple, 1982). The topic-comment notion carries the same connotation as “theme” and “rheme” (Daneš, 1984; Fibras, 1974; Hajicova, 1994; Kopple, 1982; Schneider & Connor, 1990), the most common terms used to describe the sentence structures.

Generally speaking, the first element of a sentence always holds the initial position and the rest are categorized as rheme. Theme is “what the clause is about” (Halliday, 1985, p. 39) and regarded as “the point of departure of the message” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 64). To clarify Halliday’s definition of theme, Thompson (2004) separated themes into many subcategories to clarify different themes (see Appendix B). As the given information, a theme should be placed in the beginning of a sentence or clause to be related to the preceding sentence, and a rheme, as the new information concerning the theme, will then move the reader forward to the subsequent context. Therefore, through the balance and movement between theme and rheme, they play an important role in the unity and coherence of a text.

Theme-Rheme Patterning. Derived from the theme-rheme theory, some approaches to examining coherence have been exploited. The first one is Theme-Rheme progression types (Daneš, 1974): the progression of themes and rhemes that are also named given and new information in texts. The second is Topical Structure Analysis (Lautamatti, 1987; Simpson, 2000): the exploration of a whole text by linking the discourse topic and sub-topics. The third one is Wastson Todd’s (1998) Topic-based Analysis: the presentation of logical relations in texts by identifying the key concepts.

Although the Topic-based Analysis is adapted and developed from TSA, its

complicated diagrams may not only confuse the assessing raters but hinder students' identification of abstract key concepts as well (Kroll, 2007). Besides, TSA originates from Theme-Rheme progression types, so their frameworks of topical development actually resemble each other (Albertini, 1990; Lan, 2008; Shen, 2004; Todd, 2007; Weisberg, 1974). Most of the studies on TSA focus on defining the three progression types as soon as the topics are identified, which is not definite enough to understand the topical development (Knoch, 2007). That is to say, how the sub-topics in a text are recognized remains obscure. Therefore, with the insufficient semantic elements detected, the process of searching for the topics and their progression would make the implementation of TSA perplexing and challenging (Lautamatti, 1987). Therefore, the present study adopts TP as its way to teach low achievers coherence analysis.

Coherence Analysis: Thematic Progression (TP)

TP indicates the patterns how the flow of information exchanges between the consecutive occurrence of theme and rheme pairings in a text (Eggins, 1994). Besides, it is convinced that the theme selection for all clauses and sentences is not random but patterning (Daneš, 1974). TP helps the reader/writer to build up the coherence in a text. There are five TP types developed by Daneš (1974): 1. Simple linear TP or TP with linear thematization of rhemes; 2. TP with a continuous (constant) theme; 3. TP with a hypertheme; 4. Exposition of split rheme; 5. TP with a thematic jump. To describe a T-R nexus clearly, Daneš uses a horizontal arrow (\rightarrow) and also a vertical arrow (\downarrow) to express the contextual link in and between sentences (see Appendix C). The five types of TP are illustrated below.

Simple Linear TP

In this type, the new information about the theme in one sentence becomes the old of the next sentence. Themes and rhemes in this type are connected continuously by repeating identical or relevant words. The following is a passage with the simple

linear TP type.

(2.5) The stomach (T1) produces gastric juice, which contains dilute hydrochloric acid (R1). The acid (T2) kills most of the bacteria in the food (R2). The partly digested food (T3) passes next into the duodenum (R3). (Li & Liu, 2005, p. 56)

In the example 2.5, *the stomach* is Theme 1 and the rest is Rheme 1. Then *the acid* in the second sentence summarizing Rheme 1 becomes Theme 2 in the next sentence. In the third sentence, *kills most of the bacteria in the food* is narrowed down to the focus only on *the partly digested food* as Theme 3. The given information keeps advancing to bring out more new information, which formulates the linear progression.

TP with a Continuous/Constant Theme

In the second type, more than one rheme deal with the same theme. With the same theme repeated, readers' attention is surely drawn to what the rhemes mention. The following passage is the example of this type.

(2.6) The brain (T1) contains 10 billion nerve cells, making thousands of millions of connections with each other (R1). It (T1) is the most powerful data processor we know (R2). And it (T1) is under intensive investigations by scientists nowadays (R3). (Li & Liu, 2005, p. 56)

In Example 2.6, Theme 1 *the brain* is substituted as *it* in the following two themes. Therefore, on seeing the subjects of each sentence, readers can easily know the passage is about human brain. The same theme is presented by three different and new rhemes to make the passage understood easily.

TP with a Hypertheme

In this type, each theme is derived from a hypertheme so that every sentence can be linked semantically or logically. This type is given in Example 2.7.

(2.7) New Jersey (hypertheme) is flat along the coast and southern portion: the north-western region is mountainous. The coastal climate (T1) is mild, but there is considerable cold in the mountain areas during winter months. Summers are fairly hot. The leading industrial production (T2) includes chemicals, processed food, coal, petroleum, metals and electrical equipment. The most important cities (T3) are Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Trenton, Camden. Vacation districts include Asbury Park, Lake Wood, Cape May and others. (Daneš, 1974, p. 120)

In (2.7), Theme 1, 2 and 3 are all inferred from "New Jersey", the hypertheme. They can be viewed as the sub-categories of the hypertheme.

Exposition of Split Rheme

In this pattern, each sentence will share a common rheme which is then split into two or more partitions. Each of the divided rhemes will become the theme of the following sentence. See Example 2.8:

(2.8) All substances (T1) can be divided into two classes (R1): elementary substances and compounds. An elementary substance (T2') is a substance which consists of atoms of only one kind (R2'). A compound (T2'') is a substance which consists of atoms of two or more different kinds (R2''). (Daneš, 1974, p. 121)

An elementary substance and a compound are both parts of *two classes*, Rheme 1 in the first sentence. And they have their own new information to describe them respectively.

TP with a Thematic Jump

Though Daneš viewed the last type as the modification of the simple linear TP type, it is apparent to find one of the themes was skipped as a result of its redundancy or explicitness. The progression can be found in Dr. Martin Luther King's speech as follows:

(2.9) It (T1) is obvious today that America has defaulted on the promissory note in so far as her citizens of color are concerned (R1). Instead of honoring this sacred obligation (T2), American has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." (R2) But we (T3) refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt (R3).

This passage can be illustrated by the simple linear TP type, with its Rheme 1, *the promissory note*, turning into Theme 2, *this sacred obligation*. However, what can be substituted by *we* in the third sentence is *the Negro people* in the second sentence. Therefore, there must be a sentence, whose theme or rheme refers to Theme 2 and then moves to Theme 3, and it is omitted between these two sentences. In fact, because the theme carried in the deleted sentence appears both in the previous and later sentences, readers are still capable of indentifying *we* as *Negro people*.

Other Two Rhematic Progression Types

Despite Daneš's (1974) concern about the thematic content, other possible progression types, the connection between a rheme and the preceding theme or rheme,

are not taken into consideration. To make the above possible links enhance the coherence progression, some researchers (Cloran, 1995; Crompton, 2004; Hawes & Thomas, 1996; Mauranen, 1996) proposed two more types whose focus is shifted to the rheme parts—rhematic progression (hereafter RP). The following dialogue is the example Cloran offers:

(2.10) Mom: It (T1) is too cold for *passion fruit* now (R1).

(2.11) Mom: *They* (T2) don't like the cold weather (R2).

(2.12) Mom: Do you (T3) think we should plant a *passion fruit* vine at our new house (R3)?

(2.13) Stephen: Yes...yes.

(2.14) Mom: It (T4) usually takes a couple of years before you get many *passion fruit* on your vine (R4).

(Cloran, 1995, p. 390)

The TP between Example 2.10 and 2.11 is Daneš's (1974) simple linear TP type as Rheme 1, *passion fruit*, becomes Theme 2, *they*. Then what is happening between Example 2.11 and 2.12 is the first type proposed by Cloran (1995), that is, Theme—Rheme progression (see Appendix C). The previous theme directly refers to the next rheme. This can be defined as TP with a subsequent rheme. Then the progression in Examples 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14 put all their emphasis on rhemes. Therefore, Rheme 3 and Rheme 4 are exactly the same thing. This type can be viewed as TP with interrelated rhemes (see Appendix C).

To sum up, five TP and two RP types are defined to make the coherence progression more complete. Therefore, the present study will include these types to examine the students' written works.

Previous Studies on TP

Then this section presents the studies previously conducted on TP analysis. First of all, TP has been used to analyze the professional texts and to specify the progression types in them. The first kind of texts is the editorials in the newspapers written by native writers, which were compared with the ones written by nonnative writers (Hawes & Thomas, 1996). No significant difference has been found in these writers' essays. Sade (2007) then applied TP to explore the religious tracts, and

Downing (2001) analyzed the ‘leisure’ pages in newspapers and magazines by TP as well. The next type of texts examined is academic writing—the scientists’ writing (Ventola & Mauranen, 1991; Weissberg, 1984). In addition, TP is also employed to examine the textbook passages (Agawa, 2004; Alonso & McCable, 1998, 2003; Jalilifar, 2010; Lan, 2008; Lee, 2009; Li, 2009). However, these relevant studies only lay emphasis on the readability of the written texts. In other words, no interaction between readers and writers is concerned.

The next concern of TP starts dealing with the coherence of college students’ writing, and these learners are found inclined to manage the concepts very well. The analyzed texts are mainly gathered from two sources: the writing tasks in composition class (Chao, 2002) and the examination passages (Crompton, 2004; Faigley & Witte, 1981b). Then the constant TP type predominates over the linear and hyper-theme progressions in high-rated essays (Chao, 2002) and the compositions of the skilled native writers (Crompton, 2004). Like the research on revision, skilled writers’ writing here is compared to the unskilled ones’ to show the TP types which are adopted more frequently in the essays written by the former. However, Mustaffa and Aman (2007) found their limited-English-proficiency undergraduates also possessed the potential for producing coherent essays with marked themes and TP types. As a result, it is concluded that it may be feasible for teachers to instruct TP to students, especially the ones with low English proficiency (Mustaffa & Aman, 2007).

Then the focus has been shifted to examine the feasibility of instructing the coherence analysis and its positive effect on students’ learning of the coherence analysis. In Zhang’s (2010) study, her experimental group was taught TP after a pre-test and she found these non-English majors’ attitudes toward writing turned positive. Besides, her participants’ performance in writing and coherence was meanwhile enhanced by the end of this one-month study. However, the TP instruction

in her study was not illustrated carefully.

Therefore, a detailed procedure of teaching TP—thematic operational approach—was developed (Cao, 2008; Ren, Cao, Gao & Li, 2009). With the approach applied, the writing coherence of Cao's (2008) 32 non-English sophomores and juniors was considerably improved, so she concluded the promising effect of teaching TP on college students' writing. In fact, when examined carefully, Cao (2008) only required her students to practice some exercises on TP types rather than compose some written texts. Therefore, her TP instruction was not clear enough. Then Yang (2008) primarily emphasized the process of students' learning TP and their analysis of assigned discourse. With the students working cooperatively, his instruction of TP trained his participants to analyze a sample text related to their major. Therefore, he reached a conclusion that TP instruction implies the success of teaching writing.

All in all, the above-mentioned studies on TP instruction proved it is feasible for teachers to teach TP and further help their students make progress in writing coherence. However, there are actually some problems. First, all of the participants in these studies were college students with intermediate or advanced English proficiency. Second, with only one written text analyzed in most studies, it is unlikely to objectively generalize the writing improvement in students' writing. Third, these studies were all conducted within an extremely short time—one month. Lastly, the way to identify the themes and rhemes in sentences is ignored because the specific units that can connect other sentences mainly depend on the cohesion. Therefore, the current study focused on the low achievers, who practiced writing multi-drafts in 20 weeks, by developing a more detailed teaching process consisting of TP and CD. The reason is as follows.

The Integration of CD and TP

Both TP and CD seem to be appropriate to analyze a text (to name but a few:

Cao, 2008; Crompton, 2004; McCarthy, 1991; Reid, 1993; Scott, 1996; Tsao, 2004; Zhang, 2010; Zhou, 2007; Yang, 2008); however, some problems also appear if each of them is implemented respectively. CD is often viewed as part of creating cohesion in texts (Halliday & Hasan, 1976); nonetheless, a coherent text needs more beyond the mere operation of cohesive devices (Stotsky, 1983). Moreover, Halliday and Hasan (1976) also pointed out that the interpretation of textual connections only by the identification of specific words or phrases is not enough to fully see through the implicit implications within a context. Therefore, Theme-Rheme structure needs to be added to the analysis of a text. The following are the examples which explain that semantic meaning or relation sometimes cannot solve the ambiguity in sentences.

(2.15) John wanted Bill's horse — (2.15-1) but *he* wouldn't give it to him.

(2.15-2) but *he* wouldn't pay him for it.

(2.16) These ponies these children had were given by their grandparents.

(2.17) *They're* staying here now.

In Example 2.15-1 and 2.15-2, the personal reference *he* is both used to refer to the old information in Example 2.15. The reason why readers can know the first *he* is the replacement of Bill and the other *he* is *John* lies in the semantic relation carried by the pronoun. By contrast, in Example 2.17, *they* could be *these ponies* or *these children* in Example 2.16. The interpretation of *they* can depend on grammatical functions, so the actor, subject and theme are different units in Example 2.16: they are *grandparents*, *these children* and *these ponies*. In Example 2.17, *they*, as the first component of the sentence—theme, is actor and subject as well. Furthermore, the analysis of Daneš's TP types can be applied into the examples and thus *they* definitely refers to *these ponies*. The theme of the previous sentence is the most probable target of cohesive reference item (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Therefore, in analyzing the text structure, CD helps TP structure concentrate on smaller units in a sentence; at the same time, TP also reassures the textual progression by examining the positions of CD.

In conclusion, based on the literature reviewed, CD and TP have been respectively proved to successfully track the abstract cohesion and coherence implied in the written texts especially produced by high achievers. These skilled writers' achievement in applying CD or TP to their writing can be easily recognized even though they never learn CD or TP beforehand (Cao, 2008; Chao, 2002; Crompton, 2004; Tierney & Mosenthal, 1983; Watson Todd, et al., 2007; Weissberg, 1984; Yang, 2008; Zhang, 2010; Zhou, 2007). In fact, when taught CD or TP, these high achievers also held positive attitude toward the instruction (Lee, 1998, 2002; Liu, 2000; Tsao, 2004; Zamel, 1983b; Zhou, 2007). To be brief, whether the skilled writers acquire the ability to apply CD and TP to their writing innately or not, the distribution of CD and TP in their discourse has been essential to their well-organized and coherent writing. However, how these high achievers possess the ability to apply CD and TP remains uncertain since most of the relevant studies have only focused on the students' final written products.

Besides, a large number of studies on these high achievers' good-quality writing have been conducted to date, while low achievers were found unable to make progress in writing on account of their failure to focus on the content-level problems (Fitzgerald, 1987; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Perez, 2000). To make matters worse, the constant comparison between high and low achievers makes the latter more helpless, which ascertains no possibility of making any change (Porte, 1996, 1997; Vann & Abraham, 1990). Although, in Mustaffa and Aman's (2007) study, their low-proficiency college students' writing was proved to be somehow capable of applying TP to make their written texts coherent, little research has actually employed the systematic instruction of CD and TP for the possible solution to the low achievers' poor writing quality. Therefore, more studies are needed to be made to explore the effect of instructing CD and TP on low-proficiency students writing performance

since CD and TP have been regarded as helpful strategies in the good-quality writing. Besides, these students' development of writing and attitudes toward the learning of CD and TP will also be associated with the effect of learning CD and TP, so what they will go through in the writing process and how they will view the instruction of CD and TP are also needed to examine.

Research Questions

Therefore, in this study, TP was taught to the high school underachievers when revising in writing class and writing conferences to investigate its effect on their writing progression. Since they are found to tend to focus on linguistic elements (Raimes, 1985), CD was integrated to familiarize the students with the smaller units to detect the semantic relation between sentences. Besides, not counterparts of skilled writers any more, the unskilled ones learned CD and TP to revise both the surface and content in their writing in this study. Their writing performance and progression were examined quantitatively and qualitatively to address the research questions:

1. What effect will the instruction of CD and TP have on low achievers' writing?
2. What progression will low achievers show in the process of developing writing when analyzing CD and TP by themselves?
3. How will low achievers feel about coherence instruction after learning how to analyze CD and TP in their writing?

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

The current study was conducted to investigate how EFL students benefited from the instruction of CD and TP when writing. To explore the implicit writing process, qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted. In this chapter, the design of this study is presented. First of all, the selection of the participants is described in detail. The next section displays the different sources of data collection, together with the collection procedures illustrated. In the end, the analysis of the above collected data is introduced as well.

Participants

The participants were chosen from one of the researcher's classes in a senior high school in Taipei, where students generally start learning to write in English after the ninth grade. During the instruction of writing coherence, these 39 eleventh-graders, majoring in liberal arts, were divided into this class with different levels of English proficiency. Most of them had learned English for over 4 years but never formally learned how to write in English. In the subsequent year, to enter their ideal colleges, all of them would take the Scholastic Aptitude English Test (SAET), one of whose sections requires its examinees to write compositions. Therefore, all the participants in this study were eager to learn the way to write in English.

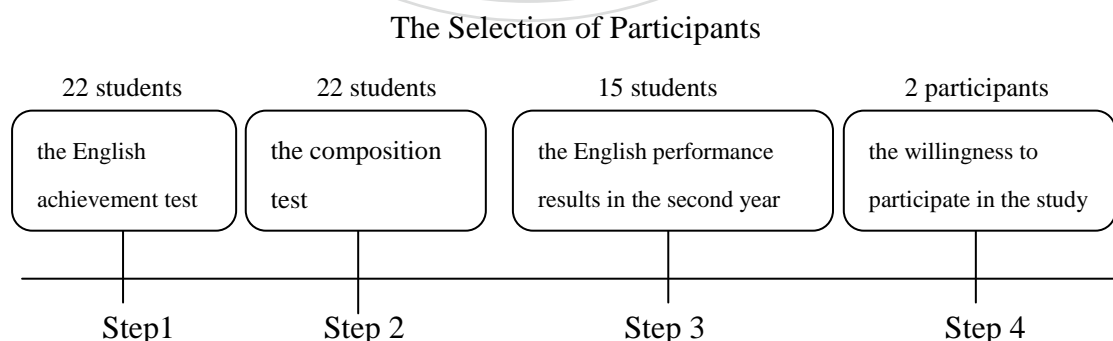
In practice, due to the tight semester schedule and large class size, the researcher was not allowed to fully explore the development of each student's writing. A case study research was thus adopted to investigate the students' writing process. The reasons for a case study are described as follows. First, Nunan (1992) reported that a case study is realistic for practitioners and provides various opinions with its

three qualitative characteristics: “naturalistic (spontaneous speech), process-oriented (taking place over time) and ungeneralizable (very few subjects)” (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 12). Second, a case study has been “... proven to be the most effective way to examine the writing process...” (Zamel, 1983, pp. 169) because the process can be viewed as a cognitive series of decision- and choice-making (Flower & Hayes, 1981), which is difficult to understand, or to add strength to what students have learned. Besides, the implications for the writing process as a focus for a case study can be discovered by: 1) “monitoring: ... discovering the extent to which the treatment... has been implemented... [; 2)]... causal explanation: discovering or confirming the process by which the treatment had the effect that it did” (Reichardt & Cook, 1979, p. 21). To be brief, a case study completely corresponds with the theoretical and practical needs for doing the present study, so a few students would be chosen to take part in the 20-week study.

Selection

The selection of participants was adapted from Porte’s (1997) operational identification of the qualified underachieving EFL writers, as shown in Figure 3.1. The following are the steps of selecting the participants of the study.

Figure 3.1



In the first step, all the eleventh-graders in the researchers’ school were required to take an achievement test to examine how they had learned English in the beginning of the second school year since they entered senior high school. In the test, the

non-choice parts, including translation and writing, were scored by their English teachers with the classes and names on the papers sealed. The average of the choice and non-choice parts of the class was 48. More than half of the students got their scores under this, namely, falling in the bottom 50 % of the class, which was in line with the heterogeneous English proficiency levels in this class. The average of these 22 students was 36.

Next, each of these 22 students was given a description-type composition test to finish in 50 minutes. These compositions were subsequently assessed by two qualified teachers of General English Proficiency Test (henceforth GEPT). However, all of these students' grades scored less than half of the full score. At the end of the semester, only seven of them passed the English academic performance of the second year. Then the researcher interviewed the rest fifteen students to explain the procedure of the study. The sign-up sheets were passed to confirm their willingness to participate in the study. At last, only two of them showed great interest in this and signed up. Therefore, they were also asked to sign informed consent documents (see Appendix D) to make sure they all fully understood the process of the whole study. To keep their privacy, they were called Bob and Peter (pseudonyms), and their written works throughout the study were examined to see what progression was in them.

Raters

This section introduces the other participants—two GEPT raters and two other researchers who analyzed the writing coherence.

GEPT Raters

The raters are the researcher's colleagues, whereas the students they taught were junior to the researchers. They thus did not know Bob and Peter. These two teachers are also qualified GEPT trainee teachers of writing. Both of them are experienced in teaching English and scoring students' compositions; moreover, they still regularly

receive training to confirm their scoring.

The rated passages were separated into two sets: one was from the participant-selection process and the other was the two cases' written essays. The former was firstly sent to the raters to determine the qualified underachievers in the beginning of the study. The latter was assessed by the raters in the end. Before sent to the raters, all of these texts were typed and were the same as what the students had written. Besides, they were numbered without informing the raters of the selection of these works (see Appendix E). To elicit the explicit focus on textual coherence from the raters, the CEEC composition rating scale (see Appendix F) was adopted as it is more detailed than that of GEPT. Besides, the raters both knew the titles and instructions of all the compositions the participants had written; meanwhile, to assure the reliability between them, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated. This is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

The Reliability of the Raters

	Writing performance	Writing coherence
Pearson r-value	.679	.598

According to the above table, the two raters' Pearson correlation coefficients achieved the noteworthy level; therefore, the reliability of the two raters was dependable.

Coherence Researchers

Besides the two raters, the researcher of the present study and another rater, a researcher of the Master of Arts in English Teaching (ETMA) in National Chengchi University, analyzed CD and TP of the two participants' final written products. Her analysis data were collected to be assessed with the researcher's analysis. Similar to the previous analysis of the raters' reliability, whether the evaluation between the two researchers was consistent was also illustrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2
The Reliability of the Researchers

Writing coherence	
Pearson r-value	.570

The coefficient presented that the reliability of the researchers' coherence evaluation was trustworthy as well.

Data Collection and Procedure

Based on Lee's (2002) study, the data collected throughout the study were classified as follows: 1. product data: the students' written drafts and their scores rated by the raters and researchers; 2. process data: transcripts of the writing conferences and interviews; 3. perception data: the transcription of questionnaires, interviews and journals. The diverse ranges of data sources from a variety of methods established the validity of this case study (Nunan, 1992). Besides, after the source of the above data is presented, the subsequent section explains how the data were collected.

Product Data

The product data, including the revised versions along with the raters' scores and comments, were collected during the study. There were four essays revised with the aid of the researchers in the writing conferences, and three others completed by the participants themselves. Then the procedure of collecting the product data produced by the participants, namely, the instruction and application of CD and TP during the study, is described as well.

The Participants' Written Drafts and the Raters' Comments

To help the students improve their writing and analyze the writing coherence at the same time, the writing tasks the participants did were primarily related to the topics used in the SAET. That is, the types of these compositions were mostly pictorial narration and sometimes description. The former type included: 1. the narration of comic strips which is considered easier; 2. the narration of one picture

which was a new type in 2009, which CEEC adopted to make examinees able to use their imagination as much as possible. However, the examinees were found unable to perform well on this type of writing test (Lin, 2009). Despite that, the above-mentioned types of writing were all included in this study to hopefully equip the participants with the capability of knowing how to deal with different types of writing. Initially, three narratives of comic strips were the first writing tasks, and then the participants went on to practice writing descriptions. In the end of the study, they were required to write one-picture narratives.

Then all of the written essays were sent to the GEPT raters. First, they scored the holistic writing performance according to the CEEC rating scale. Then they were also required to make comments on the participants' writing. To avoid the subjectivity of these comments, the raters mainly followed the ones based on the CEEC rating scale to make their comments consistent.

The Procedure of Collecting the Product Data

In view of the obscurity of teaching coherence in most studies (Alonso & McCable, 2003; Chiu, 2004; Lee, 2002; Nunan, 1994; Shen, 2004; Veluz, 1992; Yang, 2008), a set of well-developed instruction of CD and TP was designed (see Appendix G). Unlike the previous studies whose foci were on writing itself, the coaching in the present study combined the teaching of writing with reading. The following were the reasons why the reading was integrated into the writing instruction. First, the inspiration of reading enables students to think in critical ways. Second, the comprehension of the reading texts provides students with different ideas for some topics. Third, the authentic writing in the reading passages sets a good example of new ideas, organization, language mechanics, etc. Lastly, the background source of the reading becomes the model writing especially for foreign language learners of low and intermediate proficiency level (Hao & Sivell, 2002; Matsuda, 2003).

