

BECOMING A BETTER TEACHER IN THE WRITING CLASS: A CASE STUDY OF A WRITING TUTOR IN A UNIVERSITY IN CHINA

Fu Bei

1. Introduction

In the second language writing community, the bulk of studies have been carried out on the needs of those learning to write rather than of those learning to teach writing (Hirvela & Belcher 2007). Such an imbalance deserves the attention and efforts of researchers since how teachers teach can have a direct impact on how students learn. To date, however, there is a paucity of research on how EFL teachers teach and learn to teach writing.

In China, as more and more pre-service and in-service teachers have been abroad to complete a TESOL programs or other short-term teacher education programs in western countries, they have been “enlightened” by the latest Western research and pedagogy, and set out to reform the system and open the eyes of willing students to the joys and benefits of EFL writing. What is more, a number of teacher education programs in China have introduced new methods and experiences of writing teaching to the frontline teachers. Many scholars (Bradley & Orleans 1989; Leki 2001; You 2004) suggest that when applying Western writing approaches for local use, writing teachers need to heighten their consciousness of the literary practices, educational tradition, students’ needs and instructional constraints in the local contexts. Local adaptations of the Western imports into China have been reported (You 2004). Bradley and Orleans (1989) made technological and cultural adjustments when using peer-reviewing activities in classrooms in China and Japan. Arndt (1993) found that Chinese students prefer peer comments to be given in written form at the revision stage. Li (1994) suggested using annotations instead of oral feedback in a process-centered writing classroom in Hong Kong. However, all these studies were mainly concerned with the students or writing instruction, but not the writing teacher.

As a writing teacher of English major students in China, I have implemented some Western teaching methods into my writing class and made some breakthroughs, but it has still left lots of puzzles and uncertainties. It is these uncertainties that have driven me to review the literature and led me to the theme of teacher change. Few empirical studies are dedicated to exploring the

endeavors made by the EFL writing teachers during their change processes. This study is only a part of a project on the issue of teacher change regarding EFL writing teachers. Using data from interviews and classroom observation, this paper aims to explore the facilitating and constraining factors of the implementation of Western teaching pedagogy in the EFL writing class.

2. Literature Review

Deliberate inquiries into how EFL writing teachers learn to teach better for the benefits of students have trailed behind the investigation of effective teaching methods *per se*. Richards (1987), for example, lamented the paucity of research regarding the preparation of language teachers, and Freeman and Johnson (1998) argued that teacher education has been widely conducted, but that few actual studies were carried out in the field.

2.1 Teacher Change

Teacher change is an intricate phenomenon, which covers change in teachers’ professional practices, beliefs and attitudes that will lead to improvements in student learning (Griffin 1983). McLaughlin and Marsh (1978: 75), for instance, report that, “A primary motivation for teachers to take on extra work and other personal costs of attempting changes is the belief that they will become better teachers and their students will benefit”. According to Liu (2007), teacher learning and teacher change may arise from the help of others, such as teacher education training, action research, curriculum reform participation and teacher educators.

Much research on teacher change is related to teacher education programs. Guskey (1986) proposes a model of the linear process of teacher change which starts from staff development program, change in teachers’ classroom practice, change in student learning outcomes, to change in teacher’s beliefs and attitudes. It is said that unless teachers see positive changes in student learning, they are not going to change their beliefs and attitudes. Borg (2003) further suggests that the relationship between what teachers think and believe and how they behave is not a straightforward one. While teacher learning in the

form of cognitive change does not guarantee behavioral change, behavioral change does not necessarily imply cognitive change. In the model of change put forward by Lamin (2004), awareness, that is, raising awareness of the need for change, and teacher training are two critical features that have an impact on the process of change, suggesting that teacher education does have a pivotal role to play in effecting teacher change.

Studies have shown that teacher education programs undertaken in isolation from teachers' ongoing classroom responsibilities seldom have much impact on teaching practices or student learning (Doyle & Ponder 1977; Zigarmi, Betz & Jensen 1977). Van Lier (2002: 144) reminds us that the context is central to learning, and 'it cannot be reduced and it cannot be pushed aside or into the background'. Zhang (2005) summarizes some other situational factors that may impede the application of western pedagogies and possibilities of teacher change: large classes in which teacher have trouble maintaining discipline; inadequate teacher preparation; persistent use of L1; teacher and student resistance beliefs and attitudes; and unclear or unrealistic governmental policies.

Tikunoff and Ward (1983) suggest that changes in practice have not been enduring because teachers have been treated as if they were passive practitioners of the teaching methods proposed in theoretical research. If a teacher is to create and maintain change in practice, he or she must have an acknowledged, legitimate and rewarding role in creating the knowledge to facilitate these changes, but if teachers' interpretations of new methods are quite different from what the "experts" have intended, the new methodology is doomed to failure (Briscoe 1991). Additionally, Schon (1983, 1987) describes the fact that teachers cannot construct new knowledge, take charge of their actions and initiate change without reflection "in" and "on" action.

In this paper, teacher change is clearly defined as a positive change for the benefit of students' learning. It needs both necessary conditions, for example, reflection "on" action (Schon 1983, 1987), and other aspects, for example, teacher education training, action research, curriculum reform participation and a good teacher educator, as listed in Liu (2007). In addition, the local EFL context and situational factors may constrain the process of teacher change.

2.2 Teacher change in EFL Writing

In a longitudinal study of five experienced EFL writing teachers, Shi and Cumming (1995) claim

that when a new method is consistent with teachers' teaching beliefs, they will gradually implement it into their practice, otherwise, they will disregard it. Within an ecological framework (Casanave 2009), EFL writing teachers have to constantly wrestle with the question of how to best integrate writing practices into teaching contexts that are dominated by conventional approaches. A case in point is the implementation of process-centered pedagogy in product-oriented writing classrooms (You 2004). Tsui (1996) demonstrates a situated perspective of teacher learning, where an EFL teacher in Hong Kong had to develop a modified version of process-focused writing, despite her own enthusiasm about the pedagogy and the students' positive feedback, mainly because of institutional and curricular constraints. In particular, the adoption of process-centered writing resulted in fewer compositions and required teachers to spend more time on the actual writing process, which conflicted with the institutional and curriculum goals i.e. to provide as much exam-like writing practice for students as possible and to cover the grammar-focused syllabus prescribed by the school.

In feedback, new ways of obtaining information, such as peer feedback, computer-based feedback, and conference feedback (also termed as face-to-face feedback in literatures), have been introduced into the classroom with various effects and results (Lee 2010). Lee (2008) even encourages some form of short-term teacher training in feedback, which could instil positive change in teachers' beliefs about feedback. There is, of course, no guarantee of change in teachers' practice, especially for those who feel they lack the autonomy to initiate and implement change in their work context. Lee (2010), however, mentions that writing teacher education programs can broaden teachers' perspectives on teaching writing and help them construct new identities as writing teachers.

Leki (2001), in turn, warns against the danger of the wholesale application of the prevalent Western research and pedagogy, such as process-centered approaches, peer response, minimal error correction, instruction in the western concept of plagiarism and the development of voice, without considering the local realities of teaching writing. For instance, in a testing-oriented curriculum, written communication skills may not be needed or valued as much as test taking strategies. Casanave (2009) supports the importance of context and believes that the realities of local EFL contexts constrain what teachers are able to enact from their EFL teacher education programs and

from their personal beliefs about writing instruction. In sum, in the EFL writing class, teachers tried to replace conventional teaching approaches with western pedagogy. It was not wise for teachers to apply the new methods without carefully studying the methods and the local EFL contexts. However, the facilitating and constraining factors of teacher change in the EFL writing class have not been explored yet. What is more, the voice of students in the teacher change process has not been heard yet.

2.3 EFL Writing teaching in China

In China, EFL writing is not taught as a separate subject or skill until students go to college. Teachers see themselves more as teachers of language rather than teachers of writing (Lee 1998; Reichelt 1999). This is because writing is treated primarily as a vehicle for reinforcing language structures and vocabulary. Much of teachers' time is spent on marking students' writing work, leaving them with little time to attend to other important aspects of their work as writing teachers. You (2004) found that in China, the syllabus is nationally unified and exam-oriented, and teachers have little time or incentive to enact 'western writing pedagogies' that, for example, ask students to develop their abilities to think critically. Innovations and 'enlightened' teaching of writing is possible in only a few of the elite, private high schools and universities.