Reading class. At the start of the coherence instruction, the reading passages in the textbooks were typed in the handouts to avoid the interruption of new vocabulary or sentence patterns with different colors and fonts. After 3- to 5-minute silent reading, students were asked to skim the reading again to find the topic sentence of each paragraph to recognize the main idea. Then they scanned the text again to search for some specific information the authors tried to convey. The understanding of the main idea and key points in the reading helped students to get the gist and comprehend the global coherence of the text.

In the subsequent class, students were given a CD-TP chart with the CD and TP categories classified and illustrated with examples (see Appendix H). Besides, the textbook reading, mostly adapted from magazines, speeches, novels or experts' works, was again typed into different sections in the other handouts to make it easier for students to examine the coherence. Then students were led to differentiate the theme and rheme in each sentence, recognize the inter-sentential relations by pinpointing CD, and draw the TP types alongside each paragraph (see Appendix I).

Writing class. After the reading instruction, model paragraphs written by some students (see Appendix J) were also provided to make students familiar with what to write and how to proceed in the writing procedure—prewriting, writing and revising, which took most students almost one class period or more to finish. Students had to generate their ideas about the topics after reading the composition instructions. Before starting to write, the students could choose one of the three ways to gather ideas in the pre-writing stage: 1. mind mapping: writing down any related words or phrases that came up to mind; 2. question list: asking themselves questions about the topic to write; 3. free writing: writing a passage without thinking over grammar, spelling and punctuation, etc. No matter which way students opted to use, they were advised to write down as many ideas as possible.

The writing stage required students to single out the more related ideas in the prewriting stage. First, they had to decide which ideas to adopt or cross out. Then the selected ideas needed to be organized based on their relevance to the discourse topic. The more general the ideas were, the more possibly they could be the topic sentence in each paragraph. The other ideas were thus classified into further explanations to support the topic sentences. In this way, students could reasonably organize their ideas rather than order sentences randomly.

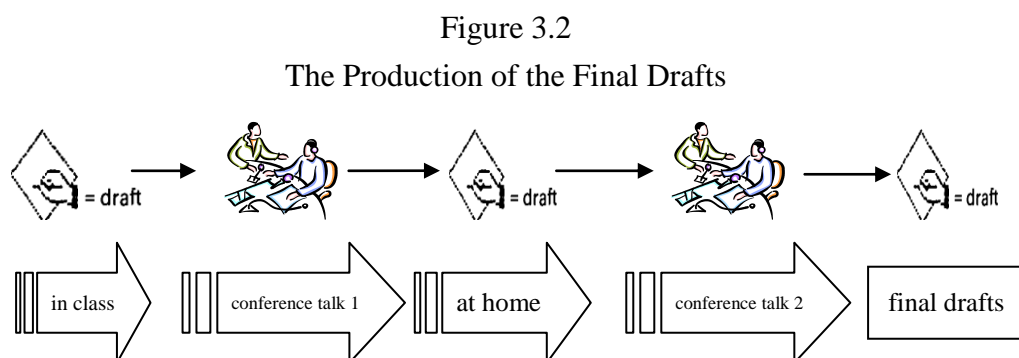
In the revising stage, the procedure of analyzing TSA, developed by Conner and Farmer (1990), was adapted to operate CD and TP in students' written pieces. Students firstly were required to number their sentences, identify the theme and rheme in each sentence, and draw a line between these two parts. As for the theme types, the participants only had to be familiar with the ones frequently appearing in their own writing, such as subject, adjunct, and so forth. Then students had to circle or underline the words which were relevant to the words either in the former rheme or later theme, and find out each word's cohesive category according to the CD-TP chart (see Appendix H). If no CD was found, students were required to examine if the distinction between the theme and rheme was appropriate and to rewrite their sentences until the connection was established.

Finally, the progression of the topic in each sentence was illustrated with the guidance of CD. Then students could chart the progression types after their writing (see Appendix K). On the other hand, when no progression between sentences was found, students needed to go back to their drafts to see if there was any inappropriate CD. Moreover, during the searching process, they were allowed to discuss these problems with their classmates or the researcher who walked around the classroom to ensure if any alternative words could be used to establish connection. In the meantime, the linguistic errors in their drafts could be revised.

The above teaching process was practically improbable to occur in the writing conferences as this would take so much time that the participants and the researcher might have felt overwhelmed. By integrating the coherence instruction into the normal class, the participants were able to practice searching for CD and TP in every kind of reading with other classmates. Accordingly, in the conferences, what the researcher had to do was primarily to confirm if the participants understand what was taught and how their operation of CD and TP proceeded.

The Two Participants' Written Works

After the participants learned how to distinguish the different CD and TP types in the accomplished essays of the textbook, they did the same writing exercise as others did in the fifty-minute writing class. As they became more familiar with the normal process of writing, they had to finish writing as soon as possible within a class period to train their writing speed in the later writing tasks. After that, their writing pieces were returned with scores and comments given by the researcher. Few days later, Bob and Peter would take turns to attend the writing conferences with their texts revised, along with CD and TP marked in their own writing. The focus of the second drafts was essentially on coherence, organization, and the linguistic mechanics. Based on the discussion in the first conferences, Bob and Peter would revise the same draft again. The procedure is shown in Figure 3.2.



These final products of each writing exercise were collected and then rated by the GEPT trainee teachers. They would give each draft two scores: writing performance and coherence. The scores of the participants' fourteen final drafts would be compared, and at the same time, the coherence of these works was analyzed as well. Based on these scores, whether there was any progression on these written essays could be shown.

Process Data

In this section, why the study adopted writing conferences is described first. Then the procedure of the writing conferences was illustrated in detail, while the interviews, also the perception data, would be discussed in the later part.

Why Writing Conferences?

The present study adopted the writing conference, which is considered a practical and effective way to immerse participants in the writing processes. On top of that, some features of writing conferences exactly correspond with what the present study tried to explore: the consideration of written drafts and writing processes, and the development of students' independence to revise on their own (Bowen, 1993; Duke, 1975; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Huang & Tang, 1997; John & Gilchrist, 1999; Lin, 2000; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Saito, 1994; Sperling, 1990; Yeh, 2001). Above all, writing conferences, unlike the classroom instruction, are able to aid the low-achievers in understanding the teaching and written comments with ease as teachers can switch their ways to teach different students in the one-to-one conferences (Bowen, 1993).

To understand the progression of coherence in the students' writing, eight conferences were held with each participant in a consultation room in the teachers' office during the five-month study. Unlike the preceding studies (except Huang & Tang, 1997; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997), the teacher/instructor in these writing

conferences was the researcher herself for the following reasons. First of all, the current case study aimed at recording the writing development of the researcher's own students by instructing them different writing skills, which is consistent with the teacher/action research, also one type of case study defined by Stenhouse (1983). Besides, composition teaching with CD and TP is not widely realized and accepted in authentic teaching situation here in Taiwan, especially in high schools. It was practically impossible for the researcher to observe a competent teacher teaching coherence in writing conferences. As an on-the-job teacher herself, the researcher had difficulty allocating extra time watching the other teachers' teaching especially in writing conferences, where the instructors were almost college teachers in most research. The last reason was that collaboration in this teacher/action research was infeasible because its conference time was at the lunch break, the only available time when the participants could show up. This situation corresponded precisely to Nunan's (1992) claim that collaboration is not "a defining characteristic of action research" because of these aforementioned "practical reasons" (p. 18).

The Procedure of the Writing Conferences

First of all, every conference averagely lasted for 20 to 40 minutes and was held in the teachers' office. To shorten the inherent distance between the participants and the researcher in the typical classroom lectures, the furniture in the consultation room of the teachers' office was set based on Arbur's (1977) "best physical arrangement" (p. 339). That is, both the student and teacher could see each other and meanwhile read the drafts together; therefore, the eye contact in the conference talk occurred unaffectedly. Besides, the conferences were taped with the participants informed in advance.

Next, each conference talk consists of three main stages. Firstly, the researcher and the participants would discuss their problems when they wrote in class or at home.

Then the participants themselves reread their drafts again to ensure if the cohesion and coherence they had found exactly existed. When they were stuck or paused, the researcher would guide them to find the connection by asking them to repeat the sentences or confirm what they wanted to express. The last stage was the time for the students and the researcher to reconfirm the discussed ideas or raise other related questions. Before the conference dismissed, the next appointment would be made. After these stages, the participants would revise the drafts again and write down what they thought and how they felt during the writing and conferences in their journals.

Perception Data

Finally, perception data was gathered during and by the end of the study. The collected data was the participants' journals written between conferences, final questionnaires and interviews. These personal documents were the retrospective information consisting of the cases' "affective factors, ... [,] and [their] own perceptions..." (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983, p. 189).

Journals

The participants' journals were written between conferences to display their views of everything about the writing class, the discussion in the conferences or other relevant issues, which they might not think up at the time of the conferences or writing (see Appendix L). In this way, some related information about the participants learning, such as the problems they encountered when writing, and the link between the learning and teaching of CD and TP could be revealed (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman & Conrad, 1990). However, because the participants were quite busy with their schoolwork, they occasionally forgot to keep the journals or delayed turning them in. It was thus essential for the study to adopt another way to explore more about the students' perception of the whole process of the teaching and learning CD and TP.

Questionnaires

Therefore, both of the participants had to complete the questionnaires (see Appendix M) in the consultation room at the end of the study. The questionnaire was adapted from the Rose's (1984) self-report questionnaire to elicit the approaches adopted by the participants, the problems they had in the writing process and their views of learning CD and TP. The questionnaire was comprised of the closed-response and open-response questions. They were divided into two main categories to meet the goals of the study: the writing development, and the perception of CD and TP in writing. Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, it was sent to the researcher's experienced colleagues and other ETMA researchers first to ascertain its reliability. Based on the suggestion of these teachers and researchers, the questionnaire was revised to fit every aspect of the study.

Interviews

To explain possible obscurities in the journals, conference talks and questionnaires, the subsequent interviews with the participants were conducted for at least one hour to clarify: 1. "data on stages and process of acquisition" (Nunan, 1992, p. 149)—the progression of whole learning and coaching process; 2. what the participants were thinking about the writing process (Merriam, 1992)—their viewpoints on the learning of cohesive ties and TP types. The interviews were recorded with the participants informed in advance. Besides, the semi-structured interviews were conducted because it was more flexible for the interviewer to conduct the interviews without being confined to certain questions. Most important of all, this was more accessible to the participants' inner thoughts. As to the interviewees, they were allowed to give certain degree of control over the progression of the interview (Nunan, 1992). The questions in the interview (see Appendix N) focused on the self-reflection on how the participants viewed their development and how they felt

during the composing process.

Data Analysis

The above data were thoroughly examined to resolve the proposed research questions. The process data were first analyzed either between the conference talks or after them to be recursively compared with the preceding conference transcripts, which were carried out prior to the ones of the perception data. Next, once the perception analyses came to an end, they would be used to contrast with the analyses of the process data and the participants' product data, which were spontaneously evaluated by two GEPT teachers in the end of the study. The subsequent sections described the processes and objectives of analyzing the collected data.

The Analysis of Product Data

To answer the first research question—what effects the instruction of CD and TP have on the low achievers' writing, their written works were first rated by the GEPT raters to examine the scores of their holistic writing performance and writing coherence. In addition to the scores of the participants' writing, the researchers' analyses of coherence focused on whether the participants could correctly identify CD and TP in their written drafts. The GEPT raters' scoring and the researchers' analyses of coherence would be compared to scrutinize how the instruction and application of CD and TP would influence the cohesion and coherence in the participants' writing. In this way, whether the participants made progress in writing coherence would be easily identified.

Since GEPT raters scored the participants' writing based on the CEEC composition rating scale, the following sections present how the two researchers analyzed cohesion and coherence based on CD and TP.

The Procedure of Analyzing CD and TP Types in the Written Essays

The analysis of the participants' written texts was similar to the coaching

procedure of CD and TP. To begin with, the theme and rheme in each sentence were investigated as the students did when they revised. In fact, as Shen (2004) mentioned, senior high school students might have trouble delimiting the distinction between the theme and rheme in one sentence. Therefore, Berry (1992) concluded that the words or phrases prior to the verb should be the theme, which could “include the thematic elements contributing to the coherence in the writing texts” (as cited in Ravelli, 1995, p. 220).

Afterwards, based on each T-unit in every sentence, the inter-sentential connection with the next theme needed to be recognized in accordance with Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) CD, together with reference to Mo’s (1991) model, in the rheme part of the first sentence. The preceding theme sometimes could be connected to the next theme, or the previous rheme might be associated with the next theme or rheme. The coherence identification kept carrying on in the subsequent search in the remainder of the written works.

After the cohesive words were located, the TP type was then relatively straightforward to be inspected. The procedure of analyzing the coherence in the participants’ written essays was illustrated with the following text.

(3.1) (1) *Measurements are needed in many everyday activities.* (2) *In kitchens you will find measures for volume (measuring cups), mass (scales and weights), and temperature (cooking thermometers).* (3) *Accurate measurements are especially important for scientific experiments.* (4) *In a laboratory, make sure your measure meets your needs.* (a cloze test in DRET, 2006)

The first step of the analysis started with the recognition of theme and rheme. The distinction of theme and rheme was drawn primarily based on pre-verb one, including the first-constituent or subject theme (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). As a result, the themes in these four sentences were *measurements*, *in kitchens you*, *accurate measurements* and *in a laboratory (you)*. T1 and T3 were both the grammatical

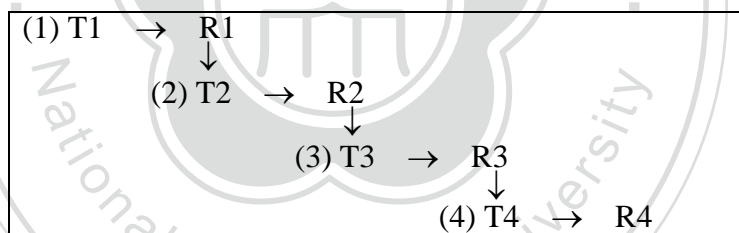
subjects; T2 and T4 belonged to the multiple themes.

In the next step, the words or phrases related to the ones in the previous or subsequent clauses were marked and numbered on the basis of the CD-TP chart (see Appendix H). T2 was the ellipsis of “the activities in kitchens”; T3 was the synonym of T2; T4 could be viewed as the place where the *scientific experiments* were performed, and the laboratory was one part of doing experiments. So, *experiments* is the hyponymy of *laboratory* in lexical cohesion, and the numbers of these CD categories in the CD-TP chart were 3, 5-1-2, and 5-1-3.

The final step was the illustration of TP. The topical development was apparently revealed with the detection of the aforementioned cohesive words. The paragraph was a good example of the simple linear TP presented in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3

Daneš 's Simple Linear TP (Daneš, 1974, p. 118)



The Scale to Score CD and TP Type

The analyzing procedure was diagrammed in a rating scale adapted from the ones utilized by Mustaffa and Aman (2007), Lan (2008) and Zhou (2007). The scale was employed to score the coherence marked in the participant’s writing by the researchers. The researchers also had to distinguish the themes and rhemes by copying the sentences in the chart. As shown in Table 3.3, the above-mentioned example 3.1 was rated in the scaling chart.

Table 3.3

Scaling Chart of CD and TP

Sentence No	Theme [Theme category]	Rheme	Cohesive words	Check
(1)	Measurements [Subject as theme]	are needed in many everyday <u>activities</u> .		√
(2)	(Of <u>the activities</u>) In kitchens, you [Multiple theme]	will find <u>measures</u> for volume (measuring cups), mass (scales and weights), and temperature (cooking thermometers).	3 ellipsis & 5-1-1 repetition	√ √
(3)	<u>Accurate measurements</u> [Subject as theme]	are especially important for scientific <u>experiments</u> .	5-1-2 synonym	√ √
(4)	In <u>a laboratory</u> , (you) [Multiple theme]	make sure your measure meets your needs.	5-1-3 hyponym	√
TP types	(1) T1 ----> R1 ↓ (2) T2 ----> R2 ↓ (3) T3 ----> R3 ↓ (4) T4 ----> R4			√ √ √
Total coherence score				9

As long as the specific cohesive words or phrases between two sentences were underlined, each sentence would get a check—a check means a point. Besides, the CD category between two sentences would also be marked according to the chart of CD and TP (see Appendix H). Except for the first and last sentences, the other sentences would be given one or two checks if there was cohesion between sentences: first, the theme could be related to the previous rheme or the same as the previous theme; second, the rheme of a sentence might become the theme of the next sentence. Therefore, six checks were all listed among the four sentences and the cohesion of this passage got six points. Next, on the basis of the identified CD, the inter-sentential TP types were also drawn in the bottom of the chart. Once the thematic progression was established by the cohesive devices found between two sentences, the progression could get a check, that is, one point. It was likely that no topical progression appeared even if the cohesive devices were identified, and then no check would be marked there. Then the total points would be listed in the bottom column. Finally, the more checks one written text got, the more coherent it was.

The Analysis of Process Data

The analysis of process data—the transcription of the writing conferences—can be used to address all of the three research questions: the effect of CD and TP instruction on the participants' writing, the development of their writing development, and their attitudes toward the instruction of CD and TP. On one hand, these transcripts could reveal what development displayed in the participants' writing by examining how often and why they adopted certain types of CD and TP at the time of writing, and so on. In this way, this could also be compared with their writing performance shown in the product data to reconfirm the effect of teaching CD and TP. On the other hand, through the talks between the participants and the researcher in the conferences, how they felt about learning CD and TP could also be traced by the specific coding schemes; moreover, the analysis of process data could be referred to the perception data to see whether there are similarities and differences between them as well. The following are the details of the procedure of analyzing the process data.

In the transcription of the recorded writing conferences, how the participants' development of writing and views on CD and TP were recognized was described as follows. In the writing conferences, the researcher led the participants to review their written drafts so as to make sure whether they made revisions with CD and TP considered. As the study proceeded, whether the participants cultivated the ability to apply CD and TP to their writing would be elicited through the discussion between the researcher and participants. In addition, when it came to the problems the participants might encounter when writing and revising, how they viewed the teaching and learning of CD and TP could also be traced based on the conference transcription.

In the conference transcription, some specific patterns identified in the writing conferences transcripts were analyzed (Bowen, 1993; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Huang & Tang, 1997; Lin, 2000; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Sperling, 1990; Yeh,

2001). The analysis was conducted with the progression of the writing conferences. For example, before the next conference, the preceding conference talk was transcribed to see if there was any repetitive pattern. Then the similar patterns would be classified as the same category. Once some different subsequent patterns appeared in later conversations, the previous transcripts were analyzed again to avoid leaving those new divisions behind. These divisions were then composed of the schemes to code the conference talks (see Appendix O): 1. the application of CD and TP; 2. the revision of content, linguistic mechanics, CD and TP; 3. the attitude toward CD and TP; 4. the other relevant problems. And these coding schemes therefore became the criteria for identifying the participants' writing progression and their attitudes to CD and TP. Besides, the quoted writing conference transcripts would be recorded as the following example. For instance, Peter's writing conference on his seventh draft would be coded as P-WC-D7. And the quoted lines, such as line 15 to 20, would be added as P-WC-D7-015-020.

Due to the focus on the writing coherence, the study did not categorize the interaction between the teacher and students in writing conferences, which were the media of teaching coherence. Therefore, the discussions about applying CD and TP to the examination of writing coherence were singled out with the other discussed issues remaining in the transcription. In other words, the topics related to revising in the conference contexts were specified to determine their influences on students' writing. Besides, these revisions were compared with what was discussed and suggested during the conferences to investigate whether the participants comprehended the application of CD and TP.

The Analysis of Perception Data

The next data analyzed to address all the three research questions were the perception data. The first one was journals gathered during the study, another one was

questionnaires and the other was interview transcripts collected in the end of the study.

These three types of data were analyzed to understand:

1. whether the participants could be aware of the effect of learning CD and TP—to see if this corresponds with the effect found in the product data;
2. what development of the participants' writing would be revealed during the instruction of CD and TP, which was also shown in the process data;
3. how the participants view the learning of CD and TP, which could be explored in the transcription of the writing conferences as well.

Journals

The first set of the data was the diary-journal protocols adapted from Schumman and Schumman's (1977) analysis. The coding items of the analysis were limited to the following: 1. satisfaction/dissatisfaction and understanding of the process of the instruction; 2. confidence or frustration in the writing process; 3. desire to maintain their own writing habits; 4. the similarity/difference of applying CD and TP; 5. the timing of applying CD and TP (see Appendix P). In this way, the participants' thoughts and their development of writing would be precisely revealed. However, because of their low English proficiency, Peter and Bob were allowed to write in Chinese as this not only could avoid extra burdens to their schoolwork but also elicit their real thoughts. The data were all translated into English to be analyzed. To make the analysis clear, for example, Bob's journal of the second draft would be recorded as B-J-D2, and the quoted five lines from line 3 to line 7 would be added as B-J-D2-03-07.

Questionnaires

To answer the second and third research questions, the relevant information was used to validate the analyzed transcriptions of the journals, writing conferences and the participants' written products with the recurring patterns examined in the

questionnaire as well. Additionally, the questionnaire was also conducted in Chinese and then translated into English for analysis. Like the journal analysis, the question quoted in the certain part would be recorded as, for example, P-Q-I-2, which meant Peter's second question on the first part.

Interviews

At last, the subsequent interviews were also conducted almost in Chinese. When transcribing the recorded data, the researcher adopted the interview log (see Appendix Q), developed by Marriam (1992), to identify the terms and other necessary information in the interviews by playing the tapes, along with taking important notes. Then these notes were then coded based on the time when the transcribed sentences exactly occurred so that it was a lot easier to find the exact location of the specific words or phrases. These recorded conversations were recursively examined to discover the repetitive patterns, with such categories as TP, CD, progression, attitudes and other problems pinpointed in the transcription (see Appendix R). Then the way to decode the interview transcripts was the same as the way adopted in the above-mentioned data. So the quoted Bob's interview transcript, for example, line 2 to 10, would be coded as B-I-002-010.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The aim of this chapter is to display the results of the present study. To address the research questions, the analyzed data are classified into product data, process data and perception data. The data will be compared to examine the effect of students' learning CD and TP, the development in their writing coherence and their attitudes toward the coherence instruction. The analyzed data were illustrated in Table 4.1, which shows the data were closely interwoven to generate the results.

Table 4.1

The Data Examined to Generate the Results

RQ	Data	Product Data		Transcription of process and perception data			Raters' comments
		Written texts	Writing conferences	Final interviews	Questionnaires	Journals	
RQ1: Effect	Progress in writing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Progress in writing coherence	✓		✓	✓		✓
	The frequency of applying CD and TP	✓					✓
RQ2: Development	Writing coherence		✓	✓		✓	
	Writing skills		✓	✓	✓		
RQ3: Attitudes	Confidence in writing		✓	✓	✓		
	Attitudes to CD and TP			✓	✓	✓	

The above table is illustrated based on the collected data to show the categories found to answer the research questions. First, whether the instruction of CD and TP had any influence on the participants' written works would be examined by the analysis of the process and perception data. It was found that the participants were both aware of their progress in the holistic writing performance and the writing coherence. This finding could be also compared with the related quantitative

data—the rating of GEPT raters and the researchers and the frequency of the participants' applying CD and TP categories—to correspond with the participants' improvement. Next, based on the process and perception data, the progression of the low achievers' writing was divided into the development of their writing coherence and writing skills. Finally, the third research question about the participants' attitudes toward CD and TP was also addressed based on the process and perception data. This part consisted of whether the participants could have confidence in their writing and how they viewed the learning and teaching CD and TP.

The Effect of Learning CD and TP on Writing

The first goal of this study was to ascertain what influences the instruction of CD and TP would have on the low-proficiency students' writing. There were three main effects examined: the progress in writing, the improvement in coherence and the frequency of CD and TP categories employed by the participants. The significant effects are presented with the analyzed results of the following sets of data. One is the process and perception data from the questionnaires, the transcription of journals, writing conferences and interviews. The other source of data is the participants' product data, inclusive of their revised texts, the raters' scoring and the researchers' analysis of coherence.

Effect 1: Progress in Writing Performance

From the process data and the perception data, the participants were both found to be exactly aware of their progress in the holistic writing performance. Besides, they also attributed their improvement to the changes that took place in their writing. The improvement could be found in the participants' product data as well.

The Awareness of the Improvement in Writing Performance

The data analyzed in this section included the questionnaires and the transcription of journals and final interviews.

First of all, the questionnaire data demonstrated the participants actually perceived the improvement in their own writing performance. In the items related to the writing performance, both Bob and Peter agreed that they could write in English better than before. This is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

The Questionnaire Items Related to Writing Performance

Questionnaire items	B	P
5. <i>I can write better than before.</i>	agree	
13. <i>My English writing has made progress.</i>	agree	
14. <i>I find it easier to write in English better than before.</i>	agree	
18. <i>The description in my writing is more meaningful and reasonable than before.</i>	agree	
29. <i>I think My English writing is better than before.</i>	agree	
30. <i>After finishing writing, I will have a sense of achievement.</i>	agree	strongly agree

Both of them thought it was much easier to produce better texts than previous ones as they knew the way to write English passages. Therefore, when asked to confirm some questionnaire items in the interview, they gave the researcher positive answers. The following are the excerpts from the participants' interview transcription.

I can write something more in detail now because of the learning of CD and TP.

B-I-071

I would just think I could get higher grades [when I can finish writing in the limited time] because I have learned CD and TP.

P-I-238

Bob's writing was always longer than Peter's and got higher grades more often, but he still thought he could write more than before at the end of the study. As to Peter, who usually lacked confidence in his grammar and wrote shorter passages, he then thought his writing could score higher as long as he could finish it. The responses made in the final interviews and questionnaires proved that the learning of CD and TP had a significant effect on the participants' perception of the improvement in their writing performance.

In addition to the above data retrieved by the end of the study, the journals kept by the participants at the time of the study reported the promising progress in their writing. For example, in Peter's journal of the last draft, he concluded that he was able to write better and better throughout the study.

Anyway, I think that my writing has progressed a lot until now because of the learning of CD and TP.

P-J-D7-06-07

Most importantly, Peter thought it was the learning of CD and TP that made it possible for him to make progress in his writing. Therefore, Peter not only noticed he could perform much better in writing than before but also realized that his achievement in writing was reached through learning how to apply CD and TP in his writing process.

In comparison with Peter, Bob's performance was much steadier. Though he usually got higher scores in writing than Peter, he finally mentioned in his final journal that his writing deserved to be rated high.

I thought it's easy to get high scores in the composition part when I wrote in English and employed the categories of CD and TP.

B-J-D7-03

Despite some difficulties he might encounter when writing, Bob indeed felt that his writing made progress during the study. In fact, most of his written drafts were rated higher than Peter. To conclude, both Bob and Peter could sense the application of CD and TP had helped improve their writing performance and they apprehended this gradual growth in the writing. Simply put, the learning of CD and TP to some extent helped the participants make improvement in their holistic writing performance.

The Changes Leading to the Progress in Writing Performance

From the process and perception data, it was also found that the participants could make progress in the writing because they were able to overcome their main problems and make some changes at the time of composing a written essay. Due to

the different problems they encountered during the writing process, this section is divided into two parts to present the two participants' respective situation.

Bob's case. As a careful and prudent person, Bob tended to spend much more time thinking over how to answer questions in the writing conferences and the final interview, deciding which ideas generated in the prewriting stage to write down, and finishing composing a written text. In other words, Bob had difficulty managing his time well when writing. However, it seemed that Bob did not perceive the examination and application of CD and TP as an obstacle to writing regardless of the insufficient time at the time of composing a text. The following was an example from one of the transcripts of the writing conferences.

R: How much time do you usually spend searching for them [CD and TP] when writing?

B: About 30 minutes.

R: 30 minutes? Including the revised parts?

B: No, that doesn't include it.

R: So you must have spent lots of time.

B: But I think my writing seems to be better by spending some time examining the coherence.

B-WC-D1-123-130

In his first draft, it took Bob a great deal of time composing and revising with the application of CD and TP. Because few problems with the search of CD and TP were raised in the conference, Bob was capable of dealing with the analysis of CD and TP very well. In other words, since his writing benefited from the examination of coherence by means of CD and TP, the time required to undergo the whole writing process did not matter a lot to Bob. As a consequence, his focus on the problem of time management which could not be solved in a short time could be shifted to his writing quality.

In the later draft, Bob still needed some time to identify CD and TP though he mentioned it was not difficult to search for CD and TP when writing. This was shown in the following transcription.

R: Do you think it's alright to look for CD and TP?

B: Well...
R: Did it take you lots of time?
B: ...Mm... I think it's fine.
R: It's fine in which way?
B: It's not difficult to find CD and TP.
R: So what do you think causes this?
B: Mm... my writing is already good because it is coherent.
R: So the analysis of CD and TP makes your writing good?
B: Right.

B-WC-D2-084-093

From the transcript of Bob's second writing conference, Bob directly pointed out that he found it easy to identify CD and TP in his writing even though it still took him much time to finish the entire writing task. Furthermore, Bob again mentioned the problem of time management in the final interview.

R: ...okay, you've written a lot up to now. You were also asked to search for CD and TP when writing. What do you think these two revision strategies?
B: (pause)... took a little more time, but... they are really useful.

B-I-140-143

In the above excerpt of Bob's interview transcription, he reconfirmed the fact that the identification of CD and TP did great help to his written texts. In view of the interconnection among the above qualitative data, Bob was found to be able to transcend the problem of insufficient time at the time of writing because of CD and TP. With the help of these two strategies, Bob was allowed to improve his performance in writing instead of continuing working on other repetitive errors. That is to say, CD and TP had a positive influence on Bob's writing performance.

Peter's case. Unlike Bob, what Peter cared a lot was his grammar and generation of ideas. According to his homeroom teacher, Peter was apt to finish a task step by step; moreover, he would be easily interrupted if some problems occurred. In other words, he would not go on writing until he found the solution to one problem.

This was presented in Peter's first writing conference.

R: Did you encounter any difficulty when doing this task?
P: Mm... little difficulty, but I couldn't find the connection between some sentences. Then I just tried my best to connect them together even though there were still some problems with grammar.
R: Why?
P: Because I know how to connect them with the examination of CD and TP.

P-WC-D1-001-005

From the above transcript, Peter admitted that he still could not deal with some grammatical problems. However, he decided to skip those linguistic errors and make his sentences connected by identifying CD and TP in the first place. On top of that, Peter would insist he finish the search of CD and TP on his own. The following was an example.

R: You cannot find the connection here. Let me see...

P: ... I want to check this again..

R: Okay.

P: The disconnection should be in this sentence...

R: It's fine. Take your time. I'll come in later.

P-WC-D1-012-016

As shown in the transcript, Peter just did what he said—trying his best to solve the discrepancy in his writing. This was very different from his way to deal with grammar because he had a tendency to wait for the correction of certain grammatical errors. As a result, the learning of CD and TP helped him further investigate the cohesion and coherence in his writing rather than waste time solving something beyond his ability.

Apart from the linguistic problems, Peter also had trouble generating appropriate ideas when writing, so he usually spent plenty of time figuring out what to write. Nevertheless, with the advance of the study, Peter was more and more familiar with the application of CD and TP, so he found himself able to generate relevant ideas. In other words, when identifying and considering CD and TP in his written works, Peter could produce related ideas to make the texts longer. Peter wrote down how he found his writing improved in one of his journals.

In this composition, I didn't have problems thinking over what to write because I could come up with more ideas by means of applying CD and TP. However, I still couldn't overcome the problem of words. Therefore, it's more troubling for me to replace some words for others.

After I revised my writing, the text became very fluent, but I had to spend lots of time revising after writing.

P-J-D2-01-05

Peter had experienced the improvement in his writing performance, for he had little difficulty generating ideas to develop his writing. On the other hand, Peter still kept

his other problems in mind, like time and grammar. Nonetheless, these problems would not be the only focus any longer since Peter was capable of finding another way to make his writing better with the help of CD and TP.

This change also appeared in Peter's writing conference of draft 5, which scored higher than the preceding description draft.

R: Now you won't forget what just come up to your mind. Some students tend to forget how they want to develop their stories when going back to read what they write...

P: ... it's easier for me to memorize and think of what to write now.

R: Good. Then what do think cause this?

P: I could write faster, or I couldn't write so much in such a short time ...

R: Did you correct any words you wrote down?

P: Yeah, I revised some of them.

R: You did? How?

P: Yeah...by looking for CD and TP...

R: So how do you feel about CD and TP?

P: They really help a lot.

P-WC-D5-110-121

With the practice of applying CD and TP, Peter was able to produce more relevant ideas through the identification of CD and TP. In this way, it did not take Peter too much time to think of what to write. Once there was more time left, he could make good use of it to improve the other aspects of his writing by making revision. Without other problems to worry about, Peter therefore could make the writing process continue smoothly.

To sum up, the instruction and learning of CD and TP had a significant influence on the participants' writing performance. They both realized not merely the benefit brought by CD and TP to their written works but the changes occurring in the writing process. The improvement also existed in the rating of the participants' written works.

The Progress Shown in the Product Data

Besides the qualitative data, the raters' scoring of the participant's drafts (see Appendix S), inclusive of the holistic writing performance and writing coherence, also helped investigate whether the participants made progress in their writing. Each

participant's seven written works were divided into three groups: narration of comic strips (draft 1, 2 and 3), description (draft 4 and 5) and narration of one picture (draft 6 and 7). Besides, drafts 1, 4 and 6 were revised by the participants with the help of CD and TP. The other drafts were first revised by the participants and then examined with CD and TP by both the researcher and the students in the writing conferences.

Based on the GEPT raters' scores, the allocation of the two participants' overall writing performance is displayed in the following figures. Figure 4.1 presents the distribution of Bob's narration of comic strips, description and narration of one picture; Figure 4.2 is Peter's.

Figure 4.1

The Distribution of Bob's Writing

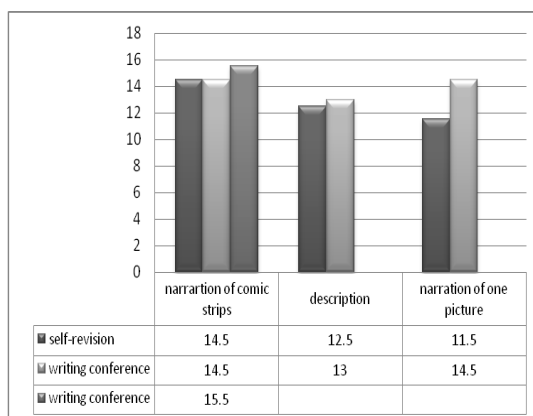
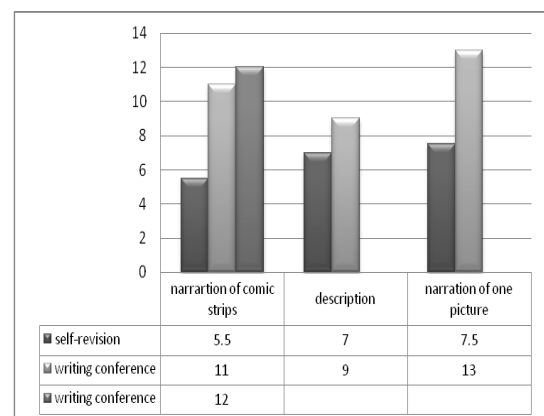


Figure 4.2

The Distribution of Peter's Writing



In Figure 4.1, Bob got one more grade in his third draft of the first type writing, 1.5 more grades in the second draft of the description and three more grades in the last type of the drafts. Moreover, Peter got 6.5 more points from his first draft to the third draft in the comic-strip narration type, 2 more points in the second draft of the description and 5.5 more grades in the last draft. In other words, all of the participants' second and third drafts in each type of writing scored higher than the first drafts. Therefore, it was apparent that both Bob and Peter made progress in the holistic writing performance in each type of writing. Besides, Bob's writing performance was averagely better than Peter's. In spite of this, the progress that Peter

made was much more significant than the one Bob did. Therefore, the instruction of CD and TP had a positive influence on the students' writing at the time of the study.

Effect 2: Improvement in Writing Coherence

In addition to the awareness of the improvement in their own writing performance, the participants were also found to be able to make progress in the writing coherence. On top of that, the participants also could explain how their writing coherence was improved. The above findings were supported by the product data, including the GEPT raters' and researchers' scoring of coherence, along with the former's comments on writing coherence based on CEEC rating scale.

The Awareness of the Improvement in Writing Performance

The data analyzed in this section included the questionnaires, the transcription of the journals and final interviews, and some of the participants' written works listed together.

From the questionnaire data, Bob and Peter both thought their coherence improved more than before in three ways, as presented in Table 4.3. One was that there were greater and clearer structures in their later writing. In the meanwhile, the sentences in their writing were also organized much better than before. In addition, they both felt that what they wrote—sentences and paragraphs—could be acceptably associated with the assigned topics. In short, the participants themselves also sensed their progress in their writing coherence.

Table 4.3

The Questionnaire Items Related to Writing Coherence

Questionnaire items	B	P
6. I think the organization of my texts is better than before.	agree	
8. The coherence of the sentences and paragraphs in my writing is better than before.	agree	
11. I think the sequence of my sentences in writing is better than before.	agree	
20. I think the structure of my writing is better than before.	agree	
32. The sentences in my writing can correspond with the topic more than before.	agree	

33. <i>When writing, I find the sentences and paragraphs can correspond with each other better than before.</i>	agree
34. <i>The sequence of my sentences in writing is more reasonable than before.</i>	agree
35. <i>My writing is better organized than before.</i>	agree

The participants' consciousness of the coherence progress was revealed as well in the interview transcriptions. Instead of using the term coherence, they both mentioned their written texts became 'fluent' with few mistakes. The following are the examples: "Um... they [CD and TP] became the great help when I write (B-I-241);" "(they help me more in) fluency ... (B-I-250);" and "... because I can write more fluently (P-I-013)." These excerpts all corresponded with the results in the questionnaire data—the participants' awareness of the progress in the writing coherence was in line with the factors described in the questionnaire. To be brief, the participants both found their writing more coherent through identifying CD and TP.

Different Aspects of Perceiving the Progress in Writing Coherence

From the perception and product data, it was found that the participants' writing coherence could be improved because they were able to perceive the progress in different aspects. In view of this, this section separately presents the two participants' own distinct findings.

Bob's case. In his journal, Bob directly attributed the progress in writing coherence to the application of CD and TP.

I find that the cohesive devices in my high-rated texts are very complete, and the TP types are also very clear.

B-J-D7-01-02

Bob found that the learning of coherence made some of his written texts rated high, which indicated that Bob was able to discern whether his writing was coherent or not by identifying CD and TP. That is to say, the coherence in Bob's written products was facilitated by the application of CD and TP. In the meanwhile, his more coherent texts helped him get better grades. This could also be supported by the

comparison between his and the researchers' analyses of CD and TP in his seventh draft: Fight (see Appendix T). The categories of CD and TP types examined by Bob were the same as those analyzed by the researchers. Therefore, his identification of CD and TP was totally correct, which also led to the high grade of this draft (see Appendix S).

Peter's case. Peter on the other hand found his 'later' writing full of information that helped readers know about what he had written more completely. This was shown in the following transcript.

R: ... Then can you tell the difference between your previous writing and subsequent one in addition to fluency?

P: What difference...

R: Yeah.

P: Maybe there were more details in later writing.

R: You think there are more details?

P: Right.

R: What was the reason for the increase of details?

P: In the conferences, I had to tell more details.

R: You mean what made you think of more details?

P: ... because in the conferences, I had to tell the details in the story.

P-I-422-430

With many important details skipped in his previous written texts, Peter then was able to detect what was missed or not mentioned in his own writing on the basis of the given topics. This was also why his writing became much longer than that in the beginning of the study. Take Peter's last draft as an example. This was the narration of one picture, where three boys in uniforms seemed to argue with each other. The following draft was written within a limited time.

Peter's Draft 7: Fight (original)

Mark is a bad student in his class. Joe is also his good friend. One day, Mark and Joe planed to distroy something in the classroom. Peter listened to their word and talked to the teacher. The teacher punished Mark and Joe. They then wanted to find and fought with him.

Peter saw them coming and running out. They picked up a stone and threw at Peter. He began to bleed and was sent to the hospital. He stayed there for a week. Mark and Joe saw Peter staying in the hospital so long. They will apologize to him

when Peter left the hospital.

From the above draft, it was apparent that Peter missed some details, such as why Joe also wanted to destroy the classroom, who Peter was, when and where Mark and Joe met Peter, and so on. What was worse, some sentences were lack of proper cohesive devices so that the theme in each sentence could not keep progressing. Then the following was the revised draft of *Fight*.

Peter's Draft 7: Fight (revised)

Mark is the worst student in his class. Joe, one of Mark's classmates, is also his good friend. Joe is also a bad student in his class. One day, Mark and Joe planned to break the glass of the classroom. Peter, one of their classmates, was hearing their words and told to their teacher. Therefore, their teacher punished Mark and Joe. They were very angry at Peter, so they wanted to find him and tried to fight with him.

Peter saw Mark and Joe come and ran away. When they saw Peter running away, they picked up a stone and threw it at Peter. After the stone hit Peter's head, Peter began to bleed. Therefore, he was sent to hospital and stayed there for a week. Mark and Joe heard Peter might stay in hospital for a week so that they feel so sorry to him. They would apologize to Peter when he was allowed to leave the hospital.

With CD and TP examined carefully, more details were given to make the whole story more complete. For example, readers could know that Joe was also a naughty boy, he and Mark's trick was overheard by another classmate, they found Peter somewhere in the campus and bullied him, and that the naughty boys knew they did something wrong, and so on. Then Peter mentioned how he felt about the revision of this draft in his journal.

It's a little troubling to write down every detail in each sentence. However, I could avoid writing down sentences without worrying too much to make the words reach what the instructions required. When I looked for the themes and rhemes, I reread the text again to help myself correct the improper information and sentences.

P-J-D7-03-06

As to Peter, he found his coherence improved by thinking over sentences carefully. Most important of all, what he wrote would not be deviated from the assigned topics because every sentence could be closely connected to keep the themes move forward.

In other words, the identification of CD and TP allowed Peter to produce more detailed information to link every sentence and further to make progress in the cohesion and coherence in his written texts.

In short, the participants both found the improvement in their writing coherence with the application of CD and TP, which was shown in the perception data. Therefore, the instruction and learning of CD and TP not only facilitated the participants' holistic writing performance but also their writing coherence.

The Progress in Writing Coherence Shown in the Product Data

In addition to the qualitative data, the GEPT raters' scoring (see Appendix S) and the researchers' analysis (see Appendix U) of the participant's writing coherence also could reveal whether the participants made progress in their writing coherence.

The GEPT raters' scoring of coherence. Based on Appendix S, the coherence means obtained from the raters were further illustrated in Figure 4.3 and 4.4, indicating how the coherence in the participants' writing developed. Like Figure 4.1 and 4.2, the distribution was illustrated based on the three types of writing mentioned

Figure 4.3

Bob's Distribution of the Raters' Rating of Coherence

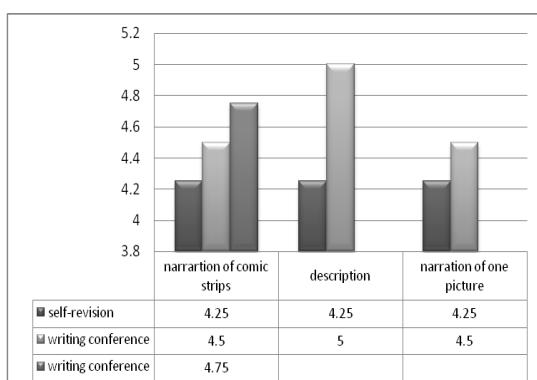
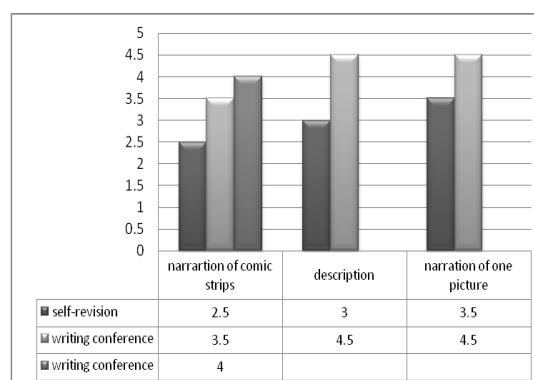


Figure 4.4

Peter's Distribution of the Raters' Rating of Coherence



Similar to the results of the participants' holistic writing performance, Bob's writing coherence was averagely rated higher than Peter's; moreover, the coherence of all his drafts was rated over 4. Averagely speaking, of Bob's second and third

drafts, he got 0.25 more grades in coherence in both the comic-strip and one-picture narration types. Besides, the highest grade of his writing coherence was the description type, where he got 0.75 more grades. In Peter's writing coherence of the comic-strip narration type, he got 1.5 more grades from his first draft through the third one. Peter also got 1.5 more grades in the description type. As to his one-picture narration, his last draft got 1 more grade than the previous draft. Though Peter's writing coherence was not as good as Bob's, his progress in writing coherence was also more remarkable than Bob's. That is to say, the participants' writing became more coherent and well-organized with the advance of the study.

The researcher's coherence scoring. Besides the raters' assessment of the participants' writing coherence, the coherence evaluated by the researchers (see Appendix U) was involved to further confirm the progress of the participants' coherence. The left main column was the ways of coherence scoring that the researchers designed to analyze coherence with CD and TP in the participants' writing. In this column, the "O" scores were the original ones given by the researchers. Then the scores were converted into the ones based on the coherence scoring of the CEEC rating scale and they were showed as "C". In this way, it is possible for the researchers' rating of coherence to be compared with the GEPT raters' rating. And the results of the conversion were listed next to the left main column.

Based on Appendix U, the coherence means of the researchers were illustrated in Figure 4.5 and 4.6 to present how the coherence in the participants' writing progressed. The distribution of the participants' writing coherence was illustrated based on the three types of writing as well.

In Figure 4.5, Bob's second and third drafts of the first writing type both scored higher in coherence than the previous drafts. In the first type of writing, he scored 1.12 more grades in his second draft and 0.1 more in the third draft. And these two

drafts were both very close to the full score: 5.

Figure 4.5
Bob's Distribution of the Researchers' Evaluation of Writing Coherence

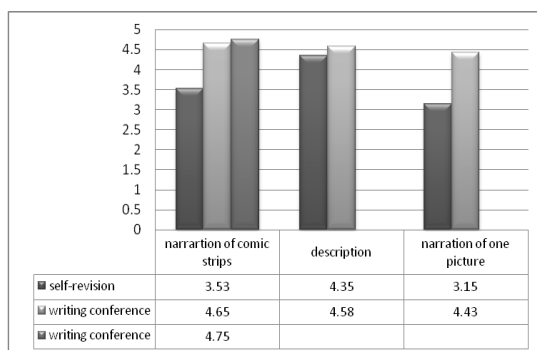
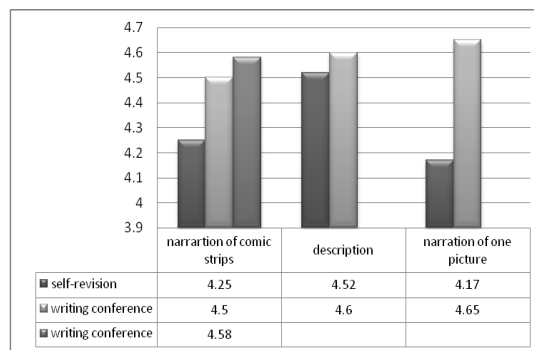


Figure 4.6
Peter's Distribution of the Researchers' Evaluation of Writing Coherence



Moreover, Bob got 0.23 more points in the second draft of the description type. In his one-picture narration type, Bob made the most progress: he got 1.28 more grades in the last draft. As to the coherence of Peter's comic-strip narration type of writing, he got 0.25 more grades in the second draft and 0.08 more grades in the third draft. Peter also scored 0.08 more grades in the second draft in the description type of writing. Besides, he also made the most progress in the one-picture narration type of writing: he got 0.48 more grades in the last draft.

In the researchers' rating of coherence, Peter's coherence averagely scored a little higher than Bob's, but Bob's progress was more significant than Peter's. As a result, the participants were proved to make progress in coherence, which is also corroborated by the GEPT raters' scoring. This suggests the instruction of CD and TP should have some positive effects on the coherence of the participants' writing. Their scores also indicate their great understanding and application of CD and TP.

Effect 3: the Frequency of Certain Categories in CD and TP

Then it is essential to examine how often the participants adopted CD and TP through counting the number of cohesive words and TP types in each draft. The results were gathered from the participants' written products, the researchers'

coherence analyses and the raters' comments on coherence. Through analyzing the frequency of CD and TP categories in the participants' writing, how the instruction of CD and TP affected the participants' adoption of certain kinds of CD and TP can be clearly identified.

The Analysis of CD

The categories of CD appearing in the participants' writing were checked to know if there was any connection between the CD categories used by the participants and their progress of coherence. Table 4.4 presents the frequency of the cohesive words applied in the participants' written texts. "B" represents Bob and "P" is Peter.