In most EFL writing classes in universities, the teaching depends on textbooks, model writing appreciation and teacher feedback. The procedure of English writing teaching is as follows:

1. Manuscript form
2. Diction
3. Sentence
4. Paragraph
5. Composition as a whole
6. Summary and Book report
7. Formal and informal styles
8. Practical writing
9. Research paper
10. Punctuation

In the last two decades, more and more teachers have been dissatisfied with the established methods of teaching English writing. They have been trying some new methods as a way of improving and complementing the established writing procedure and methods, in which process-centered approach has been implemented and studied the most (Zhang 2005).

In teaching writing, there is a gap we need to fill in, that is, to find out what happens when teachers implement new methods in their writing class and what can be done to promote teacher change, so as to enhance writing teachers' competence and professionalism. This paper aims to explore the following two research questions:

1. What are the factors facilitating changes in the teaching practice?
2. What are the factors constraining changes in the teaching practice?

3. Method

To address the research questions stated above, a case study using tools of interview, written text analysis and observation was adopted. As a qualitative study focusing on gathering information in the natural surroundings, the case study had the advantage of probing into and gathering information on how the participant – Jane, tried to implement her teaching reform in the EFL writing class for English majors in China.

3.1 The researcher and the researched

It was difficult and demanding to be a teacher in the writing class, not to mention to be a good one. However, I loved teaching writing, because it was difficult, and I wanted to make it easier for my students. As I taught writing, I found myself harvest a lot both as a teacher and as a person. My first job was as an EFL writing teacher. So was Jane's.

As a postgraduate majoring in English translation from X University, one of the top foreign language studies universities in China, Jane was confident in her language proficiency, but had little knowledge about language pedagogy. In her work, she was responsible and active. Even though she had other teaching commitments in the college and had to prepare her lessons, she always tried to find the time to give written feedback to students on their work.

In 2011, Jane applied for the "Fulbright" program, which is offered by the U.S. government. She was enrolled to teach Chinese in the United States. In return, Jane could take four MA courses to update her teaching theories and enrich her experience as a teacher in FLT. The four courses were Modern Methods of Teaching English (reading and writing), Research Writing, American Literature and British Literature.

In 2013, when she returned from the U.S. and taught EFL writing again, she decided to implement something new in her class. The university she worked for was famous for

medicine-related subjects. In the English Department of the university, there are only eleven English teachers. With the relatively insufficient teaching force, the department aimed at providing graduates with both a solid base in the English language and a high level of knowledge in medicine.

It was the meeting in her office that inspired me to take her as my participant in a case study. I loved her office as soon as I entered it. The room was small but tidy. Three desks with books and students' exercises were near the window. A sofa was comfortably laid beside the desks and on the other side of the sofa was a computer desk. The lovely sofa was the place where Jane shared her story with me, showed me the "American textbook", and explained to me the way she conducted her "conferences" and a series of reforms, such as "process-centered writing" in her teaching. I still remembered the glow on her face when she shared with me her thoughts. At that moment, I told myself that this was exactly what I wanted to probe into—a case of becoming a better teacher in the EFL writing classroom.

Jane was quite confident and optimistic in her teaching reform. In the middle of our first meeting, Professor Wu, the deputy dean of the department came in. Later, from the words of Jane, I could feel her admiration for her leader, as the latter organized an encouraging community for the young teachers to teach and to learn.

Jane had a writing class every Tuesday. On Tuesday morning, I would come to her office at 7:30. Sometimes she would give me the handout and then we would walk to her class at around 7:40. From her office to the classroom, it took us only 5 minutes, but it was in those 5 minutes that she would tell me about the planning of the course and answer my questions. Then I would go to Jane's class and witness the obstacles she encountered there and the efforts she made to develop as a better teacher of writing. As a classroom observer, I would keep logs on the observation of her teaching and response from her students in the classroom. In addition, as a teacher keen on EFL writing, I wished to communicate with her about the problems and challenges she had confronted in her teaching reform.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

The data for the study were mainly from 4 in-depth semi-structured interviews with the participant and 6 classroom observations for three months, triangulated with the data gathered from interviews with students and other written

materials involving students' writing exercises, written feedback, emails and course materials. The interviews with the participant were conducted in Chinese and lasted from 30 to 60 minutes. The interviews with 5 students (2 females and 3 males) were carried out after class for 5-10 minutes.