Table 4.4
The Frequency of Cohesive Words in the Participants' Drafts

%	D1		D2		D3		D4		D5		D6		D7		sum		
	B	P	B	P	B	P	B	P	B	P	B	P	B	P	B	P	
Reference	pronominal	20	40	27	27	33	25	27		14	25		18	38	22	23	
	demonstratives	7							10	14					2	3	
	definite articles				9	8		14			6	17		6	2	5	
	comparatives														0	0	
	sum of reference	27	40	27	36	42	25	27	14	10	29	31	17	18	44	26	31
Conjunction	additive			18											2	0	
	adversative	13				17	12.5	9		7			6		7	3	
	causal								20	29		17	6	13	3	9	
	temporal	7		27	9	8	12.5		20	7			12	13	10	7	
	continuative							9		10		6	6		4	0	
	sum of conjunction	20		25	9	45	25	18	0	50	43	6	17	29	25	26	19
Lexical reiteration	repetition	7	60	18	36	33	50	9	71	40	29	13	50	35	13	22	38
	synonym				9			9				25	17	6	7	3	
	hyponym	27		9	9			18	14		6				9	3	
	metonym							9			6			6	2	1	
	antonym														0	0	
	general items	20					25	9			13		12	13	9	5	
	sum of reiteration	53	60	33	55	27	75	55	86	40	29	63	67	53	31	48	50

Due to little use of substitution, ellipsis and collocation in the participants'

essays, these three categories were excluded in this section. The following is the process of how the results of CD frequency generated. First of all, the number of certain cohesive devices applied in one of the participants' drafts was counted. The first sentence would have one cohesive device, and the next sentence would have one or two cohesive devices to connect the previous sentence and the following sentence. Then the percent of the cohesive devices in one draft was calculated based on the total number of the sentences in one draft and so was the sum of Bob's and Peter's each CD category.

According to Table 4.4, the CD category which was applied most frequently in all of the two participants' drafts was lexical reiteration. This category appeared in each of the students' drafts. Pronominal reference was the second most that both of them adopted. The third category which appeared often in the students' writing was temporal conjunction. Then Figure 4.7 and 4.8 illustrate the distribution of the use of reiteration in Bob's and Peter's writing based on the three different writing types.

Figure 4.7

Bob's Distribution of Lexical Reiteration

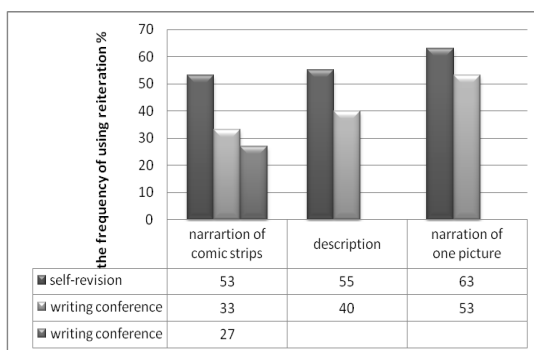
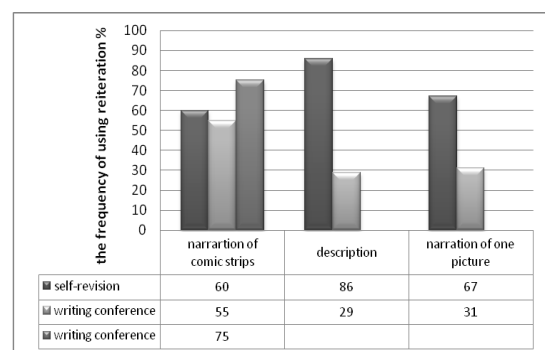


Figure 4.8

Peter's Distribution of Lexical Reiteration



The above two figures show that, except for Peter's comic-strip narration type, the participants both applied less and less reiteration categories in their other drafts. In other words, they attempted to avoid repeating the same words or phrases in their later drafts. The following figures are the distribution of the participants' application of reference.

Figure 4.9
Bob's Distribution of Reference

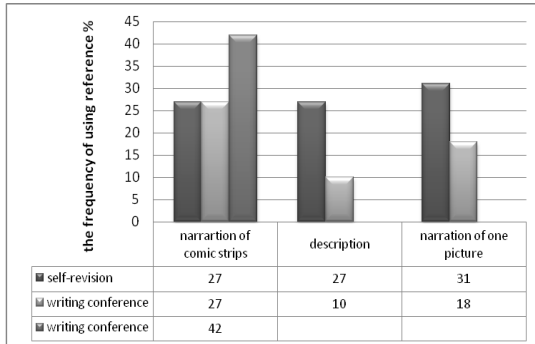
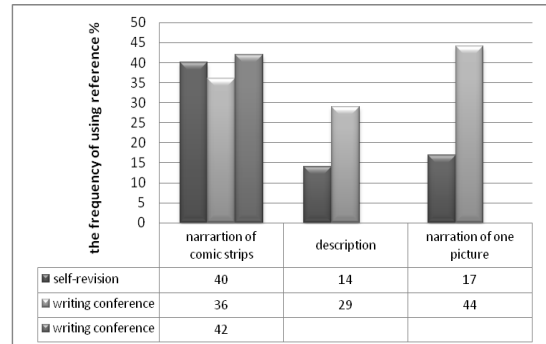


Figure 4.10
Peter's Distribution of Reference



In the above two figures, both Bob and Peter used more reference categories in their third drafts of comic-strip narration type. However, in the description and one-picture narration types of writing, Bob applied less reference in his later drafts, while Peter used more. Then Figure 4.11 and 4.12 show the distribution of the participants' application of conjunction.

Figure 4.11
Bob's Distribution of Conjunction

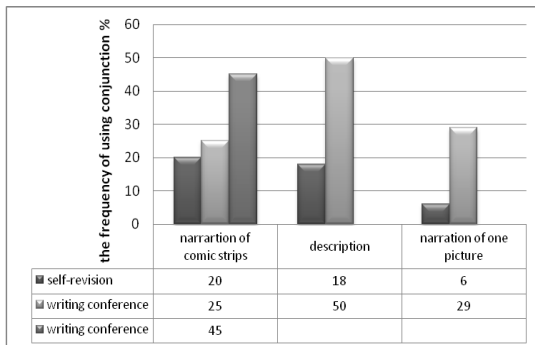
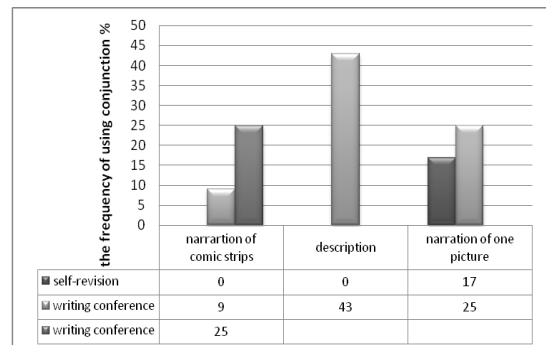


Figure 4.12
Peter's Distribution of Conjunction



Contrary to the application of reiteration, both the participants could write down more conjunctive words to make their sentences more connected in their later drafts. Most of all, Peter seemed to cultivate the habit of adding conjunctive words to his sentences because he never used this kind of cohesive DEVICE in the beginning of the study.

To sum up, the similarity between the cohesive words used by Bob and Peter

was the significantly increasing frequency of applying conjunctive adverbs; on the contrary, the frequency of reiteration decreased by the end of the study. Besides, the two participants showed different development of using some cohesive words. While Peter employed more reference but less reiteration in his later drafts, Bob used less reference but more reiteration. Without the same or similar words written by these participants, they learned to use proper cohesive words to make their writing more coherent. In either case, they both could make progress in their writing coherence. In general, the instruction of CD, to some extent, had its effect on students' performance in writing cohesion.

The Analysis of TP

Besides the exploration of CD, this section focuses on the coherence in the participants' written works. The frequency of the participants' application of TP types is recorded in Table 4.5. Three of the TP types—TP with a hyper-theme, split rheme and a thematic jump—were excluded in the analysis as the participants never used them.

Table 4.5
The Thematic Patterning in the Participants' Writing

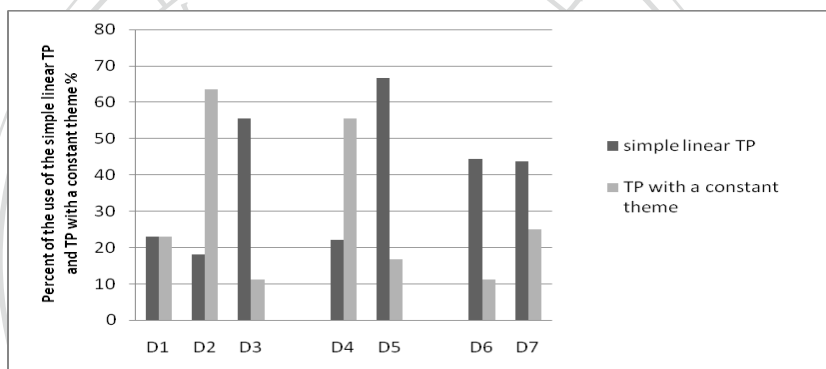
%		simple	TP with a	TP with a	TP with	without
		linear TP	constant theme	subsequent rheme	interrelated rhemes	TP
D1	B	23.08	23.08	21.37	21.37	11.10
	P	20	50	10	20	0
D2	B	18.18	63.64	0	9.09	9.09
	P	50	40	10	0	0
D3	B	55.56	11.11	12.28	12.28	7.69
	P	37.50	50	12.50	0	0
D4	B	22.22	55.56	11.11	0	11.11
	P	57.14	28.57	0	11.29	3.0
D5	B	66.67	16.67	0	0	16.67
	P	55.56	33.33	6.0	5.11	0
D6	B	44.44	11.11	0	11.11	33.33
	P	50	33.33	0	0	16.67
D7	B	43.75	25	18.75	6.25	6.25
	P	50	41.67	8.33	0	0
Sum	B	36.99	30.14	10.96	9.59	12.33
	P	45.90	40.98	4.92	4.92	3.28

The following is the process of how the results of TP frequency generated. In

the beginning, the number of TP types used in one of the participants' drafts was counted. Every two sentences could be identified one TP type. Next, the percent of the TP type in one draft was calculated based on the total number of the sentences in one draft and so was the sum of Bob's and Peter's each TP type. The distribution of each TP type in the participants' written works is illustrated in the following figures. The illustration is also on the basis of the three writing types that the participants wrote. First of all, Figure 4.13 and 4.14 show the distribution of Bob's and Peter's applying the simple linear TP and TP with a constant theme at the time of the study.

Figure 4.13

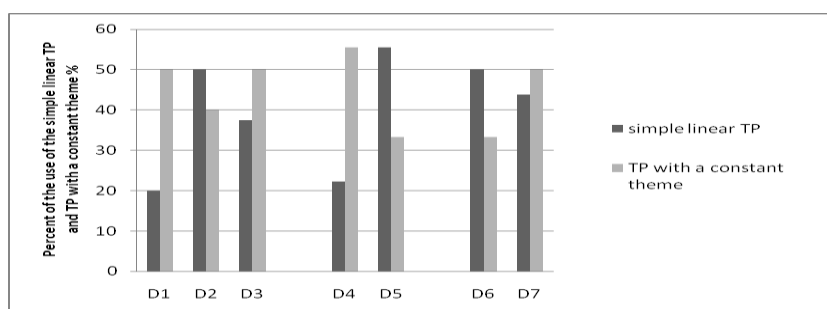
The Distribution of Bob's Use of Simple Linear TP and TP with a Constant Theme



From the above figure, it can be found that Bob was able to adopt these two TP types in turn. Moreover, Bob preferred to use simple linear TP type in his later drafts (D3, D5 and D7) of each writing type, while the TP with a constant theme accounted much higher proportion than the simple linear TP type except for D2 and D4.

Figure 4.14

The Distribution of Peter's Use of Simple Linear TP and TP with a Constant Theme

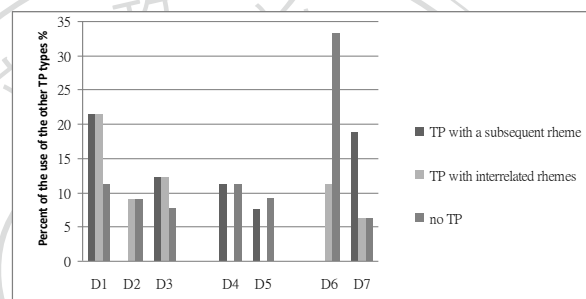


In Figure 4.14, we can find that these two TP types also took turns to appear in

Peter's written drafts. Besides, the proportion of Peter's applying simple linear TP and TP with a constant theme was far higher than Bob's. In addition, except for the description type (D4 and D5), the difference of the frequency of these two TP types in Peter's writing was not as significant as Bob's.

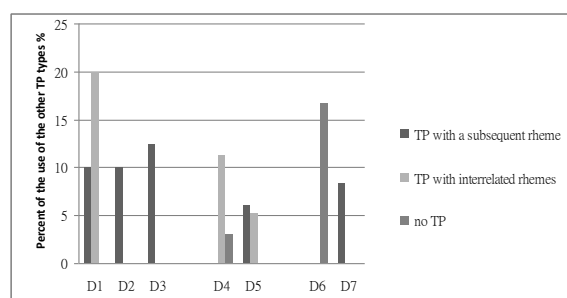
Then it is also necessary to examine how the participants applied the other TP types they learned in the study. Figure 4.15 and 4.16 present the distribution of the other TP types used by the participants.

Figure 4.15
The Distribution of Bob's Use of the Other TP Types



In Figure 4.15, it seemed that, compared to Figure 4.13, except for the description type, Bob tended to averagely apply simple linear TP, TP with a constant theme, TP with a subsequent rheme and TP with interrelated rhemes in most of his drafts. However, there were not any TP types among some sentences in each of his drafts, but the proportion of no TP type decreased in each writing type. Therefore, Bob's topical progression became more and more evident in his later drafts of these three different writing types.

Figure 4.16
The Distribution of Peter's Use of the Other TP Types



As shown in Figure 4.16, Peter applied few of these two TP types, TP with a subsequent rheme and TP with interrelated rhemes, in his later drafts. His application of TP types focused on the simple linear TP and TP with a constant theme. Additionally, only two of his drafts (D4 and D6) had no TP types. Therefore, Peter seemed to be able to make his sentences more connected than Bob.

In conclusion, though the frequency of Bob's and Peter's TP types was not exactly identical, the results presented that both the participants could apply well the TP types that they learned throughout the study. Moreover, with the combination of CD and TP, the participants could identify the TP types easily and correctly no matter what CD categories were employed. As a result, the participants were able to compose coherent texts with CD and TP carefully applied.

The Raters' Comments on the Writing Coherence

To explore if the above-mentioned distribution of CD and TP types was associated with the progression of the participants' writing coherence, the raters' comments on coherence were listed to be compared with the frequency of specific CD and TP types. The raters' comments are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6
The Raters' Comments on Coherence

			Points	Beginning and ending	Cohesive text	Transition words	Others
Narration of comic strips	Mystery novel (D1)	Bob	F	F	F	F	With detail, coherence
		Peter	G		F	F	With proper transition words and coherence s
	Spider (D2)	Bob	G	G	F	F	With details
		Peter	F		W	W	Weak conclusion
	English class (D3)	Bob	G	F		F	Well-knit story and proper transition words
		Peter		G	F	F	With proper transition words and coherence
Description of an	The most precious thing (D4)	Bob	F	F	F	F	Coherent paragraphs
		Peter		F	F	W	Weak transition words
	The thing I'll never do again (D5)	Bob	G	F	F	G	With proper transition words, coherence
		Peter	F		F	F	With transition words, coherence
	Earthquake (D6)	Bob	G	F	F	F	With proper transition words, coherence

	Peter	F	F	F	W	Fair coherence
Fight (D7)	Bob	F	G	F	G	With proper transition words, coherence
	Peter	F	F	F	G	With details, fertile imagination

G: good F: fair W: weak

The comments on Bob’s transition words and cohesiveness are almost ‘Fair’, which reassured the steady development of Bob’s coherence in writing. The good application of some related cohesive words helped him remain steady in his performance of writing coherence. On the other hand, Peter got less ‘Weak’ in his textual coherence and some of his drafts were even ranked ‘Good’ in terms of the use of transition words. Peter’s significant progress in writing and coherence corresponded with his application of more conjunction words and clear reference in his later writing. In line with the frequency of CD and TP in Bob’s and Peter’s writing, the comments they received all include proper transition words, good coherence and many details, especially in the later drafts in each writing types.

Therefore, besides the frequency of CD and TP types used in the participants’ written drafts, the raters’ comments on the coherence and organization also reflected the improvement in the participants’ writing. With the instruction of CD and TP, the participants both could choose and apply the proper CD and TP categories to make their writing more cohesive and coherent.

The Development of the Participants’ Writing

The process which the participants went through after learning CD and TP is the subsequent concern in this section. Certain types of writing development were categorized to answer the second research question from the process and perception data. The patterns of the data are classified as follows: the development of writing coherence and of writing skills.

The Development of Writing Coherence

The first concern was that the participants were able to get themselves quite familiar with the application of CD and TP by examining the process and perception data collected. Based on the data, the participants' few problems with coherence identification demonstrated that it was indeed feasible for low-proficiency students to acquire the ability to be good at CD and TP. The development would be described based on the participants' familiarity with CD and TP.

The Participants' Familiarity with CD and TP

From the transcription of the writing conferences, journals and interviews, it was found that the two participants were able to add something reasonable to make the coherence more complete when they wrote or revised their texts on their own by examining CD and TP. Take Peter's fourth conference transcript as an example.

... yeah, I added or crossed out some words when I could not find any CD and TP.

P-WC-D7-011

When discovering no connection in the texts, the participants not only were able to detect the lack of coherence, but they could know how to make up for the absence of the key words or phrases. That is to say, they applied CD and TP to their written texts to confirm if the coherence existed. If not, they would follow the trace brought by CD and TP to specify what they wanted to express in their writing. Furthermore, they did not decide the coherence categories at random. This indicated their ability to discern whether there was sufficient coherence in their texts.

On the other hand, Peter was also able to recognize whether a sentence was coherent after he revised his texts on his own. He even regarded the TP with a continuous theme used in some of his texts as a simple one.

But I used the very easy one, where the subjects in sentences were connected together.

P-WC-D5-135

No matter which type he adopted and investigated in his writing, it was apparent that he had a good grasp of identifying TP. He later recorded his finding in his last journal.

The context became better in the third sentence—Joe and Mark have the same habit—when it was revised as ‘Joe is also a bad student in his class.’

P-J-D7-001-003

After revising his final text, Peter found the revised sentences could connect the other sentences more closely than the previous one. In other words, with the study approaching to the end, Peter got more proficient in the coherence detection.

Therefore, both Bob and Peter mentioned that they found it uncomplicated to identify CD and TP when they did this by themselves at home.

No, it's not difficult to look for CD and draw TP.

B-WC-D3-004

Mm...little difficulty.

P-WC-D2-002

Now that the participants found it straightforward to employ CD and TP, the process of identifying coherence therefore grew fairly rapid. Take Bob's transcript of the second writing conference as an example.

R: Would you spend lots of time circling the cohesive words?

B: No... I just find them...

B-WC-D2-011-012

Due to little difficulty in identifying CD and TP, it undoubtedly took Bob less time to build up his textual coherence. That is to say, when Bob reread his written texts again prior to the writing conferences, it was effortless for him to trace the connection that had been made. Peter was on the other hand capable of detecting the wrong categories of CD or TP he had written down when discussing with the researcher in the writing conferences.

R: ... The connection between sentences 1 and 2 is okay. But you'd better check the connection between the next two sentences. Is there any better connection between them?

B: Um... it should be Joe...

P-WC-D7-021-023

In spite of the slight errors made by the participants themselves, they found the correct categories very soon with or even without the guide of the researcher in the writing conferences. This also corroborated the preceding assertion that the learning of CD and TP had a certain influence on the progress in the writing coherence.

Apart from the capability of correcting the loose inter-sentential connection, the participants were also trained to perform the task of analyzing CD and TP independently. For example, Bob found he could complete the process of identifying CD and TP whether the researcher helped him or not.

Yeah, there is no difference when I search for CD and TP in conferences or at home.

B-I-359

Therefore, when the notion of CD and TP was internalized, the participants then were able to operate the coherence identification individually whenever they wrote in English.

Therefore, Bob referred to the timing he would make use of to involve the CD and TP in writing compositions—when taking tests.

Yeah, I will think of CD and TP to use when I take a test.

B-I-285

Despite the time limit in a test, Bob still could think of CD and TP to use, which corresponded with what he previously mentioned: applying CD and TP was as normal as the other basic strategies he used in writing.

All in all, the above qualitative data exhibited the possibility to equip EFL low-proficiency learners with the revision strategies—CD and TP. The analysis demonstrated that low achievers could learn CD and TP well and apply them to their writing properly. In view of these findings, the participants were really familiar with the application of CD and TP.

The Development of Writing Skills

Another goal of the present study is to help the low achievers develop the ability to check the coherence in their written texts. From the process and perception data, the two participants were found to prefer CD and to focus more on content level in writing than before. Besides, revising also began to play a significant role in their writing process.

The Preference for CD

In comparison with CD, there was no remarkable development in the identification of TP because the participants had done very well in the analysis of TP since the very beginning of the study. Consequently, this section would only focus on the progression of CD. Then the qualitative data were probed to trace the progression of the participants' learning CD. First, the two participants' different development in preferring CD was presented. Then they were found to be clearly aware of the benefits brought by CD.

Different development in identifying CD. Because of their different characteristics, the following section would respectively describe the progression each participant went through.

At the start of the study, the participants decided the CD or TP categories of some words they had written in haste or with little care. Take Bob's first writing conference transcription for example.

R: Then what is the connection between the classmates and their appearance and personality?

B: ... co-occurrence.

R: Co-occurrence?

B: Or...

R: Do they exist together? But you said they are changing.

B: Hyponym?

R: Right.

B-WC-D2-020-026

When asked the cohesion between two of the sentences in his text, Bob made a quick

decision to choose one cohesive word. At that time, he still needed the guidance from the researcher. Despite this, Bob preferred to speak out the other probable choice as soon as he could; however, the answers were not always correct. As his homeroom teacher said, Bob was not a mentally agile student who always needed more time to complete something. Therefore, if he tried to do something in a hurry, it was easy for him to make mistakes. In the later writing conferences, Bob indeed spent more time than Peter making reply to most relevant questions raised by the researcher.

On the contrary, Peter at first had little idea of what category to pick out, so he would consider how to reply by pausing for a while.

R: ... For example, in sentence 8, it seems unrelated to the previous sentence. You can try to add something like the fourth category of cohesive ties. So which adverb do you think you can add to the eighth sentence?

P: ...

R: What relation is between the two sentences?

P: ...

R: The first subcategory is addition, which supplements the things mentioned before. Then the second one is adversative, like 'however.' Do you think the second one is okay?

P: No...

R: Definitely not, right?

P: Yeah.

R: So this one is impossible. Anything else? How about 4-5? Is it possible?

P: No...

R: How about the causal one? Is this possible?

P: Well...maybe...

P-WC-D2-027-041

From the above transcription, he had some problems determining the cohesion category even with the researcher's constant implication and guidance. According to the participants' homeroom teacher, Peter was a person of honesty and principle. Therefore, he made no reply until he had an affirmative answer. Unlike Bob, Peter usually could make his decision the moment he heard the researcher's questions in the subsequent writing conferences.

As a result, the participants were originally unable to differentiate the distinction between some of the cohesion categories very well. Because of their

dissimilar personal characteristics, the results presented in the qualitative data were also different from each other. Moreover, this was also caused by their casual and fast selection of words at the time of writing to finish writing as soon as possible owing to the time limit when they took tests.

Compared with the past experience of writing down or identifying whatever came to mind at the time of writing, the participants became more careful with the choice of what to be written down with the advance of the study. The following is Bob's example found in the last writing conference.

R: ... Then in the fifth sentence, the 'this' prior to 'lecture' can also be included. If 'this' is included in the theme, then what do you think their connection is in terms of cohesive devices?

B: (pause for about 2 minutes)...

R: Do you think it's 5-1-1? Then have to be exactly the same.

B: 5-1-2.

R: You think they are synonyms. Well synonyms mean we can use different words to describe one thing. The cohesive ties you found in the following texts are great. Yeah, 'lecture' is 'speech', so they are synonyms. So actually they refer to the same thing in a different way. Therefore, these two words we're now examining are not synonyms. Try again.

B: (look at the sentences and the reference chart again)...

R: The fifth category is not necessarily the only choice.

B: 1-3.

B-WC-D7-028-040

Unlike the early writing conference, Bob chose one certain category by considering more or listening carefully to the researcher's direction instead of identifying any cohesion category in haste. After thinking over the potential categories for a while, Bob was able to have the correct answers since he needed more time to figure out which to choose.

On the other hand, Peter could identify the cohesion items faster and more correctly than he could in the beginning of the study.

R: So either way is okay. Then what connection here do you think if your theme includes the subject? There is only one person in the previous sentence and two persons in the next. You can refer to the reference chart.

P: Co-occurrence...

R: Co-occurrence?

P: General terms....

R: So they appear together... this is not repetition... they are not exactly the same.... not synonym?

P: Right...

R: Not metonym... so you're right. Let's check the following sentences. Here you mentioned that Peter is their classmate. The TP type you drew here means the theme includes 'one day.' So Mark and Joe belong to the rest part of the sentence. However, Mark and Joe should be part of the theme.

P: Um.

R: Then Mark and Joe are not the comment. So what should be the connection between these sentences?

P: 5-1-6.

P-WC-D7-252-265

Without spending too much time figuring out what category to choose as before, Peter became confident in his decision, so he could identify the cohesion without hesitation. His progress in wiring coherence could be confirmed by his faster reaction to the researcher in the later writing conferences as he really learned how to apply the cohesion indicators.

The awareness of CD advantages. The participants were also clearly aware of how CD benefited their writing. In one open questionnaire question about how CD helped to improve their writing, Bob and Peter considered this point from different views. The first excerpt was from Bob's questionnaire data.

I used to have no ideas, but now I can make use of CD to find the words and to continue to write.

B-Q-II-7

Bob thought CD helped him to generate ideas by means of connecting the relevant words. This was later reconfirmed when he was interviewed by the researcher.

Because I usually had no ideas to write... with cohesive ties, the words I'd like to use... which can help me develop the ideas from certain words.

B-I-26

Therefore, the application of CD helped Bob solve the problem of generating ideas as the generation of ideas for Bob was once his big problem in writing.

R: ... Okay, what problems did you have when you did the yesterday's task?

B: ... the consideration of the beginning plot... which one is appropriate... I spent lots of time on this.

Now that the solution to the generation of ideas had been resolved, Bob was allowed to make his ideas induced and further organized them in a logical order. Similar to Bob, Peter then in his questionnaire data confirmed the benefit brought by the detection of CD in writing, which made the sentences connected well.

The application of CD made my written texts developed well in the beginning and in the end. The sentences in my writing wouldn't be connected to their previous or subsequent sentences without CD.

P-Q-III-2

Beyond the examination of words, Peter was able to comprehend how the learning of CD improved his writing organization. Therefore, in line with the analysis of the written products, this might be the reason why Peter's progress in coherence was more significant than Bob's, which distributed steadily throughout the study.

In addition, in Bob's case, he considered CD made the TP identification much more straightforward.

Cohesive devices were more easily to be identified.

B-I-260

His reason for that was found in the open-ended question in the questionnaire.

I thought CD was the connection from word to word, so I found it not difficult to find the categories of it.

B-Q-II-2

In view of this, Bob's preference for CD could be attributed to its concrete and explicit quality. For Bob, whose time was usually not enough to make use of, something specific in writing was definitely helpful in the process of searching for CD. Peter furthermore presented a more convincing reason.

No, it's not difficult to draw the TP diagram... It's easier to draw the TP diagram after I found the cohesive devices.

P-I-369

This was also the reason why the instruction of CD was combined with the one of TP. The participants found the progression of themes between sentences could

subsequently be revealed as soon as the categories of CD were recognized accurately. After all, the categories of CD were more explicit and concrete than the notion of TP.

Though the development of Bob's and Peter's writing cohesion was very different on account of their distinct personality, they both viewed the learning of CD as a facilitator in their writing.

More Focus on Content Level

Despite the fact that the participants paid more attention to the relatively surface-level cohesion, they meanwhile became used to focusing on the content level of their texts instead of laying sole emphasis on such linguistic units as tense and spelling, etc. Then they grew more cautious to develop the subsequent plots. As a result, more content could be created to make the written texts well-organized and closely-connected. The following excerpt was Bob's finding when he applied CD and TP at the time of taking tests.

R: When you take a test, will you think of CD and TP to use?

B: Yeah...

R: Like you said before, you would write and find CD and TP at the same time?

B: Right.

R: What do you think the advantage of doing this?

B: ...

R: Or why do you think of them?

B: ... it seems to become my habit when taking tests.

R: This has been your habit?

B: Yes.

R: Is this because you were required to do this by me?

B: (laugh)

R: So now you're in the habit of looking for them. How do you think the habit can help you?

B: These can help me make sure I don't deviate from the topic.

R: Okay... anything else?

B: It is much easier to develop the writing.

B-I-284-299

From the above transcription, it was incredible for Bob, who usually needed more time to write, to cultivate the habit of examining the coherence even in the time-limited tests. With the great help of coherence identification, Bob was able to

make his writing improved in the content level. Besides, when Bob exactly knew what he had written could be strongly associated with what the instructions required, he would feel less stressful, which made him keep writing assertively.

Additionally, Peter further found the application of coherence examination allowed him to lengthen his written products, which used to be much shorter and less coherent because many crucial details were left out.

R: ... Then can you tell the difference between your previous writing and subsequent one in addition to fluency?

P: What difference...

R: Yeah.

P: Maybe there were more details in later writing.

R: You think there are more details?

P: Right.

R: What was the reason for the increase of details?

P: In the conferences, I had to tell more details.

R: You mean what made you think of more details?

P: ... because in the conferences, I had to tell the details in the story.

R: Okay, I see. You were asked to do that, right?

P: (laugh)

R: You mean the conferences would make you think about more details?

P: Right.

P-I-422-436

As the main focus in each writing conference was the investigation of CD and TP in the participants' drafts, it could be inferred that Peter acquired the ability to make his writing more complete and coherent when searching for CD and TP because of more possibilities extended from CD and TP to make his writing longer at the same time.

Moreover, Peter's more focus on the organization and coherence appeared in later writing conferences, while the percentage of the questions related to spelling and tense increased as well since the final draft was much longer than the preceding ones.

Take Peter's last conference transcript for example.

R: Okay, the CD and TP you found in your paragraph 1 are good except sentence 3. Do you think it's not easy to find CD and TP? Or everything goes well?

P: I write something different in the beginning.

R: What do you mean?

P: ...in the beginning I felt the meaning was weird when writing... so I revised it....

R: You found the semantic meaning was weird, so you revised it.
P: At that time... Joe and Mark... have... were... I write they have the same bad habits.
R: Um.
P: I think that is strange, so I revised it.
R: So you write they were both naughty.
P: Right.
R: I see... so you... at that time... you revised the sentence after you were looking for CD and TP or when you write it down and found it weird?
P: I found that when I was looking for CD and TP.
R: Oh... you did that when you were searching for them. Then did you write 'they both had bad habits' here? In the beginning?
P: I wrote it in sentence 3.
R: So do you think this helped you write when looking for CD and TP?
P: Yeah...

P-WC-D7-101-119

After solving some linguistic problems, the topic of the conversation shifted to one sentence revised by Peter himself. Not only did Peter mention the revision he made but he explained the reason as well. Therefore, he exactly knew how and why he revised the sentence because the identification of CD and TP made him appreciate the implicit structure implied in his texts. By the end of the study, Peter really turned more competent in the coherence investigation, so his later writing was rated higher than the preceding ones. Though Peter's performance in writing was not as good as Bob's, his comprehension of CD and TP was to some extents far greater than Bob's.

To sum up, Bob and Peter finally could shift their focus from the surface-level problems to the content and organization levels which they used to ignore. This was undoubtedly initiated by the cultivation of coherence investigation, which also made the participants' writing coherence improved and made it easier for them to experience the process of writing.

The Enhancement of Revision Stage

The other remarkable development the participants experienced was their consciousness that the seemingly complicated stage of revising actually facilitated their development in writing. Instead of examining what the participants precisely

revised in their own texts, the following analyses focus on the relation between the participants' revision and their identification of CD and TP.

The original role of revision in the participants' writing. When asked about their viewpoints of rewriting in the questionnaire, both Bob and Peter did not hold positive attitudes toward it. They found it really time-consuming to make revision when writing. Whether they wrote compositions in tests or at home, they always had no sufficient time to revise. For Bob, he would spend much time considering the story plots. As soon as Bob read the instructions in the composition part in a test, some relevant ideas would come up to his mind. The following excerpt of the interview transcription is one of the examples.

R: Then why did it (looking for CD and TP) take you so much time? Why did you have to spend so much time finishing it?

B: .. um....

R: Like what you said... it's more difficult to look for them in the textbook reading, but it's easier to do so in your own writing.

B: Um...

R: Then why does it take you so much time?

B: Well... (pause)

R: In which step do you think it takes so much time to do so?

B: I would like to separate the original meaning... uh... maybe because the words to be used are more difficult... I guess... so I would change my thought... have to keep changing my thoughts to... (pause)...

R: Okay, for example, the words you wanted... you could not find the word you wanted in the beginning... so you would explain it in another way. And when you wanted to give it another try, is it possible for you to meet the same situation again? Do you mean that?

B: Yeah...

R: So you have to figure out the third way, and this is time-consuming?

B: Um.

B-I-164-179

Based on the above transcript, it could be induced that Bob, as a person of exquisiteness, would think up more than one way to develop his writing. Due to this, Bob certainly would spend extra time figuring out which one was the best to write. Needless to say, Bob surely needed more time on how to determine which one was inappropriate in one text and to think of the alternative to substitute for it. Therefore,

it was certainly unlikely for Bob to leave more time to examine what he had written and even to revise such mistakes as linguistic errors or incoherent sentences.

Unlike Bob, Peter had to spend more time figuring out how to spell the words he wanted to write down since his English proficiency was a little lower than Bob's.

R: Good. After you read the instructions and the picture, did you find something difficult?

P: I could not think of the words I wanted to use at that time.

R: You could not spell the words?

P: Yeah.

R: Were there many words?

P: The words I think of are much easier, so that kind of words were few.

P-WC-D5-006-011

Therefore, what deterred Peter from making good use of his time was the lack of sufficient amount of vocabulary despite the fact that he might have produced related ideas. To make matters worse, Peter might not move forward to write until he thought of appropriate words. So Peter once confessed to the researcher that some of his revision or coherence examination was completed between classes as he did not have extra time to make revision at home.

It could be concluded that with the different concerns occupying in their mind when writing, the application of revision in the writing process indeed took up much time in the time-limited tests. Bob and Peter undoubtedly would regard rewriting as a time-consuming way to operate at the time of writing.

The actual role of revision in the participants' writing. Although Bob and Peter both revised such small errors as a certain word in their writing, they did this on the basis of CD and TP that they were trained to be familiar with. Take one of the transcripts of Bob's writing conferences for example.

R: ... When did you add 'later' in the tenth sentence before you searched for TP and CD or when you were searching?

B: I added this word after I wrote the composition.

R: You mean you did that when you when you were searching for them?

B: (nod)

B-WC-D7-055-058

Based on what Bob told the researcher, the process of revision indeed existed in the application of CD and TP—even in revising some words; moreover, the process of choosing the alternative words could proceed smoothly with the help of coherence identification.

In terms of the sentence level, neither Bob nor Peter thought they would keep correcting one sentence they had written down, which contradicted to what they actually had done during the study. Therefore, in the subsequent interview, they were required to explain the reason. Since their answers were the same as each other, the following example was excerpted from Peter's fourth writing conference.

R: ... Did you cross out the sentence you had written again and again?

P: I'd seldom done that.

R: Seldom? So you seldom revised your sentences?

P: Mm.

R: Is this because you think the sentences you wrote were alright or because you figure out the sentences before you wrote them down?

P: I carefully considered what to write in advance.

R: So you did not write down anything until you figured out exactly what you wanted to write?

P: Unless I did not have enough time.

P-WC-D7-101-119

It was the process of considering a sentence with care that allowed the participants to write down one sentence without too much revision. After being trained to analyze the coherence in their own writing, both Peter and Bob were in the habit of thinking over what was going to be written down with care. Consequently, the effect of learning CD and TP on the writing development was validated.

In brief, Bob and Peter unconsciously integrated the strategy of coherence examination into the revision stage. Since they knew the way to make revisions very well, revision gradually took less and less time. In the meantime, to avoid as few errors as possible, the participants would consider what to write carefully. Then they could have more time to organize their essays. Therefore, it is evident that the development of the low achievers' coherence and revision both had great effects on

the writing performance. With CD and TP concerned at the time of writing, the two participants were able to improve their writing quality by means of coherence investigation rather than the sole focus on grammatical mechanism.

To sum up, the instruction of coherence investigation equipped the participants with the ability to learn CD and TP and to apply them to writing. On top of that, CD and TP are employed as the revision strategies to make their written essays more organized and coherent. The above development further helped these underachievers to pay attention to the discourse level in their writing instead of the only focus on linguistic units.

The Participants' Attitudes toward Writing Coherence

The last research question to be addressed was the way that the participants regarded the process of learning coherence throughout the current study. The description of the participants' attitudes was divided into two subcategories based on the process and perception data. They were the cultivation of confidence in coherence and the attitudes to the learning of CD and TP.

The Cultivation of Confidence in Writing Coherence

Throughout the study, the participants were trained to examine content level in writing, which attempted to stop them from being stuck by the repetitive grammatical problems. Therefore, their ability to analyze coherence helped them build up their confidence in this aspect. This is presented in Table 4.7 excerpted from the participants' questionnaire data.

Table 4.7
The Confidence in Writing

Questionnaire items	B	P
6. <i>I think the organization of my texts is better than before.</i>	agree	
20. <i>I think the structure of my writing is better than before.</i>	agree	
36. <i>My sentences can be more associated with the required topic.</i>	agree	
31. <i>When writing, my sentences can be more associated with the</i>	agree	

<i>paragraph than before.</i>	
33. <i>When writing, the sentences and paragraphs can correspond with each other better than before.</i>	agree
34. <i>The sequence of my sentences in writing is more reasonable than before.</i>	agree

As discussed in the effect and development sections, the participants were aware of how their writing coherence improved with the facilitation of CD and TP.

Furthermore, this also indicates that they meanwhile grew more confident in the organization of their writing, or it would be impossible for them to perceive the difference of their coherence development. Therefore, they both agreed that their coherence made progress. This was also demonstrated in the transcription of the writing conferences. The following is one of the examples.

R: Did it take you lots of time to look for CD and TP?

B: ... mm... I think it is fine.

R: It's fine in which way?

B: It's not difficult to find them.

R: So what do you think cause this?

B: ... because my writing is already coherent.

B-WC-D3-085-091

As far as Bob was concerned, he was assertive in the coherence of his texts as a result of the scores he got and his ability to identify CD and TP with ease. Most important of all, he did not pause for a long while for this kind of questions as he did before because he was fully self-assured that he really could do it well. Then another example comes from one transcription of Peter's writing conferences.

R: Did you encounter any difficulty when doing the task?

P: Mm... little difficulty, but I could not find the connection between two sentences. Then I just tried my best to connect them together.

P-WC-D2-001-003

Peter also found he had few problems investigating the coherence in his written texts. Once in a while, he was confronted with the situation that there was no connection between sentences; nevertheless, he did not give up or just waited for the next writing conference to obtain the solution. He would make every effort to keep searching for the connection or make some necessary revision in that he knew how to solve the problem and further to connect the sentences again. In other words, without the

familiarity with the application of CD and TP, Peter might fail to find out the disconnection, let alone the way to make up for it.

From the analyzed qualitative data, the participants' confidence in writing coherence was illustrated to show how it was cultivated. The abstract content level was made to become more concrete and feasible for the students to organize the sentences well. Therefore, they could gain much more confidence in coherence than in grammar which they still needed more time to sharpen.

The Attitudes toward the Learning of CD and TP

Both of the participants affirmed the advantages of coherence learning. This section focuses on the students' attitudes toward coherence identification and the learning/teaching of CD and TP during the study. Due to their different personal traits, Bob's and Peter's thoughts on CD and TP are depicted respectively.

Bob's case. Since the time was the main problem Bob had when writing, he therefore mentioned this several times. Nevertheless, he still looked upon CD and TP as reassuring means in writing.

R: ... okay, you have written a lot up to now, and I'd asked you to look for CD and TP when you were writing... do you think they are good to use or time-consuming? Or do you have special feelings about them?

B: (pause) ... took a little more time, but... they are really useful.

B-I-140-143

Thanks to the benefits brought by the learning of CD and TP, Bob thus did not think of the time needed in the process of identifying CD and TP as a big trouble. On top of that, the CD and TP categories were considered constructive in his writing by Bob himself; for that reason, even though it took him much time and energy to locate the categories of CD and TP in his own written texts, he still held positive attitudes toward the learning of them.

In the other transcript of the final interview (see Appendix V), Bob mentioned how he felt about CD and TP when he initially started to learn them—he was not keen

on the instruction of them actually. He found it bothering to apply the coherence analysis because he originally thought that writing a composition was to write down whatever came to his mind. This implied that he used to ignore his textual organization. To make matters worse, his low English proficiency made him unable to clearly describe what he wanted to express, which caused his bad performance in writing prior to the study.

However, as the study proceeded, Bob's thoughts tended to be more positive than before. This change is presented by how Bob thought about the combination of CD and TP to examine coherence in reading and writing, as shown in the following interview transcription.

R: ... I had taught CD and TP through the instruction of reading passages in the textbooks since the last semester. Do you think this way is complicated or... how do you think about this?

B: Um... can help me learn some ways to memorize them, but then...

R: ...um...

B: ... it means that what we have to learn is probably a lot more, because the reading in the textbooks is far more complex.

R: So you think it's a little bit complex to teach CD and TP through the textbook reading?

B: Right.

R: How about looking for them in your own writing?

B: It's relatively much easier.

B-I-121-131

In Bob's opinion, there were not only the disadvantages but also the advantages of learning how to detect coherence through the examination of CD and TP in the reading texts in the textbooks. With the relevant examples provided in the textbook in class, Bob firstly thought this helped him not only to discern the differences between the categories of CD and TP but further to keep them in mind so as to apply them to his own writing. Compared to the diversity of CD and TP categories in the textbook, the investigation of coherence in what he had written therefore became simpler to establish and identify coherence.

Nevertheless, the learning simultaneously produced the inconvenient fact that he

had to learn more than other classmates in addition to the grammar or the skills of answering questions in tests. Since Bob was unable to have enough time to complete regularly-assigned schoolwork, the extra learning of CD and TP certainly made him under some pressure. This was also presented in his questionnaire data.

12. If you had one more chance, would you still want to learn CD and TP?

No, it wasn't necessary. I think I should keep in mind the basic concepts. After all, I can't write with too complicated skills.

P-Q-II-12

Therefore, in some way, Bob thought the application of CD and TP would restrict him to write without interruption since he needed some time to figure out how to organize his writing, let alone the extra examination of coherence, which was seemingly not as important as the linguistic level.

Despite the inconvenience of searching for CD and TP, Bob later stated the other advantage in the interview.

R: In the last semester, I taught CD and TP in class. This semester, I taught them both in class and the writing conferences. What difference did you find between last and this semester?

B: ...

R: You can consider this from the learning of CD and TP or the writing ...

B: ...um ... in the last semester, I had to figure them out... really had to spend lots of time figuring them out... then this semester... I could write more down within the same time limit.

R: What do you think causes this?

B: ...

R: Why did you need such a long time to think of these things? ... Why did the tasks in the last semester take you much more time to think of?

B: ... (pause)... um... in the last semester... last semester, a drafting part was included... so I had to spend some time figuring out how to make the drafts.

R: Okay, so making drafts takes you a lot of time... how about searching CD and TP? Did this take much time too?

B: Well... not that much...but more than this semester... maybe I wasn't familiar with the use of CD and TP at that time...

B-I-186-198

The advantage brought by the learning CD and TP was that Bob found it easier for him to write more than before even within the same amount of time. He thought the practice of making drafts in the previous semester took him too much time to

complete the writing tasks on time. This also implied that Bob appeared to prefer to make drafts at the time of writing in tests in the subsequent semester. When asked about how much time was used to detect CD and TP in his writing, Bob thought he made progress in this aspect as he had a better grasp of the notion of CD and TP and he thus did not have to spend as much time as before. The difference Bob found in his improvement in writing between the two semesters again corroborated his affirmative thoughts on the learning CD and TP.

Therefore, Bob observed his writing progress, especially in fluency which he used to pay little attention to. This actually resulted from his better comprehension of CD and TP and his ability to apply them correctly in his own writing. By continuing to apply CD and TP to his writing, Bob got more familiar with them and understood that the learning of CD and TP promoted his writing coherence; consequently, his attitudes adjusted—from negative to positive. In other words, he confirmed that learning CD and TP did great help to his writing.

Peter's case. The development of Peter's attitudes toward the learning of CD and TP was very different from Bob's. In the beginning, Peter had been already active in learning CD and TP. He always appeared at the conference room punctually, he seldom missed the time to turn in his writing assignments to the researcher and he was eager to solve the problem of disconnection without as much guidance of the researchers as possible. With the active manners, it seemed that Peter had little trouble in examining CD and TP.

R: Some of the students said that it took them much time to write through CD and TP. How do you feel about this?

P: No, I don't.

R: Then do you think it took lots of time to search for CD and TP after in-class writing?

P: No, I don't think so.

R: Do you think this way would limit yourself to writing what you wanted to write?

P: What limitation?

R: For example, the following sentence has to be connected with the previous one, and then you just could not write at will.

P: A little bit.
R: Did it happen frequently?
P: Well, it seldom happened, but still would happen.
R: You mean this would happen sometimes?
P: Mm...
R: Up to now, have you had any special thoughts about CD and TP when writing or reading in class or at home?
P: I'm still not sure what the functions of TP are.
R: You still don't know its functions?
P: Yeah... I'm not sure what TP works for just by connecting the sentences
R: Well, it helps you to see the structure of the writing...
P: ... I think cohesive devices are enough to do that.

P-I-289-310

Though Peter in fact had difficulty finishing his writing in the limited time, he still did not think the time he needed was mostly occupied with the process of detecting CD and TP. Additionally, unlike Bob, Peter found that he could follow the patterns of searching for CD and TP; therefore, he would not feel confined to developing the content in his writing with CD and TP considered together. Peter furthermore proposed that if possible, he would like to learn CD and TP much earlier—in the first year of senior high—as he considered that it was potential for him to write even better in the content level, which could make his sentences associated well. This was shown in his questionnaire data as follows.

<i>12. If you had one more chance, would you still want to learn CD and TP?</i>

<i>Yes, of course and I hope I can learn this as early as possible. Maybe in the first grade of senior high. If I could learn CD and TP earlier, I might make more progress.</i>
--

P-Q-II-12

Despite some challenges occurring in the process of identifying CD and TP, Peter had been quite confident in his capability of coherence examination when applying CD and TP on his own or with the researcher's assistance. In one excerpt of his final interview (see Appendix W), Peter showed his dislike toward the prewriting stage included in the last-semester writing tasks, which was exactly the same as Bob. What caused this principally lay in the fact that there are always lots of problems for the students to solve in tests, where usually do not allow them, especially

underachievers, to finish writing in the limited time. However, Peter was still able to differentiate if his writing was coherent by identifying CD and TP. In other words, the notion of coherence identification had been internalized in Peter's mind during the present study; therefore, he could employ it independently at any time.

Furthermore, Peter's positive attitudes toward the learning of CD and TP were also reflected on his views of the way that coherence was instructed.

R: Do you think the instruction of TP and cohesive ties through the understanding of the reading is clear?

P: Very clear.

R: Does this way help you know more about TP and cohesive ties? Are they complex or not?

P: No, I can search for them clearly.

R: Then which one is clear to understand TP and cohesive ties, the reading or your writing?

P: My own writing, but what is included in my own writing is much less.

R: I think this is related to you experience in life. Besides, the instructions will limit you to write something specific, so you cannot really write too much.

P: Mm...

P-I-273-280

Though the reading essays in the textbooks were far difficult for him to search for CD and TP than his own written texts, Peter identified with the coherence instruction very much. He was aware of what benefits the learning of CD and TP had produced, so he even would like to learn this as early as possible. Even though the coherence categories included in his own texts were less diverse than those in the textbook essays, the instruction of coherence through the formal essays to some extent inspired Peter's potential for investigating coherence independently.

Then the following excerpt displays Peter's reason for being in favor of the way to instruct CD and TP in the present study.

R: If I taught you TP and cohesive devices in writing class, and you did not have to learn them from the reading, would this way help you understand them more easily?

P: I think it would be strange.

R: Oh, why? You think it's weird to learn them just from your writing?

P: Because most people don't have the experience of writing in English, and they did not have to write in English before...

R: Then it'll be weird to learn them suddenly?

P: Because if I just analyze my first writing without learning them before, and it would be lack of many things as there would be no cohesion and connection.

R: So you think there would be no connection in your own writing because of no cohesion.

P: Yeah, the ideas may jump randomly.

P-I-459-469

Peter quite approved the combination of CD and TP by identifying them in the textbook reading first. He even could imagine what would happen without learning the categories of CD and TP in the formal texts prior to some classmates' writing which must have been no complete connection between sentences. Peter should have benefited a lot from the identification of CD and TP, or he would not think of something positive about the learning process, regardless of such problems as time, the way to learn coherence and language proficiency, and so on. This could also explain why Peter's progression was comparatively significant.