The interview with the participant shed light on her "new teaching practice" and the problems in her teaching. The classroom observation, in turn, revealed the realities of her teaching, and the improvements and obstacles in making changes. Interviews with the students uncovered the voices and thoughts of their teacher's practice. Students' writing exercises, feedback and other materials helped to triangulate the practice and belief concerning Jane's teaching.

The data were collected and analyzed on a continuous basis. Analysis of the transcriptions, field notes and other materials were used to generate questions to be raised and discussed in later interviews. Routine personal reflections were recorded to summarize ideas that have emerged from the data. In addition, a summary of transcripts was sent back to the participant for confirmation of the facts.

4. Jane's Story: Findings and Discussions

4.1 Something new

Something new that Jane learned was mainly from the content of an American textbook named *Teaching Adolescent Writers*. The textbook was the course material in a course named Modern Methods of Teaching English Jane had taken in the States. The full use of the textbook convinced Jane that it was feasible, at least partially feasible, for her class back in China.

"It's a pretty good textbook as it was written by an experienced writing teacher in the United States.....I was dissatisfied with my teaching and we (my colleagues and I) always complaint about students' poor writing in their graduate paper. I didn't want to teach in the old way, and this textbook gave me some ideas and they were worth a try." (J-02-11)

"Before I went abroad, I taught English writing in my own way. However, when I went to America, and saw something new. I decided to have a shot at making some change." (J-03-01)

The textbook covered different themes including the common misunderstandings of writing among teaching practitioners, a writing revolution calling for more writing practice in different courses, the teacher as a writing model, using authentic materials as reading and writing models, students' power of determining writing

topics, the importance of purpose and audience, and using assessment to facilitate students' writing.

"Some of them were not suitable for my students, for it's much more about teaching American adolescent." Jane thought. As a teacher emphasizing the importance of language accuracy, she implemented the "element crafts", face-to-face feedback or conferencing and the process-centered writing in her class.

As a result, her class (90 minutes) was composed of three sections: 1) teacher's instruction on text structure & writing model (about 60 minutes); 2) students' presentation on "element crafts", namely strong verbs, sentence variety, paragraphing, choice of words, clear thesis etc. (about 10-20 minutes); 3) face-to-face feedback or conferencing (about 10 minutes & during the break). In presentation, students were required to share good readings with "element crafts" from the sources like BBC news, the speech notes on TED, film lines. Conferencing was reserved for students each week. Another change was about the follow-up activities of students' first draft writing. Partner and teacher would comment on the writing exercise, and students were required to write two drafts on the same topic.

4.2 Factors facilitating changes

Teacher's reflection on teaching: the initial step

As mentioned by many scholars (e.g. McLaughlin & Marsh 1978; Griffin 1983), the primary motivation for Jane to take on extra work and other personal costs of attempting change is the belief that she will become better a teacher and her students will benefit.

Five years ago, when Jane was a new teacher, her writing class was not interesting. She did all the talk and students sat, and just sat there.

"I just wanted to finish all the contents in the textbook, for example, narrative, expository, for I thought I had a lot to teach." She remembered. Another dissatisfaction, which was a big puzzle for her came from her feedback on students' writing work. At that time, 50 students sat in her class. It was a heavy burden for her to give feedback. "My feedback was always not enough," She remembered, "and my teaching failed to help students."

"It originated from my previous experience, because I did not want to teach writing like that anymore. Then the textbook gave me some idea, and I was thinking whether I could make some change." Jane said. Reflection on action (Schon 1983, 1987) initiates Jane's change. Reflection is

the channel for us teachers to be more professional and competent in our teaching practice. It is also the first step and necessary condition of teacher change. It is closely related to the concept "awareness" given by Lamin (2004), that is, reflection on action can raise teachers' awareness of the need for change.