With the participants' attitudes explored in the qualitative data, their identification with the examination of coherence was revealed in their growth of confidence in writing and positive attitudes toward the learning of CD and TP. Therefore, the coherence instruction by combining CD and TP not only had remarkable influence on the low achievers' writing and the development of their writing process, but affected their manners and ways to learn how to write well in content level instead of the only focus on linguistic level which always made them frustrated in the writing process.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

In an attempt to look into the relation between coherence instruction and the student's writing, the findings in the current study are briefly reiterated in this chapter first. Besides, the consistency and inconsistency between these findings and the literature reviewed in Chapter Two are illustrated as well. With the findings and the previous studies compared, possible explanations for what the findings represented are also provided.

What to be compared between the findings in this study and the relevant literature is primarily based on the research questions raised in Chapter Two: how the instruction of CD and TP affected the participants' writing by investigating their writing performance, writing development and their attitudes toward the coherence teaching.

The Effect of Instructing CD and TP on the Students' Writing

From the above-mentioned results, the instruction of CD and TP was proved to have a significant effect on the low achievers' writing. The improvement in the participants' writing in the present study confirmed that the so-called underachievers could actually benefit greatly from the instruction of CD and TP. Besides, with CD and TP taught and learned systematically, certain coherence categories that were applied more often in the participants' writing demonstrated that their writing performance could be as good as the high achievers' in the previous studies.

Low Achievers' Progress in Writing and Writing Coherence

In this five-month study, the participants got higher scores both in the holistic writing performance and writing coherence based on the rating of the GEPT raters and the coherence analysis of the researchers. These two students were also found to

be able to write longer texts and identify whether there was any disconnection in their own writing. In addition, from the analyzed qualitative data, the two participants were also aware of the progress in their written drafts when writing. Most important of all, they both attributed the improvement to the learning of CD and TP. This finding, in fact, is inconsistent with what some researchers found: their low-proficiency participants were unlikely to make their writing quality better because their exclusive focus on linguistic mechanics in the surface level of their written texts (Fitzgerald, 1987; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Perez, 2000). The possible reasons why the result of this current study was different from the above research reviewed were shown as follows.

It is likely that the EFL underachievers in this study learned the revision strategy—the integration of CD and TP—to examine their writing coherence. In other words, CD and TP equipped these low-proficiency learners with the ability to make content-level revisions. This is because the instruction of CD and TP has been validated to ensure the cohesion and propositional coherence in students' writing (Faigley & Witte, 1981b; Hasan, 1984; Mustaffa & Aman, 2007; Pappas, 1985; Witte, 1983a; Yang, 2008). Therefore, despite the fact that the participants in this study sometimes could not help but concentrate on such mechanical errors as tense, spelling and grammar, their writing quality could still be improved with the help of CD and TP.

The other possible reason is that the actual connection between language proficiency and writing performance is not as direct as imagined (Jones, 1984; Raimes, 1987). Despite the low English proficiency, the EFL writers in the present study were proved to be able to learn revision strategies—CD and TP—very well. Furthermore, they could also perform as well as the high achievers regardless of their low English proficiency (Cumming, et al., 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987). Therefore, as

long as the underachievers have the opportunity to learn the proper writing strategy to examine the coherence rather than keep correcting grammatical problems, they are likely to write coherent texts and even ensure the writing quality as their counterparts do.

In brief, despite the lack of correct linguistic units in these low achievers' writing, the integration of CD and TP could be an alternative way to teach these students to improve the cohesion and coherence in their writing. As a consequence, the progress which the participants, less proficient in English than most other students in the researcher's class, made was noticeable.

The CD Categories and TP Types Adopted by the Underachievers

Another finding was that the participants applied the same CD and TP categories as the ones used by the high achievers in relevant studies. This demonstrated that the systematic instruction of CD and TP could enable these low-proficiency EFL learners to pay attention to the content level and further to enable these participants to improve their writing. The possible reasons for the results would be presented along with the reiteration of findings.

The Application of Certain CD Categories

On one hand, it was found that the frequency of applying lexical reiteration claimed the highest proportion at the time of instructing coherence. Among these types in the lexical reiteration, repetition, pronominal reference and temporal conjunction were adopted more often than others in the participants' writing. The temporal conjunction in particular increased in the participants' later written drafts. This is in line with the previous studies (Castro, 2004; Tierney & Mosenthal, 1983; Weissberg, 1984; Zhou, 2007) because these CD categories have also been attested to distribute widely in the high-rated essays. Since the participants' later written texts were scored higher than their early ones, the frequency of applying these above CD

categories therefore increased.

It is likely that the EFL underachievers in this study could apply certain cohesive devices well and properly because of the systematic way of teaching CD (Lee, 1998, 2002; Liu, 2000; McCarthy, 1991; Reid, 1993; Scott, 1996; Zamel, 1983b). Adapted to specific exercises, CD was no longer abstract to understand with those exercises practiced constantly. With CD learned in an organized way, the participants' writing was improved (Faigley & Witte, 1981b; Hasan, 1984; Pappas, 1985), and in the meantime, the overuse of CD would not take place (Carrell, 1982; Connor, 1984; Tierney & Mosenthal, 1983).

On the other hand, the above-mentioned finding seems inconsistent with the other series of research that, even without being instructed, high achievers are able to apply the above-mentioned CD categories. In those studies, it was the native speakers (Tierney & Mosenthal, 1983), ESL learners (Ferris, 1994), college students (Faigley & Witte, 1981b; Ferris, 1994; Tseng, 2008) and graduate students (Weissberg, 1984; Zhou, 2002) that were found to apply large numbers of reference, lexical reiteration and temporal conjunction categories in their written texts. This was illustrated in Table 5.1. Therefore, the results of this study demonstrated that the underachievers were capable of employing the same proportion of CD as the high-rated essays written by skilled writers. The following is the possible explanation for why the EFL low achievers in this study could reach this achievement.

Table 5.1
The Most-frequently Used Cohesive Devices by Skilled Writers

Research	CD	Reference	Temporal Conjunction	Lexical Reiteration	Participants
Ferris (1994)		✓		✓	ESL college students
Faigley & Witte (1981b)		✓	✓	✓	College freshmen
Tierney & Mosenthal (1983)		✓	✓		Native 12th-graders
Tseng (2008)		✓	✓		EFL college students
Weissberg (1984)				✓	Graduate students

It is possible that the participants in this study could perform in writing as well as high achievers because of the concurrent application of TP. First of all, with TP integrated, the misuse of applying CD could be avoided since the textual coherence could be clearly identified (Kroll, 1990; Zamel, 1983b). Furthermore, as Kurzon (1988) mentioned, themes in some ways function as cohesive devices due to their connection with the preceding or following sentences. Consequently, the integration of CD and TP facilitated each other's contribution to the writing. The integration helped the low achievers focus not only on the surface-level concerns but also on the content-level ones. Besides, this also allowed the low achievers to improve their writing performance beyond the linguistic mechanics (Porte, 1995; Vann & Abraham, 1990).

The Application of Certain TP Types

This section focuses on the TP types employed by the participants. The TP types used more often would be reiterated first, and later the possible explanations for the results would be given as well.

Among Daneš's (1974) five types of TP, the simple linear TP and TP with a constant theme were the primary ones the two participants applied. The finding corresponds with the previous studies on TP and TSA, as shown in Table 5.2. The reason why the progression types of TSA are listed together with the ones of TP is that their progression types are similar to each other (Albertini, 1990; Lan, 2008; Shen, 2004; Todd, 2007; Weisberg, 1974). That is, the sequential progression of TSA equals the simple linear TP; the parallel progression of TSA is TP with a constant TP.

Table 5.2

The More Frequently-used Coherence Progression Types Found in Other Studies

Research	TP	More frequently-used coherence progression types	Participants	Genre
Almaden (2006)		Sequential progression < Parallel progression	ESL college students	Definition essays

Chao (2002)	Simple linear TP < TP with a constant theme	Senior high students	Argumentative
Hawes & Thomas (1997)	Simple linear TP < TP with a constant theme	Intermediate college students	Untold
Lee (2002)	Sequential progression < Parallel progression	ESL college students	Description
Liu (2009)	Sequential progression < Parallel progression	EFL English majors	Exposition
Shen (2004)	Sequential progression < Parallel progression	Senior high students	Description
Chiu (2004)	Sequential progression > Parallel progression	an English major	Narration and description
Crompton (2004)	Simple linear TP > TP with a constant theme	Native undergraduates	Argumentation
Fan (2008)	Sequential progression > Parallel progression	Science and engineering majors	Argumentation
Weissberg (1984)	Sequential progression > Parallel progression	Graduates	Scientific research reports

The participants in these studies—college students (Almaden, 2006; Chiu, 2004; Crompton, 2004; Fan, 2008; Hawes & Thomas, 1996; Lee, 2002; Liu, 2009), graduates (Weissberg, 1984) and senior high students whose writing was rated high (Chao, 2002; Shen, 2004)—all applied the first two TP types more often than the other types. In the present study, these two frequently adopted TP types not merely took turns to appear but were occasionally combined as well in the participants' written products. Therefore, the participants' writing skills to some extent reached the same level as the skilled writers' in the relevant literature. The following are the possible explanations for this consistency.

One possible reason is that the mostly adopted TP types revealed how coherence instruction affected and further improved the participants' textual coherence. Initially, the two underachievers both had difficulties completing their writing in the limited time because they found it hard to generate ideas and to make their passages long enough. With the coherence instruction, they were then capable of extending their content based on the related cohesive devices implied in the themes and rhemes of their preceding texts. So the simple linear TP helped them develop the writing content. However, the overuse of the first TP type made the writing move

forward too much to follow the original topic. As the study advanced, the participants tended to merge the constant theme TP type with the simple linear TP in their written texts. This helped them stick to the identical topics to avoid deviating from the topic (Almaden, 2006; Chao, 2002; Lee, 2002; Liu, 2009; Shen, 2004). Therefore, the two participants not only avoided distributing random information and distracting from the main topic with the overuses of each TP (Downing, 2001), but they were allowed to make the topic of a text more explicit because of the same or similar themes (Eggins, 1994).

The other possible reason could be that in this study, TP, along with the rhematic progression (Cloran, 1995; Crompton, 2004; Hawes & Thomas, 1996; Mauranen, 1996), was instructed to the low-proficiency EFL participants in a detailed and well-organized way (Cao, 2008; Mustaffa & Aman, 2007; Ren, Cao, Gao & Li, 2009; Yang, 2008). Besides TP and RP, the instruction of coherence included CD as the revision strategies as well. CD helped the participants identify the specific units to define the progression of the propositional coherence in texts (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Stotsky, 1983). In this way, the coherence instruction became more complete. With appropriate ways to teach, the participants' insufficient English proficiency would not deter them from acquiring the ability to make content-level revisions.

In conclusion, despite the low English proficiency, the participants in this study were able to reach the skilled writers' level in the application of thematic progressions with the CD and RP merged in the normal teaching lessons. In other words, it is promising for low achievers to make their writing quality better by learning how to examine and further to improve the textual coherence in their writing beyond the surface level.

The Development of Writing Coherence in Low Achievers' Writing

The following issue concerned is to answer the second research question: how

the low-English-proficiency students in this study made progress in their writing coherence by learning CD and TP. Based on the qualitative data collected in this study, the participants were found to have the potential for learning CD and TP well and to be able to focus on the content-level when writing.

The Possibility to Make Low Achievers Familiar with CD and TP

The finding that high school underachievers were likely to apply CD and TP appropriately in this study was revealed in the relevant qualitative data. The participants' identification of CD and TP was almost consistent with the researchers' analysis. This was also shown in their good performance of writing coherence. Besides, in the writing conferences and final interviews, the participants also found it easy to identify CD and TP and to apply them to their writing. This corresponds with the research on coherence, illustrated as follows.

In line with the research on cohesion and coherence, CD and TP have been proved to indicate how well and badly a composition is written (Faigley & Witte, 1981b; Hasan, 1984; Pappas, 1985). Moreover, the explicit instruction of CD and TP can elicit students' potential for writing better due to clear cohesion and propositional coherence (Faigley & Witte, 1981b; McCarthy, 1991; Mustaffa & Aman, 2007; Reid, 1993; Scott, 1996; Witte, 1983a; Yang, 2008). Therefore, the participants in this study were able to have good commands of CD and TP which enhanced their writing quality.

The possible reason for the above-mentioned finding could be that the low achievers indeed have the potential for learning CD and TP to improve their writing quality. The low-proficiency participants in this study were proved to be quite competent in coherence investigation. They were found to be able to: 1. apply CD and TP skillfully in their own writing; 2. identify the exact discrepancy in the content level; 3. correct the disconnected sentences. Therefore, with the appropriate revision

strategy, these low achievers could stop themselves from being stuck in the linguistic problems. The specific revision strategy in this study was proved to elicit the possibility that the unskilled writers have the potential to improve their writing (Porte, 1995; Vann & Abraham, 1990). Therefore, it is students' writing strategies instead of language proficiency that are closely related to the quality of their written texts (Cumming, et al., 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987).

The Preference for CD

Another development was the participants' preference for CD when they learned it along with TP to revise their writing. They thought the learning of CD made them capable of not only recognizing textual cohesion but also confirming the progression of each theme and rheme between sentences.

First, the participants found it straightforward to identify or correct cohesive devices in their writing and considered them to be even more helpful. This also led to their better writing performance by the end of the study. The result is consistent with the finding that the CD categories have been attested to distribute widely in the high-rated essays (Castro, 2004; Tierney & Mosenthal, 1983; Weissberg, 1984; Zhou, 2007). The following are the possible reasons.

One possible reason could be that the participants could be adept at applying CD due to its being rather surface-oriented (de Beaugrand & Dressler, 1981; Bell, 1991; van Dijk & Kintsh, 1983; Hoey, 1983; Watson Todd, et al., 2007; Widdowson, 1978). Defined as sentence-level connection (Connor, 1987; Halliday & Hasan, 1976), CD links the linguistic units between sentences to make these sentences a paragraph and then a complete text.

The other possible reason could be that the inter-sentential connection based on the surface level of writing has been indeed the low achievers' main concern when revising (Bridwell, 1980; Crowley, 1977; Dennett, 1990; Faigley & Witte 1981a;

Fitzgerald & Markham, 1987; Hall, 1990; Stallard, 1974). Besides, low-proficiency learners inherently tend to focus on the surface level of writing which they cannot always deal with properly, especially at the revising stage (Fitzgerald, 1987; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Perez, 2000). Instead of the mere focus on such form-level aspects as grammar, tense and spelling, etc., this study adopted the effective instruction of surface-oriented cohesive devices. In this way, the participants were allowed to learn how to reach the textual cohesion well at the same time.

Second, because of the explicitness of CD, the participants also found the progression of themes and rhemes would appear once they identified the CD categories. Therefore, after learning how to investigate the abstract coherence in their written texts, these two participants could investigate and further revise something more helpful to their writing beyond the linguistic mechanisms, which was almost found to be achieved by experienced writers in previous studies (Ash, 1983; Faigley & Witte 1981a; Monahan, 1984; Sommers, 1980; Stallard, 1974; Zamel, 1983a). The following is the possible reason.

It is likely that the EFL underachievers were proved to improve their writing by applying the strategies of examining cohesion and coherence without the interference of insufficient English ability (Cumming, et al., 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Porte, 1995; Vann & Abraham, 1990). Both of the participants agreed that CD helped them to generate more ideas and further expand their writing. Consequently, it could be concluded that low achievers are capable of examining the textual coherence well with the familiarity with the concrete cohesive devices learned.

More Focus on Content Level

The subsequent development is that the participants were found to pay attention to the content level when writing. At the time of the study, one of the participants made it a rule to examine his writing coherence with CD and TP when writing. The

other student was able to lengthen his written texts by focusing both on the surface and content levels. However, these findings are not in line with the previous studies on low-proficiency students' revision because in those studies, their low achievers were unlikely to improve their writing due to their sole focus on grammatical errors (Fitzgerald, 1987; Heuring, 1984; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Nold, 1981; Perez, 2000; Perl, 1980; Sommers, 1980).

The possible reason could be that the participants were allowed to learn CD and TP systematically during the study. Despite the participants' limited knowledge of linguistic mechanisms, CD and TP facilitated their improvement in writing performance and coherence. On one hand, CD has been proved to be closely related to the writing quality by linking the discrete units in a text (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Hasan, 1984; Pappas, 1985; Zamel, 1983b). On the other hand, it is also found that TP usually appears in the academic essays (Agawa, 2004; Alonso & McCable, 1998, 2003; Jalilifar, 2010; Lan, 2008; Lee, 2009; Li, 2009) or skilled writers' high-rated writing (Chao, 2002; Crompton, 2004; Faigley & Witte, 1981b; Yang, 2008; Zhang, 2010). Therefore, the low-proficiency participants could make their writing better with CD and TP instructed in an organized way since CD and TP were applied as revision strategies (Cumming, Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Porte, 1995; Rebuffot & Ledwell, 1989; Vann & Abraham, 1990).

The Enhancement of Making Revision

The next development is that the participants confirmed the advantages of revising, so both of the participants mentioned that by applying CD and TP in the writing process, they became more careful before they wrote down what came to their mind. By the end of the study, revising was viewed as a helpful way to make their writing better because they applied CD and TP as revision strategies at different writing stages repetitively. This corresponds with the recursive characteristics of

revision (Flower & Hayes, 1986; Murray, 1997). Additionally, the participants were also found to revise both the sentence and content levels in their essays simultaneously like the skilled writers in the previous studies (Nold, 1981; Victori, 1999; Zamel, 1983a).

The possible reason why the findings were in line with the related research is that with the application of CD and TP, the participants were able to rethink the more appropriate words carefully to make the content more complete and coherent, which was initiated by the surface connectors to further strengthen the implicit coherence (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1986; Bridwell, 1980; Cohen, 1990; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Nold, 1981; Sommers, 1980, 1992; Williams, 2004; Witte & Faigley, 1981). Therefore, the participants in this study would compose texts carefully and in the meantime take the unity of the whole texts into account—which has been considered that only skilled writers can achieve (Ash, 1983; Faigley & Witte 1981a; Monahan, 1984; Nold, 1981; Sommers, 1980; Stallard, 1974; Zamel, 1983a).

To be brief, the above development of the participants' ability to recognize CD and TP also helped them to enhance the notion of the necessity for making revision in the writing process and focus more on the content level in writing. As a result, despite the insufficient language proficiency when they made revision, applying CD and TP to the written essays allowed the participants to improve writing in a discourse-level way without being interrupted by the constant problems of linguistic mechanics. In view of the participants' performance, it was feasible for teachers to teach coherence to assist students in bettering their writing.

The Participants' Attitudes toward Writing Coherence

The third question this study wanted to answer was how the students would view the writing coherence and the instruction of it. Their ability to identify CD and TP correctly and precisely allowed them to shift the focus from the surface level to

the content one at the time of writing. This therefore increased their confidence in composing coherent texts and meanwhile they held positive attitudes toward the learning of CD and TP.

Low Achievers' Confidence in Writing

The first result is that the participants' confidence in the writing and writing coherence increased with CD and TP applied in the writing process. Besides, they both could tell whether their writing was coherent or not. However, this is not associated with the series of research on low-proficiency students who were found unlikely to progress in writing when compared with their high-proficiency counterparts (Fitzgerald, 1987; Matsumura, et al., 2002; Perez, 2000). The following is the possible reason why the participants became confident in their writing and the writing coherence.

It is likely that the participants' confidence was boosted by the achievement in improving their writing quality with the help of CD and TP. At the time of this study, these low achievers repeatedly made the same grammatical mistakes as Ramies (1985) mentioned. However, without the linguistic problems stressed during the study, the participants were proved to enhance their writing by revising the discourse level as the high achievers in other studies (Ash, 1983; Faigley & Witte 1981a; Monahan, 1984; Nold, 1981; Sommers, 1980; Stallard, 1974; Zamel, 1983a). In other words, teaching CD and TP as revising strategies helped the participants contribute significantly to their writing quality with both cohesion and coherence considered (Cumming, et al., 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Porte, 1995; Vann & Abraham, 1990). Since the participants' writing quality improved with coherence investigated in their writing, they felt confident in their writing every time when this issue was discussed. Once the confidence in writing increased, both participants became more absorbed in making their coherence better.

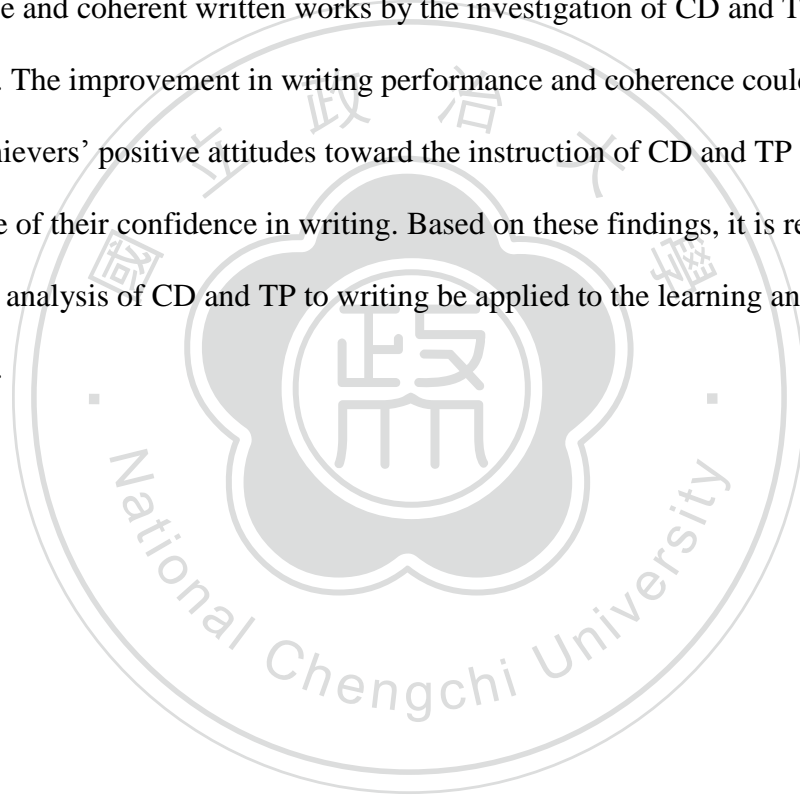
The Participants' Attitudes toward CD and TP

The other result is that the participants were found to have positive attitudes toward the instruction of CD and TP. This is in line with the previous research on teaching coherence (Chiu, 2004; Fan, 2008; Liu, 2009; Shen, 2004) since these two learners did improve in their writing coherence and also confirmed the advantages of applying CD and TP to their writing.

The possible explanation for this finding is that the participants' positive attitudes toward learning CD and TP were developed due to the longer period of this study and the practice of multiple drafts. In this study, instead of investigating the single draft or the essays written in the pre- and post-tests during few weeks or months (Chiu, 2004; Fan, 2008; Lee, 2002; Liu, 2009; Shen, 2004; Yang, 2008; Zhang, 2010), the participants were required to write multiple drafts, which allowed the low-proficiency writers to feel the significant and specific changes in their writing. In this way, not only did the participants rewrite some words and sentences with the help of cohesive connectors but they were also able to utilize the coherence examination to trace the thematic progression as the high achievers did in Chiu's (2004), Fan's (2008), Lee's (2002) and Liu's (2009) studies. Since the participants' writing performance was able to reach the high achievers', the low-proficiency writers in the present study therefore approved the effect of instructing CD and TP and held affirmative attitudes toward the instruction of CD and TP.

To conclude, the above findings provide evidence that it is feasible for teachers to teach the revision strategies—CD and TP—to EFL underachievers. The instruction of CD and TP should be systematic and well organized to be integrated into the normal classes since it would take plenty of time for teachers and low English proficiency students to teach and learn CD and TP. Besides, the learning of CD is supposed to be prior to the one of TP in that the surface-oriented CD could help low

achievers to understand the textual cohesion easily and then further to trace the comparatively abstract coherence by TP. In this way, EFL low achievers are able to learn and apply CD and TP to their writing as well as the high achievers in the previous studies. Then low achievers could improve their writing quality by paying more attention to the revision of the content level in the discourse instead of the exclusive focus on surface-level revision. Most importantly, these low achievers are allowed to repetitively experience the complete writing process and compose more cohesive and coherent written works by the investigation of CD and TP in their writing. The improvement in writing performance and coherence could lead to these low achievers' positive attitudes toward the instruction of CD and TP due to the increase of their confidence in writing. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the analysis of CD and TP to writing be applied to the learning and instruction of writing.



CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion of the current study by summarizing the major findings, which mainly describes how EFL low achievers may be affected by learning CD and TP in writing class. Then the pedagogical implications based on the effect of teaching CD and TP were examined. In the end of this chapter, limitations in the study are provided to make the suggestions for the future studies.

Summary of the Major Findings

What the present study mainly investigated is the effect and feasibility of the coherence instruction in EFL writing class. Unlike the way implemented in most research into this field, the current study adopted not TSA but TP as one of its teaching materials in that the latter is relatively complete and comprehensible. Besides, CD was also combined into the writing instruction to direct the students' focus to the content level by detecting the sentence-based cohesion.

With the above two revision strategies applied to writing in English, the primary findings of this study were illustrated as follows. To begin with, the instruction of CD and TP was feasible in high school writing class. Above all, the EFL low-proficiency students had the potential for contributing something helpful—coherence examination—to their own writing performance. This implied that as long as these students had the opportunity to learn something different from the exclusive focus on linguistic mechanisms as usual, they were likely to make progress in writing. Most importantly, it was essential for these students to spend large amounts of time developing the capability of identifying and organizing the writing coherence. Once the inexperienced writers learned how to examine whether a written text was coherent or not, the distribution of the CD and TP categories was almost the same as the ones

used by high achievers in the relevant studies.

Next, as the underachievers' writing performance was getting better by the end of the study, the development of these students' writing coherence revealed what contributed to their improvement in writing.

First of all, the participants' familiarity with the identification of CD and TP was really impressive. With the progression of the study, these two participants could operate the coherence examination independently. Due to their good understanding of CD and TP, they seldom gave up identifying the coherence categories or connecting the written words and sentences even though they sometimes might encounter some problems. In the meantime, they also appreciated the importance of making revision when writing. Therefore, they unconsciously cultivated the habit of different writing skills such as coherence detection and revising which were usually considered to happen in the experienced writers' high-rated essays.

Besides, the present study also displayed how the two participants progressed in their writing coherence because of their preference for relatively sentence-based CD. Though this mainly resulted from the low-proficiency writers' inclination to pay more attention to explicit grammatical structures, the two participants applied the detection of cohesive connectors to facilitate the implicit coherence in their written essays. With CD instructed, the EFL underachievers were able to locate the cohesion between their sentences and to correct something redundant or insufficient to make the writing coherent when TP was applied together. In addition to the surface problems, content level issues also became the unskilled writers' concentration when they wrote.

All in all, the two participants' confidence in writing was increasing owing to the significant progress in the holistic performance of writing as well as their awareness of their own improvement. They therefore both held positive attitudes toward the process of learning and identifying CD and TP in spite of the large amount

of time they had to spend in writing. Based on the findings of this study, it would be fairly feasible for teachers to teach EFL learners, even low-proficiency ones, to learn how to examine the coherence in their writing with the combination of CD and TP.

Implications

Subsequent to the findings is the second part of this chapter, which presents the implications for pedagogical practice in this current study.

First, the instruction of combining CD and TP may be practical to the writing class in high school. On one hand, teaching cohesion connectors (Tierney & Mosenthal, 1983; Watson Todd, et al., 2007; Weissberg, 1984; Zhou, 2007) and propositional coherence (Chiu, 2004; Fan, 2008; Lee, 2002; Liu, 2009; Yang, 2008) respectively was demonstrated to benefit students' writing cohesion and coherence. Besides, the underachievers were proved to benefit from the instruction by this study. Therefore, by integrating CD into TP, the surface and content levels of a written text could be inextricably interwoven so that coherence is hence generated with clear traces between sentences. Most important of all, the instruction of coherence examination beyond grammatical structures may enhance students' confidence in writing in English and further enable students to make more progress.

Second, the above method used to teach writing in English should be promoted in Taiwan, where senior high school students are required to write roughly 120-word essay in the college entrance exam. Most of these students do not have the access to English writing until their last year in senior high. To make things worse, the analysis of grammar and sentence structures always plays a significant part in writing instruction. Then the high achievers become more skilled in writing; however, the low-proficiency writers are left struggling to tackle the never-ending linguistic problems. Since the latter accounts for the main part of the whole examinees, the combination of CD and TP should be a promising alternative way to solve these

students' problems of coherence and organization in writing. In addition, students actually will not only employ one type of CD or TP throughout the writing process. As a result, teachers are also recommended not to require students to apply specific categories of CD and TP to certain type of topics so that students will not be restricted to the pattern and will be able to make their writing better by choosing different coherence categories flexibly (Weissberg, 1984).

Third, it is also necessary for teachers to design detailed and systematic ways to introduce and teach students the notion of coherence examination (Chiu, 2004; Fan, 2008; Lee, 2002; Liu, 2009; Shen, 2004; Yang, 2008). Furthermore, to correspond with the tight schedule of these busy senior high students, the instruction of CD and TP may be integrated into the relevant teaching in normal English classes. Since it could take students of different levels a large amount of time to acquire the skill of analyzing coherence and cohesion in the written texts, students should be allowed to comprehend what CD and TP are and how they can be operated in writing as early as possible. Additionally, teachers are supposed to help students cultivate the capability and habit of identifying CD and TP to construct the framework of cohesion and coherence in their written texts.

Limitations

Despite the instruction of CD and TP proved to be helpful in improving low-proficiency senior high students' writing, some limitations still appear at the time of this current study. They were illustrated as follows.

The first restriction apparently lies in the main characteristic of a case study—only two male participants in this study. The small sample size could not be generalized in a statistic way in that there was no control group to be compared with the participants to produce more objective and reliable results. Next, due to the extremely tight schedule of each semester in our high school, the researcher had

difficulty tackling such uncontrollable variables caused by the insufficient time in the process of this study as:

1. whether the participants had the similar experiences to enable them to write well when they encountered some kinds of topics;
2. what individual factors might influence the effect of the participants' learning of CD and TP;
3. how much the participants would devote to the revision when they applied the coherence examination on their own;
4. what different writing performance might be generated if the time of this study could be lengthened.

Suggestions for Future Studies

In view of the above-mentioned restrictions, some ways are suggested for the future relevant research.

First, it is recommended that a more rigorous experimental study is designed. Besides, how much the students made progress can be presented easily when more qualitative data are collected. In addition, to support the findings brought by the statistical evidence, it is still necessary to gather the qualitative data to observe the development of writing process.

Second, in addition to the comparison between the pre-test and post-test, the number of the writing tasks is supposed to be increased to trace the progression of the effect brought by the teaching of CD and TP.

Third, students' personal factors should be taken into account carefully to prevent certain variables from decreasing the reliability. Besides the contrast between high- and low-proficiency students, the respective development of these two groups is also supposed to be observed to avoid the ethic problem that the demand of low achievers, who actually are able to be taught to improve their writing (Porte, 1995;

Vann & Abraham, 1990), is usually ignored (Porte, 1997).

Fourth, to make the coherence investigation more complete, it is suggested that the combination of TP and TSA may be more practicable with CD instructed as well.

At last, different genres of compositions are also suggested to be added to the writing process to see which type of writing CD and TP have the most significant effect on.

As a result, in this way, students can follow the explicit cohesion indicators to build or revise the coherence in their own written products. After grasping the tips of establishing coherence, students are able to gain more confidence in writing and further keep sharpening other skills of writing. Meanwhile, teachers can also trace the seemingly implicit coherence in students' writing by means of examining CD and TP. With the promising instruction of coherence examination (Lee, 2002; Mustaffa & Aman, 2007; Witte, 1983a; Yang, 2008) widely adopted in Taiwan, teachers and students hopefully can head for the appropriate direction beyond the exclusive attention to surface level structure in writing to solve the problems of writing coherence.

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Appendix A

Classification of Halliday and Hasan's (1976) Cohesive Devices (Zhu, 1997, p.28)

Cohesion	Grammatical cohesion	Reference (anaphora and cataphora)	Pronominal
			Demonstratives
			definite articles
			Comparatives
		Substitution	Nominal substitution
			Verbal substitution
			Clause substitution
		Ellipsis	Nominal ellipsis
			Verbal ellipsis
			Clause ellipsis
	Conjunction	Additive	
		Adversative	
		Causal	
		Temporal	
		Continuative	
		Repetition	
	Lexical cohesion	Reiteration	Synonym or near-synonym
Antonym			
Hyponym / Super-ordinate			
Metonym			
General items			
Collocation			

Appendix B

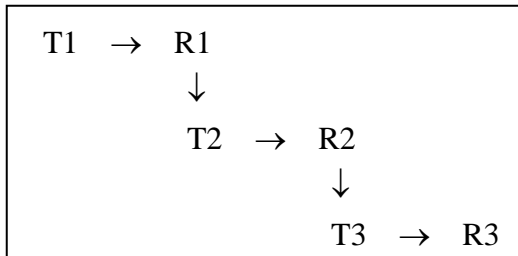
The Thematic System (adapted from Thompson, 2004, p. 164)

Sentence structure	Thematic types	Examples	Marked	
Theme in single clause	Subject as theme	(2.27) <i>You</i> probably haven't heard of the SOU before. (p.144) (2.29) <i>The languages that the Eskimo people speak around the top of the world, in places as far apart as Siberia, Alaska, Canada and Greenland</i> differ quite a lot in details of vocabulary.		
	Heavy subject as theme	(2.30) <i>Sending the final result through to Faculty before all the required documents have arrived</i> will probably just confuse matters.		
	Declaration	Passivization	(2.28) <i>They'd managed to get themselves on the wrong coach at Exeter. They were rescued by a soldier who spotted them both crying. He took them back to Exeter on another bus.</i> (p.154)	
		Multiple theme	Conjunctions in theme (2.31) <i>But all the rooms</i> look out onto the secluded garden. Conjunctive adjuncts in theme (2.32) <i>Thus disorder</i> will tend to increase with time. Modal adjuncts in theme (2.33) <i>Certainly his wife June</i> was a very odd woman. (p.157)	
		Adjuncts as theme	(2.35) <i>Last night</i> a man was helping police enquiries. ✓	
		Complements as theme	(2.36) <i>All the rest</i> we will do for you. (p. 144-145) ✓	
		Theme in WH-questions (interrogative)	(2.37) <i>What</i> happened to her?	
		Theme in yes/no questions (interrogative)	(2.38) <i>Have you</i> finish your meal, sir?	
	Non-declaration	Theme in imperative clauses	(2.39) <i>Leave</i> the lamp here.	
		Theme in exclamative clauses	(2.40) <i>What a nice plant</i> you've got!	
		Theme in elliptical clauses	(2.41) <i>Who</i> [would most like to meet]? (p. 147-149)	
		Thematized theme	(2.42) <i>It is not the technology</i> which is wrong.	
		Predicated theme	(2.43) <i>It is the second of these points</i> that I shall be concentrating on in this talk.	
		Special thematic structures	Preposed theme	(2.44) <i>It is true</i> that it took five years to do so.
Existential 'there' theme			(2.46) <i>There was</i> no question of Kate's marrying Ted. (p. 161) (2.45) <i>People like us, in the middle,</i> we have to be careful about the children we have.	
Interpolations in theme	(2.47) <i>Maureen Freely's piece, which is pure personal invective,</i> I will not dignify with a response.			
Theme in clause complexes	Subordinate clauses	Dependent clause in theme	(2.48) <i>As the universe expanded,</i> the temperature of the radiation decreased.	
		Thematic equatives	(2.49) <i>What I'm going to do now</i> is to whisk these all together. (2.50) <i>That</i> is not what I meant. ✓	
	Nominal clauses		(2.51) <i>He said, "Some people won't like it". / "Some people won't like it," he said.</i>	
		Theme in reporting clauses	(2.52) <i>Baker (1999)</i> suggests that certain features might be observed more systematically using corpora.	

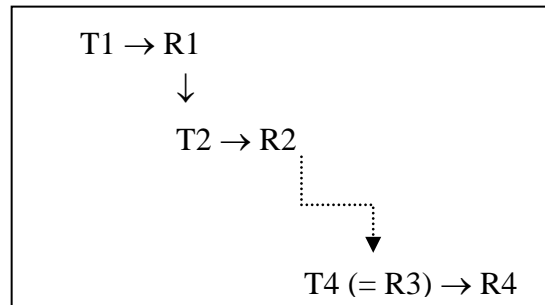
Appendix C

Daneš's TP Types (1974)

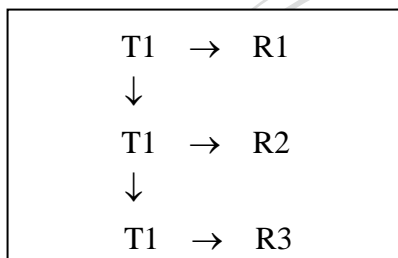
1. Daneš's simple linear TP (1974, p. 118)



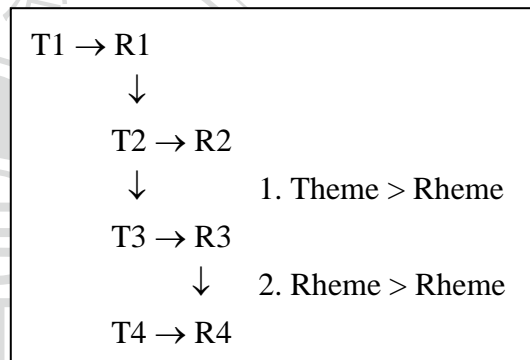
5. Daneš's TP with a thematic jump (1974)



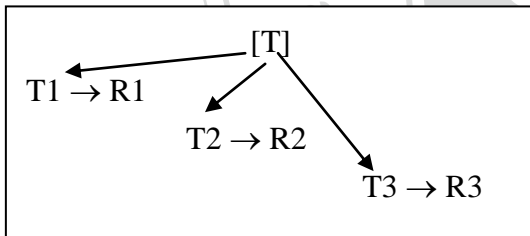
2. Daneš's TP with a continuous theme (1974, p. 119)



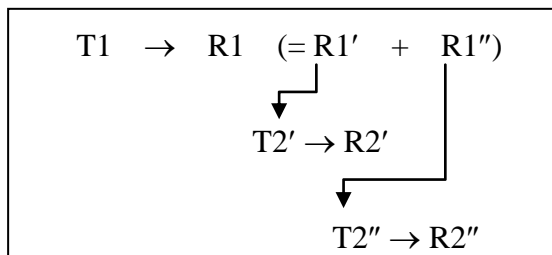
6. Cloran's other two RP types (1995)



3. Daneš's TP with a hypertheme (1974, p. 119)



4. Daneš's exposition of split rheme (1974, p. 120)



Appendix D
Consent Form

I. Research: Coherence and writing

II. Purpose: Discuss learning of English and the way to improve the ability to write in English.

III. Progression of the research:

A. In class: Practice the writing skills with the other classmates.

B. Writing conferences:

i. Length of the research: September, 2009 ~ January, 2010.

ii. Time: The noon breaks (12:30~13:00) every two or three weeks (30 or more minutes each time).

iii. Place: The consultation room in the teachers' office.

iv. What to discuss:

1. The problems you have when doing the writing tasks.

2. The issues about the application of CD and TP when writing in class and at home.

3. The process you experience when writing.

v. Others:

1. Turn in the writing pieces revised on your own.

2. Turn in the journals (in Chinese) of the thoughts about the writing and the issues discussed in the conferences.

3. Any question on learning English is available.

4. The discussion in conferences will be recorded.

5. Your personal information won't be revealed in the research.

6. The performance in writing conferences won't affect your academic grades.

7. Make the teacher informed if you are unable to attend the conferences.

8. Every conference will be tape recorded.

I would like to join the research.

I'm not available to join the research.

Signature: _____

Appendix E

The Participants' Typed Works (for Raters)

提示：請以 "What Makes A Good Friend?" 為主題，寫一篇至少 120 個字的英文作文。第一段針對文章主題，說明什麼樣的朋友才算是「好朋友」，並在第二段舉自己的交友經驗為例，以印證第一段的說明。

001

The people who will encourage me when I in a difficult time, and teach me something I don't know in patience, but the important thing is that who has the good communication with me, so the people who has the patience, the good communication, to encourage me can be my good friend.

Vicky always has the patience to encourage me and give me some helpful suggestions to me when I get into a trouble. It is so patient of her to teach me whatever I never know. As I am in bad mood, she always helps me to put it behind and makes me laugh. According to those example can know that she plays an important role in my life.

whole essay
8

002

The good friends need to have a positive attitude with you. That can listen you thinks and give you advices is very nice. When you in a bad mood that can comfort you and talk jokes to let you happy who also a good friend. Eventually, your good friends should treat you as his or her good friends.

For example, Jessica is one of my good friends and she always gets along with everybody. She always has a beauty smile on her face and never swears anyone. If you go along with her, you usually feel release and joyful with her. Her personality mixture passion and beauty. Better yet, you will want to build a friendship's bridge with her.

whole essay
7

003

A friend in need is a friend in deed. You and your friend can help each other always. No matter what happened, your friend will support you. A friend in need is a friend in deed.

Besides, a really friend is someone you can share everything with. Includes good things and bad things. And it's always not boring for you to talk with your friend. You can get along with your good friend all the time. This is what I think about a good friend.

未提到 2nd point

whole essay
4

Appendix F

CEEC Rating Scale for Compositions

等級 項目	優	可	差	劣
內容	主題(句)清楚切題，並有具體、完整的相關細節支持。 (5-4分)	主題不夠清楚或突顯，部分相關敘述發展不全。 (3分)	主題不明，大部分相關敘述發展不全或與主題無關。 (2-1分)	文不對題或沒寫(凡文不對題或沒寫者，其他各項均以零分計算)。 (0分)
組織	重點分明，有開頭、發展、結尾，前後連貫，轉承語使用得當。 (5-4分)	重點安排不妥，前後發展比例與轉承語使用欠妥。 (3分)	重點不明、前後不連貫。 (2-1分)	全文毫無組織或未按提示寫作。 (0分)
文法、句構	全文幾無文法錯誤，文句結構富變化。 (4分)	文法錯誤少，且未影響文意之表達。 (3分)	文法錯誤多，且明顯影響文意之表達。 (2-1分)	全文文法錯誤嚴重，導致文意不明。 (0分)
字彙、拼字	用字精確、得宜，且幾無拼字錯誤。 (4分)	字詞單調、重複，用字偶有不當，少許拼字錯誤，但不影響文意之表達。 (3分)	用字、拼字錯誤多，明顯影響文意之表達。 (2-1分)	只寫出或抄襲與題意有關的零碎字詞。 (0分)
體例	格式、標點、大小寫幾無錯誤。 (2分)		格式、標點、大小寫等有錯誤，但不影響文意之表達。 (1分)	違背基本的寫作體例或格式，標點、大小寫等錯誤甚多。 (0分)

Appendix G

The Process of the Coherence Learning (Adapted from Lee, 2002 & Shen, 2004)

Steps	Contents
The teaching of CD and TP	
1. Skim & scan	1-1 Reading the text silently 1-2 Skimming for the main idea of the text 1-3 Scanning for the specific information in the text
2. Cohesive ties (Halliday & Hasan, 1976)	2-1 Deciding the theme and rheme 2-2 Searching for the cohesive words 2-3 Identifying the category of each cohesive word 2-4 Numbering these words
3. TP (Daneš, 1974)	3-1 Drawing the progression based on the cohesive words 3-2 Discussing with other classmates 3-3 Confirming the TP on the blackboard written by classmates
4. Practice I	4-1 Repeating steps 2~3 in each paragraph 4-2 Following the above steps in the reading of each unit
5. Practice II	5-1 Reading the model paragraphs written by some students 5-2 Examining the coherence: 5-2-1 Checking if there are cohesive words 5-2-1-1 No cohesive words: replacing which and what words 5-2-1-2 Circling cohesive words: numbering each cohesive words 5-2-2 Drawing TP according to cohesive words
The application of CD and TP	
1. prewriting	Generating ideas: 1-1 Mind mapping: writing down any words or phrases related to the topic 1-2 Question listing: asking oneself any questions about the topic 1-3 Free writing: write anything coming up to mind
2. outlining	2-1 Choosing the more relevant ideas to write down the topic sentence 2-2 Developing supporting ideas based on the generated ideas 2-3 Ensuring each supporting sentence corresponded with topic sentences
3. writing	3-1 Beginning to write according to the outline
4. revising (Conner and Farmer, 1990)	4-1 Numbering each sentence in every paragraph 4-2 Distinguishing the theme and rheme in each sentence 4-3 Circling the words connecting each sentence 4-4 Identifying the CD category 4-5 Deleting irrelevant words or adding other cohesive words 4-7 Drawing the TP type based on the cohesive ties 4-7-1 Rewriting the sentences whose topics repeat 4-7-2 Rewriting the sentences whose topic progression breaks down 4-7-2-1 Reordering sentences 4-7-2-2 Adding new sentences 4-8 Checking if the concluding sentence: 4-8-1 connects the previous sentence 4-8-2 sticks to the topic sentence of each paragraph 4-9 Language mechanics: checking spelling, tense, word use and grammar

Appendix H

The Chart of CD and TP

(Adapted from Cloran, 1995; Daneš, 1974; Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Zhu, 1997)

CD (cohesive devices) 連繫功能詞

1. 指稱 Reference	1-1 代名詞 pronouns	(1) At home, <u>my father</u> is himself. (2) He relaxes and acts in his normal manner.	
	1-2 指示詞 demonstratives	(3) We question <u>why they tell us to do things</u> . (4) This is part of <u>growing up</u> .	
	1-3 定冠詞 articles	(5) <u>A man</u> crossed the street. Nobody saw what happened. Suddenly <u>the man</u> was lying there and calling for help.	
	1-4 比較詞 comparatives	(6) A: Would you like <u>these seats</u> ? B: No, as a matter of factor, I'd like <u>the other seats</u> .	
2. 代換 Substitution	by using a dummy word	(7) A: Did you ever find <u>a lawnmower</u> ? B: Yes, I borrowed <u>one</u> from my neighbor.	
3. 省略 Ellipsis	V, N, Sentence	(8) These biscuits are stale. Those (biscuits) are fresh. (9) He participated in the debate, but you didn't (participate in the debate).	
4. 連接 Conjunction	4-1 添加 additive	besides, additionally, in addition, furthermore, moreover, what's more, that is, namely...	
	4-2 轉折 adversative	however, yet, nonetheless, in fact, as a matter of fact, though, but, on the contrary, actually...	
	4-3 原因 causal	because, as, so, therefore, accordingly, as a result, thus, hence, since, consequently, for...	
	4-4 時間 temporal	when, before, after, until, as soon as, finally, in the beginning, meanwhile...	
	4-5 連續 continuative	likewise, and, in any case, after all...	
5. 詞彙與連用 Lexical Reiteration and Collocation	5-1 重述 Reiteration	5-1-1 重複 repetition	(10) What we lack in a <u>newspaper</u> is what we should get. In a word, a "popular" <u>newspaper</u> may be the winning ticket.
		5-1-2 同義詞或近似同義詞 synonym or near-synonym	(11) You could try reversing the car up the <u>slope</u> . The <u>incline</u> isn't all that steep.
		5-1-3 下義詞 hyponym (flower → rose)	(12) We were in town today shopping for <u>furniture</u> . We saw a lovely <u>table</u> .
		5-1-4 換喻詞 metonymy	(13) At its six-month checkup, <u>the brakes</u> had to be repaired. In general, however, <u>the car</u> was in good condition.