The textbook¹: a critical "event"

The textbook offered Jane some practical ideas, including conferencing and process-centered writing. She believed what the textbook describes: "5 minutes face-to-face talk was much more effective than 1 hour written feedback." Her experience told her that the slow improvement in students' writing was due to the inefficacy of the written form of feedback. "Many of them do not read my feedback, and moreover, conferencing is feasible in my class." She had 30 students in her class, which was less than the number five years ago. "By conferencing, students are more active in class. I can feel that! And that is the big change!" she added.

In addition to the teacher education training, action research, curriculum reform participation, and teacher educator as helpers for teacher development (Liu 2007), textbooks with practical ideas can be another important assistant for teacher change, and become a critical "event" for Jane in her story.

The cold and old textbooks for in-service and pre-service teachers in China are too theoretical to guide teacher's teaching practice. However, a book written by an experienced teacher summarizes all the pains and gains of a teacher as a person, and it is fresh and alive. Through decades of time and cross the Pacific and the Himalayas, it strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of its readers, including Jane.

Situational factors: a necessary condition

Different from the bad EFL contexts depicted by You (2004), strong support from local EFL contexts facilitates Jane's decision to make a change. Jane was very lucky, as she owned an open and cozy working environment. Supported by the dean of the department, professor Wu, a learning community was formed and some research projects and seminars were held to encourage Jane and many of her colleagues to work creatively and improve their professionalism. Jane had written a project proposal on *EFL writing and students' critical thinking ability*, and also gained the chance to teach

¹ For the contents of the textbook, refer to the above section.

academic writing and ESP writing course with professor Wu and other colleague.

Two years ago, the university introduced the “*ji xiao gong zhi*”, a performance pay program. Thanks to the program, Jane only had six periods of teaching work each week. She was very satisfied with the arrangement for she had enough time to read and research on projects interesting her. “It is an ideal university in my mind, I am free to read and teach.” Her college was a “paradise” for teachers like Jane, but not for some others. The wage there was not appealing.

Innovations and ‘enlightened’ teaching of writing are possible in only a few of universities (You 2004). That is the fact. In many universities, writing teachers are controlled by the Test for English Majors Level 4 (TEM4), because students’ performance in the TEM4 is directly related to the teachers’ interests. Luckily, Jane got no requirement from the department that her writing class should fight against the test. “Learning is not for examination...When I was a student, my teacher would never give me training on tests, and I would recite a vocabulary book and did some model tests.” In her class, she would give students writing topics from TEM4 as assignments. “But that is all,” she said.

Factors facilitating the change in this case involve the initial step--reflection on action, the necessary situational factors and the critical textbook. However, responsibility for the growth of students should be the elementary factor. Once I asked her “what defines a good teacher?” She told me, “I do not know what a good teacher is, but I think I was a good student for I can learn something good for myself in any teacher’s classroom. I think I am a responsible teacher.”

Jane realized that through conferencing and process-centered writing, students made progress. “It works, and they wrote thesis statement and outline before they start writing, and therefore their writing work is well-organized.”

As she started the face-to-face feedback, Jane became close to students, and therefore be aware of students’ language problems. “Once I told one of my students that ‘frequent new words’ was wrong, and asked him to look up the dictionary. Then he came to me with ‘good words’. That’s funny, for you give him feedback, and he will give a surprising answer. Then I explained to him, ‘you could say ‘frequently encountered’, and he said he found ‘high frequency’ but it is a noun...Sometimes we teachers took these language points for granted and neglected them in the classroom. Their language was not so good as we thought.”

4.3 Factors constraining changes

Inadequate communication between teacher and students

It is quite common for students’ voices to be ignored by teachers. Teacher change is for the improvement in student learning (Griffin 1983). In the process of making a change, it is advisable to hear the voice of the students. In the writing class, Jane was supposed to have the opportunity to listen to her students, for example, through the conferencing and small talk during the break, about their feeling of the new methods. The negotiation could help Jane make adjustments in the teaching plan or help extend the negotiation with the whole class to reach an agreement on every change.

From the interview with the students, I noticed that they held both positive and negative points of view towards the implementation of the new methods.