		5-1-5 反義詞 antonym	(14) The <u>old</u> movies just don't do it any more. The <u>new</u> ones are more appealing.
		5-1-6 概括詞 general items (有共存關係)	(15) A: Did you try <u>the steamed buns</u> ? B: Yes, I did like <u>the things much</u> .
	5-2 搭配 Collocation		(16) to compose music, to fly a kite, to reject an appeal
			(17) strong/weak tea, house arrest
			(18) bombs explode
			(19) a pack of dogs, a piece/bit of advice
			(20) keenly aware, deeply absorbed
			(21) affect deeply, coincide exactly

TP Types (Thematic Progression Types) 主題推進 (T= theme/topic; C= comment)

1. 線性推進 (simple linear topics of comments)	<p>Topic 1 → C1 ↓ T2 (=C1) → C2 ↓ T3 (=C2) → C3</p>	<p>One night, Mother took me to the theater where she worked. It was a dirty, shabby place. <u>One night, Mother</u> took me to <u>the theater where she worked</u>. T1 C1 <u>It</u> was a dirty, shabby place. T2 (=C1) C2</p>
2. 主題連續推進 (a constant topic)	<p>T1 → C1 ↓ T1 → C2 ↓ T1 → C3</p>	<p>My lovely mother was a singer. Unfortunately, in her late twenties, she suffered from laryngitis, but she had to keep working as we had no other means of financial support. <u>My lovely mother</u> was a singer. T1 C1 <u>Unfortunately, in her late twenties, she</u> suffered from laryngitis, ... support. T1 C2</p>

<p>3.大主題推進 (a hypertopic)</p>		<p>I'll tell you about my friends, John, Paul and Mary. John is an old friend from school, Paul, I met at college, and Mary, is a colleague at work.</p> <p>I'll tell you about <u>my friends</u>, John, Paul and Mary.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <p><u>John</u> is an old friend from school T1 C1</p> <p><u>Paul</u>, I met at college T2 C2</p> <p><u>Mary</u>, is a colleague at work T3 C3</p>
<p>4.主題分述推進 (split comments)</p>		<p>Our holidays (T1) include <u>skiing (C1')</u> and <u>camping at the beach (C1'')</u>. Skiing (T2') is something we do each July (C2'). Camping by the sea (T2'') is what my sister and I love best (C2'').</p>
<p>5.主題跳躍推進 (a topic jump)</p>		<p>One night, Mother (T1) took me to the theater where she worked (C1). It (T2=C1) was a dirty, shabby place (C2). (The theater (T3) was usually crowded with many viewers (C3).)The audience (T4=C3) was mostly noisy and rough soldiers who needed no excuse to ridicule anyone performing onstage (C4).</p>
<p>6. 主題推進評論 (TP with a subsequent rheme)</p>		<p>Pandas (T1) are clearly endangered species (C1). There (T2) are only 1,500 of them living in the wild today (C2).</p>
<p>7. 評論推進評論 (TP with interrelated rhemes)</p>		<p>As settlers push higher up the mountain slopes (T1), panda habitat inevitably disappears (C1). Deforestation (T2) also threatens the pandas' food supply (C2).</p>

Appendix I

Reading Handout with CD and TP

Paragraph 2:		
Topic		Comment
7. I [subject as topic]		say to you today, my friends ... so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream
8. It [subject as topic]		is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.
TP types	Cohesive ties	Notes
T ₇ → C ₇ ↓ T ₈ → C ₈	1-1	<p>◎ I say to you today, my friends...so even though we face the difficulties... → My friends, today, I tell you that <u>though/although</u> we face the difficulties... → My friends, today, I tell you that <u>despite/in spite of the fact that</u> we face the difficulties... ◎ say to (sb.)...比 <u>tell</u> + (sb.)...更正式的用法。 Ex. I say to you that I did not tell a lie. ◎ even though = <u>though/although</u> = <u>even if</u> = <u>in spite of the fact that</u></p>

Paragraph 3-6:		
Topic		Comment
9. I [subject as topic]		have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident : that all men are created equal ."
10. I [subject as topic]		have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood .
11. I [subject as topic]		have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.
12. I [subject as topic]		have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.
TP types	Cohesive ties	Notes
T ₉ → C ₉ ↓ T ₁₀ → C ₁₀ ↓ T ₁₁ → C ₁₁ ↓ T ₁₂ → C ₁₂	5-1-1 5-1-1 5-1-1	<p>◎ one day: 1. = <u>some day</u> [future] 2. on a particular day in the past [past] adv. someday [将来某日] ◎ rise up: 要求 Ex. Dr. Sun Yat-sen <u>called on</u> the people to rise up _____ the Qing Dynasty. ◎ hold A to be B [把A当作B] 有罪 1. The jury <u>held</u> the <u>defendant</u> to be <u>guilty</u>. 2. Yo-Yo Ma is <u>held to be</u> _____ a talented cellist. ◎ a. equal: 1. be equal <u>to</u> 2. be of equal <u>power/size/weight</u> 3. <u>be equal to</u> + N. = be able to V. <u>The two boxes are of equal weight</u> 4. be without equal = have no <u>equal</u> = be <u>second to none</u> ◎ not...by A but by B = ...by B not by A 不是依A而是依B Ex. The value of a person is <u>not</u> measured <u>by</u> what he/she has <u>but</u> <u>by</u> what he/she is.</p>

Paragraph 7-10:		
Topic		Comment
13. I [subject as topic]		have a dream today!
14. I [subject as topic]		have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.
15. I [subject as topic]		have a dream today!
16. I [subject as topic]		have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.
TP types	Cohesive ties	Notes
	5-1-1	◎ with + O + OC (V-ing/V-en): 1. The basketball player <u>is ready to</u> shoot his ball, and his heart is <u>beating</u> fast. → The basketball player is ready to shoot his ball, with <u>his heart beating fast</u> . 2. John <u>is proposing to</u> Mary, and he holds the ring in his palm. → John is proposing to Mary, <u>with the ring held in his palm</u> . 3. The detective is searching the house, and his gun is loaded. → The <u>detective</u> is searching the house, with his gun <u>loaded</u> . 4. My puppy eats its food happily, and its tail wags back and forth. → My puppy eats its food happily, with its tail <u>wagging</u> back and forth. 5. Loud noise is coming from outside. I can't <u>focus on</u> my homework. → With <u>loud noise coming from outside</u> , I can't focus on my homework. 6. Jane ran away. Tears rolled down her cheeks. → Jane ran away <u>with tears rolling down her cheeks</u> . 7. Frank began to work. His sleeves were rolled up. → Frank began to work <u>with his sleeves rolled up</u> . ◎ have/get/make + O + OC: 使某事或人達到某種狀態 / ~ + V. 使...做... 1. The teacher had the kids <u>singing</u> (sing) along to the Christmas carol. 2. Nick had his car <u>washed</u> (wash). 3. Don't get the driver <u>drunk</u> (drink). 4. Curiosity made the boy <u>asking</u> (ask) questions. Cf. The trainer made the dog <u>catch</u> (catch) the Frisbee. [要作某事] 5. His comment will probably make the situation <u>worse</u> . [...變更糟] 6. Perseverance made him <u>an Olympic champion</u> . [...成爲奧運冠軍] 7. It's not wise to keep customers <u>waiting</u> (wait). [使保持...狀態] 8. Don't close the window. Please <u>leave it open</u> . 9. The <u>horror movie</u> keeps us <u>in suspense</u> (suspend). [使我們忐忑不安] 10. The <u>explosion</u> left 16 policemen <u>dead</u> (die). a) suspicious about sth of sb.
	5-1-1	
	5-1-1	

* ~ which is ~ = ~ measure by what he/she is, not by what he/she has. ~ and is not measured by ~

Appendix J

The Test of CD and TP

Composition Quiz Part II

CLASS: 110-110-110110-110110

Cohesive Ties (凝結關係) & Topic-Comment Types:

I. Examples:

A. 21507:

Topic	Comment	
1. The most precious thing in my room T1 is a ring.		C1
2. T2 It is deep in my drawer, but I always keep it in my mind.		C2
3. T3 I bought it with my best friend when we were in junior high.		C3

B. 20101:

Topic	Comment	
1. The most precious thing in my room T1 is a cotton-made cake on my desk.		C1
2. T2 The cotton-made cake was my 17-year-old birthday gift.		C2
3. T3 It was made by my cousin.		C3

C. How to make sentences more cohesive:

1. The most precious thing in my room is a computer.

a. I use it to learn a lot of knowledge on the Internet.

b. With the computer, I can learn lots of knowledge on the Net.

2. The most precious thing in my room is a teddy bear.

a. It was a present from my father.

b. Many years ago, when my father worked in Japan, he bought the bear for me.

D. What makes a good topic sentence and a concluding sentence:

TS	CS
1. There are too many things in my room.	The box is my favorite in my room because there are great memories in it.
2. The most precious thing in my room is a digital camera.	For me, the best thing means the most precious.
3. The album on my shelf is the most precious thing in my room.	The album always reminds me of sweet memories, so I'll cherish it forever.

II. Quiz:

1. The most precious thing in my room is a watch. 2. The black belt of the watch is made by leather and its cover is gold. 3. Though it is a bit old, it always tells the correct time. 4. Besides telling the time, the watch is also the first thing I bought by myself. 5. When I was in college, I worked part-time in a restaurant to learn some experience. 6. That teaches me a lot. 7. From the work experience, I know how hard to make money. 8. So I saved all the money and then bought my own first watch. 9. Whenever I look at my watch, it reminds me of the valuable experience. 10.

Topic	Comment
1. The most precious thing in my room	is a watch.
2. The black belt of the watch	is made by leather and its cover is gold.
3. Though it is a bit old,	it always tells the correct time.
4. Besides telling the time,	the watch is also the first thing I bought by myself.
5. When I was in college,	I worked part-time in a restaurant to learn some experience.
6. That	teaches me a lot.
7. From the work experience,	I know how hard to make money.
8. So I	saved all the money and then bought my own first watch.
9. Whenever I look at my watch,	it reminds me of the valuable experience.
10. a. Therefore, I will treasure the watch because it means a lot to me.	T-C types: $T_1 \rightarrow C_1$ $T_2 \rightarrow C_2$ $T_3 \rightarrow C_3$ $T_4 \rightarrow C_4$ $T_5 \rightarrow C_5$ $T_6 \rightarrow C_6$ $T_7 \rightarrow C_7$ $T_8 \rightarrow C_8$ $T_9 \rightarrow C_9$ $T_{10} \rightarrow C_{10}$
b. The watch means a lot to me and I will make good use of my time.	

Appendix K

Peter's Writing Task (Draft 6: Earthquake)

提示：請根據右方圖片的場景，描述整個事件發生的前因後果。文章請分兩段，第一段說明之前發生了什麼事情，並根據圖片內容描述現在的狀況；第二段請合理說明接下來可能會發生什麼事，或者未來該做些什麼。(98年學測)



Step 1: Generate your ideas in 3-5 minutes. (1. clusters 2. question list 3. free writing)

The earthquake happened the house destroy
house will clear the government will help people
some food to people to predict the earthquake
happened drop destruction

Step 2: Make a brief outline with a topic sentence and a concluding sentence based on the hints.

pa1

1. Topic sentence: There ^{was an} had earthquake

2. Supporting ideas: 1. many houses destroyed 2. people clear their house.

pa2

3. Topic sentence: They hoped that the next disaster ^{would be so} ~~will not~~ very terrible.

4. Supporting ideas: 1. developed technology 2. drop destructions

5. Concluding sentence: (pa1 & pa2)

The earthquake happened ~~that~~ many ^{damage.} destructions were caused

Step 3: Begin to write your paragraph and add any necessary information. (1. at least 8 sentences 2. number your sentences)

1. In the ^{some where} there had ^{the} earthquake. ^{on} this disaster, many houses were destroyed, and many people did not have homes to ^{live} back. ^{After} these people are cleaning up their houses, and ^{for} seek their furnitures which ^{wasn't} dest.

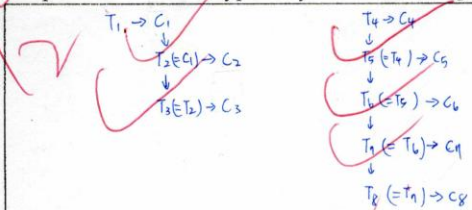
2. The government gives the victims the temporary houses, and sends the soldiers to help them clearing their houses.

3. The government also gives the victims some food to survive the hard time until ^{they return to} ~~cover~~ the normal life.

4. The government will ^{develop} the technology to predict ^{when an} the earthquake happened. The government hopes the technology that it can help ^{people prevent} them to ~~drop~~ destructions that the earthquake causes. They hope that the next earthquake will not very terrible.

Step 4: Cohesive words. (1. circle the cohesive words 2. write down the cohesive numbers)

Step 5: Draw the T-C types of your own writing.



心得：學習了一陣子，我發現我的文章中，
其凝結關係都很完善，對我來說，凝結關係還滿有成效的。

這次模考，由於自認寫作的分數是最好拿的，只要寫得不差，就有分數，所以，我先從非選寫起。選擇寫不完至少可以猜。

另外，我想老師可以採取「親自帶領我們複習」取代「出考卷」的方式來準備大考，老師您可以考慮看看。



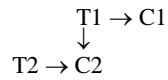
Appendix M
Questionnaire
(Adapted from Rose, 1984)

In this semester, you finished participating in the study of CD and TP. Now I want to know more about your thoughts and feelings about this study. Please answer the following questions.

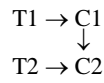
Part I: The writing development

1. I decide what to write next by thinking over the previous sentence carefully.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
2. If time permitting, revising is very helpful.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
3. I think revising can make my writing more fluent.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
4. I think it is troubling to revise the written texts.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
5. I think I can write better than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
6. I think the organization of my writing is better than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
7. I know more about how to write in English.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
8. The coherence between my sentences and paragraphs are better than some classmates.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
9. I think the help I need when writing is less than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
10. I think I am a senior high school student with good command of writing.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
11. I think the sequence of the sentences and paragraphs in my writing is better than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
12. I think the order of sentences is more logic than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
13. I think my writing has been improved.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
14. I find it easier to write in English better than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
15. I think I can make sentences which more cohere with the topic.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
16. I think I can choose more proper words to use in my writing.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
17. I think the content of my writing I much clearer than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
18. The description in my writing is more meaningful and reasonable than before.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
19. I think I become more careful to choose the words when writing.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
20. I like to write in English now.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
21. I don't dislike writing in English even if I sometimes still have difficulty writing.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
22. I have to write a very good paragraph I to keep writing the next paragraph.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
23. I now can finish writing within the limited time.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
24. If I can't think of some word or phrase I want to use, I won't keep writing until I make it.
 Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

(3) _____ TP with a subsequent rheme



(4) _____ TP with interrelated rhemes



5. Please describe why some of the categories are often adopted.
 6. Please describe why some of the categories are seldom or never used.
 7. Which one do you think is easier for you to examine, CD or TP? Why?
 8. When do you apply CD and TP when writing? (prewriting, writing, revising)
 9. If there is no time limit, when do you think it's better to examine CD and TP?
 10. When you examine CD and TP, what problems would make you do this for a long time or even stop?
 11. After the period of this study, do you think the application of CD and TP helps your writing? In which way? Please describe this specifically and completely.
 12. If you had one more chance, would you still want to learn CD and TP?
 13. If you can decide, when do you hope to learn CD and TP? Why?
 14. What do you think about the learning of CD and TP?
 15. What do you think about the teaching of CD and TP?
- This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.



Appendix N
Interview Questions
(Adapted from Merriam, 1992)

A. General questions:

1. Do you think you make progress in English writing? Why?
2. In which way does your writing be improved?

B. Questionnaire confirmation:

1. Why did you choose the item in question 36 in the questionnaire?
2. Why didn't you disagree with the description in question 27?
3. What did you mean in the third open-ended question?

C. Perception and progression questions:

1. So far, what has been your biggest problem in the writing process?
2. Do you think the instruction of CD and TP by combining the textbook passages is clear? Why?
3. Which is harder, searching for CD and TP in your own writing or the reading passages?
4. What are the advantage and disadvantage when you applied CD and TP in your writing?
5. Do CD and TP restrict you from writing smoothly? Why or why not?
6. Do you find something else when applying CD and TP? What's that?
7. What problems might you encounter when applying CD and TP in class or at home?
8. What do you think about the in-class writing and writing conferences?
9. Which coherence indicator is easier to find, CD or TP? Why?
10. When do you apply CD and TP, writing or revising?
11. What are the differences between the writing pieces you wrote in the last semester and this one?
12. What causes the differences?
13. Do you have any other thought about CD and TP—the learning and teaching processes? Why?

Appendix O
 The Coding Scheme of Conference Talks
 (Adapted from Lin, 2000 & Yeh, 2001)

	CD	TP
Application (A)	(ACD): the application of CD	(ATP): the application of TP
Revision (RV)	(RVCD): the teaching of CD and the discussion about choosing right words to connect sentences	(RVTP): the teaching of TP and the discussion about the topical development between sentences
	Content	(RVC): the storyline in the participants' writing
	linguistic mechanics	(RVLM): the discussion about sentence patterns, tense, spelling and word use, etc.
Attitude	(ACD): the attitude toward the teaching and learning CD	(ATP): the attitude toward the teaching and learning TP
Others problems (OP)	other problems when writing in class and at home	

Appendix P

The Coding Scheme of Journals

(Adapted from Schumman and Schumman, 1977)

Writer: Bob_01		Topic:	
Coding items	Line	Descriptions	Interpretation
satisfaction/ dissatisfaction			
confidence/ frustration			
desires to maintain some habits			
the similarity/ difference of applying CD and TP			
the timing of applying CD and TP			

Appendix Q
The Interview Log
(Adapted from Merriam, 2001)

Interviewee: Bob		Date:
Tape Position	Respondents' Comments	Researcher's Notes
00:01		
05:05		
10:12		

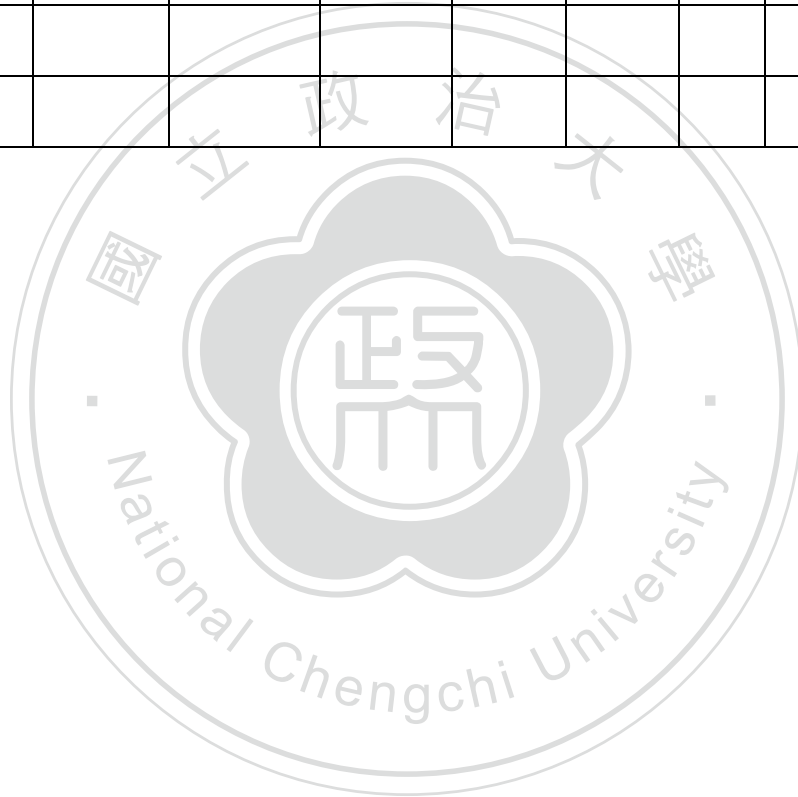


Appendix R

The Coding Scheme of Interviews

(Adapted from Merriam, 2001)

Sentence No.	Thematic progression (TP)	Cohesive devices (CT)	Progression (PN)	Attitudes (AT)	Problems (PM)	Others (OT)	+ / - (Positive/negative)
1a							
1b							
1c							
2a							
2b							



Appendix S

GEPT Raters' Scores of the Participants' Essays and Coherence

		Rater A		Rater B		Means		
		whole essay (/20)	organization/ coherence (/5)	whole essay (/20)	organization/ coherence (/5)	whole essay	Coherence	
Narration of comic strips	Spider (D1)	Bob	15	4.5	14	4	14.5	4.25
		Peter	3	2	8	3	5.5	2.5
	Mystery novel (D2)	Bob	11	4	18	5	14.5	4.5
		Peter	9	3	11	4	11	3.5
	English class (D3)	Bob	14	4.5	17	5	15.5	4.75
		Peter	10	3	14	5	12	4
Description	The most precious thing (D4)	Bob	13	4.5	12	4	12.5	4.25
		Peter	5	3	9	3	7	3
	The thing I'll never do again (D5)	Bob	12	5	14	5	13	5
		Peter	7	4	11	5	9	4.5
	Narration of one picture	Earthquake (D6)	Bob	8	3.5	15	5	11.5
Peter			6	3	9	4	7.5	3.5
Fight (D7)		Bob	12	4	17	5	14.5	4.5
		Peter	14	5	12	4	13	4.5

Appendix T

Bob's and the Researchers' Analyses of CD and TP in *Fight*

(Adapted from Mustaffa & Aman, 2007; Lan, 2008; Zhou, 2007)

Sentence No.	CD			TP		
	Researchers		Participant	Researchers		Participant
	A	B	Bob	A	B	Bob
1				T1 → R1		
2	1-1 Johnny, Peter and George		→ they	↓ T2 → R2		
3	5-1-2 classmates		→ the school	↓ T3 → R3		
4	5-1-1 lecture		→ lecture	↓ T4 → R4		
5	5-1-1 many students		→ many students	↓ T5 → R5		
6	5-1-1 lecture		→ lecture	↓ T6 → R6		
7	5-1-2 lecture		→ speech	↓ T7 → R7		
8	5-1-6 exercise		→ (answer)	↓ T8 → R8		
9	4-2 however			↓ T9 → R9		
10	4-3 therefore			↓ T10 → R10		
11	1-1 Johnny, Peter and George		→ they	↓ T11 → R11		
12	5-1-1 they		→ George	↓ T12 → R12		
13	1-1 George		→ he	↓ T13 → R13		
14	4-4 later			↓ T14 → R14		
15	1-1 Peter and Johnny		→ both of them	↓ T15 → R15		
16	5-1-6 Peter and Johnny		→ who	↓ T16 → R16		
17	5-1-1 who			↓ T17 → R17		

Appendix U

The Researchers' Scores of the Participants' Writing Coherence

		Researcher A		Researcher B		Mean (C)	
		O	C	O	C		
Narration of comic strips	Spider (D1)	Bob	0.62	3.08	0.79	3.97	3.53
		Peter	0.70	3.50	1.00	5.00	4.25
	Mystery novel (D2)	Bob	0.86	4.31	1.00	5.00	4.65
		Peter	0.80	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.50
	English class (D3)	Bob	0.90	4.50	1.00	5.00	4.75
		Peter	0.88	4.38	0.96	4.58	4.58
Description	The most precious	Bob	0.74	3.70	1.00	5.00	4.35
	thing (D4)	Peter	0.90	4.52	0.90	4.52	4.52
	The thing I'll never	Bob	0.89	4.44	0.94	4.72	4.58
	do again (D5)	Peter	0.90	4.44	0.95	4.75	4.60
Narration of one picture	Earthquake (D6)	Bob	0.63	3.15	0.63	3.15	3.15
		Peter	0.78	3.89	0.89	4.44	4.17
	Fight (D7)	Bob	0.77	3.85	1.00	5.00	4.43
		Peter	0.86	4.31	1.00	5.00	4.65

O: original scores

C: converted scores

Appendix V

The Excerpt of Attitudes toward CD and TP in Bob's Final Interview

R: ... then what difference between the last semester and this semester do you find when you learned CD and TP?

B: (pause)

R: I mean what do you think about CD and TP when you learn them at different times?

B: I didn't want to learn them in the last semester. I didn't like them at first.

R: You didn't like them. Why?

B: I thought I should write what I wanted to write when writing... then it could be alright if I didn't violate the topic of the instructions in the writing exercises.

R: ... violate what?

B: ...the topic in the instructions...

R: So you think you just wanted to follow the requirement in the instructions.

B: Yeah...

R: You think this is okay. Just write what you want to write... is there any other reason? Why did you dislike the cohesive devices and thematic progressions at first?

B: (pause)... a little troublesome.

R: Besides that, what else? What's your opinion about the two skills? Or when you learned them in class, did you have any idea of this?

B: ...um... it's really very troublesome.

R: Even when you just read them or look for them by yourselves?

B: (laugh) ... yeah...

R: Okay, maybe this was the first time for you to learn this. How about the third year? Did you change the thoughts about thematic progressions and cohesive devices in the third year?

B: ...

R: Or still the same? Anything else?

B: Yeah, my thoughts changed.

R: What's that?

B: Um... they became the great help when I write.

R: So you think they help you a lot in writing.

B: Um.

R: Besides this, do you have any other ideas? Will you think of them when you read some articles?

B: ... read articles....

R: Like reading comprehension, semantic choice, etc.

B: ... I would do this in the semantic choice part.

R: ... ok, semantic choice... you mentioned that they help you a lot in writing, and in what ways? When you applied cohesive devices and thematic progressions in writing, in what ways did they help you more?

B: ... fluency...

R: Fluency? Okay... anything else?

B: ... no...

B-I-206-252

Appendix W

The Excerpt of Attitudes toward CD and TP in Peter's Final Interview

R: What do you think about the in-class writing by yourself and the discussion in writing conferences?

P: My thoughts?

R: Yeah, last year, I led you to find TP and cohesive devices in the textbook reading, and then you had to search for TP and cohesive devices by yourself in writing class. This year, you were invited to join the conferences and looked for TP and cohesive devices with me. What difference or similarity did you find between these two ways?

P: Similarity and difference?

R: Yeah...

P: Mm... let me see...

R: What similarity and difference between the way that you find them yourself and the way you discussed with me?

P: One way is that I found them after writing, and I had to make a draft. I think it's troubling to draft.

R: So you think drafting first made you troubled last year?

P: Right.

R: Why?

P: Because after I finished writing, I filled some of what I wrote. Then it's almost done.

R: Oh... I see. Actually, in that part you don't have to write down a lot of things. I found most of you preferred to write down some key words and phrases. Well, that's enough.

P: Um...

R: The other way is to list some questions. Another is free-writing. Some of you liked free-writing. You mean you think whichever is troubling?

P: It's much easier to list some important points. The others are really troubling.

R: Besides that, what effect will these ways have on your process of looking for TP and cohesive devices?

P: What effect?

R: Yeah...

P:

R: What difference would this make when you search for TP and cohesive devices?

P: The process?

R: Yeah, or ...

P: Yeah, no difference.

R: You think there is no difference between the searching in class and conferences.

P: Yeah...

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