“I think writing class is not difficult, but writing is difficult for me. I expect more feedback from Jane. I am not satisfied with my writing, such as the choice of words. But I think I will make some progress in the course.” (Zack, a male student)

“It is a new method, but I (we) feel troublesome and tired with the tables she gives us to fill in. She always makes change in her teaching but should notify us in advance. I don’t think my partner will help me with my writing problem. I need Jane’s comments. She is responsible, like the teachers in our department. But I feel I learn little in her class. I suggest Jane makes good planning at the beginning of the semester, and should be systematic in her teaching plan. Of course, she has no experience in the new method; I hope we will learn something at the end of the course, but not a waste of time.” (Silvia, a female student)

“At first, I followed Jane’s order to write and rectify my mistakes, but the list is too long, and I lose my patience..... then she once told us that if we gave up rectifying our mistakes, it’s OK, and then we belonged to the ‘control group’. I think I am comfortable with being a ‘control group’.” (Tony, a male student)

Jane claimed that she wanted to make some change and stimulate students to study. Yet in class she required her students to revise their writing drafts again and again, but did not tell them why. Without much stronger motivation, the students would become more and more demotivated. Students’ voices indicated many problems which could be solved if Jane had communicated with her students.

In addition, from students’ voice, some other situational factors summarized by Zhang (2009) may impede the possibilities of teacher change can be found in Jane’s class, such as inadequate

teacher preparation, here referring to the peer feedback training to students and the teaching plan for the whole lesson.

Inadequate knowledge on “something new”

Teachers interpret techniques and implement them based on their prior knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning. Often these interpretations are quite different from the “experts” have intended and the new methodology is doomed to failure (Briscoe 1991).

Jane needed more knowledge on how to conduct the process-centered writing approach. As to the follow-up activities of students’ first draft writing, or the actual process-centered writing, Jane spent too much time on error correction and text structure on the first draft.

“It’s a laborious task to correct mistakes in students’ compositions. Before I made some changes, I gave students my feedback, but they failed to correct the mistakes. And the same mistake could appear in the composition at the beginning of the semester, and again the final exam at the end of the semester. Now I underline their problems and require them to rectify the problems, and make a record of the mistakes. For example, they transcribe the mistakes on the left of a page, and the correct sentences on the right, and then mark the type of the mistakes, maybe the verb tense or the choice of words.” (J-01-01)

Jane was strict with students’ language mistakes (see Appendix). In her reflection at the end of the semester, she wrote: “the first draft should focus more on content, and its richness, and then the language.”

According to Zhang (2005), in process writing, the first revised draft should focus on the meaning of the text. In this process, large passages may be deleted, or added, or changed. These passages should be marked to show that they have been drastically changed. The revisions of the second and the third drafts are more related to language use, but there are not so many drastic changes, and the focus has also been shifted to grammar, vocabulary and style.

In addition, Zhang (2005) reminds us that students need comments on improvements or how to revise an article so as to improve the quality of the composition. The revision suggestions should focus on the content, the selection of materials, logical reasoning, coherence, choice of words, rhetoric devices, and the detailed treatment of these problems. Content should be the priority, and when the students start to revise their work, some mistakes can be found by themselves.

Inconsistency between teaching belief and practice

Borg (2003) suggests that the relationship between what teachers think and believe and how they behave is not a straightforward one. While teacher learning in the form of cognitive change does not guarantee behavioral change, behavioral change does not necessarily imply cognitive change.

Though she believed “5 minutes face-to-face talk was much more effective than 1 hour written feedback”, Jane spent less than 10 minutes or even no time allotted to face-to-face feedback. Some students would come to her for conferencing after the class, but the pace of conferencing was too slow.

In her reflection at the end of the semester, she wrote: “I have not made good preparation and students wrote too much. Some of them have 2-3 times of face-to-face feedback, and some only have it once.”

When the new method is consistent with teachers’ teaching belief, they will gradually implement it into her teaching, otherwise, they will disregard it (Shi & Cumming 1995). Jane’s choice of conferencing and process-centered writing rather than the other themes in the textbook revealed her belief regarding writing teaching, that is, “writing cannot be taught, and students should take responsibility of their own writing, and teacher would help them in the process.” Yet in her class, Jane was still the performer and knowledge giver. In the class, she was typically “standing up there and giving them information”, “spitting the information out”.

Observation log (23/4/2013):

It is around 7:45, and we arrive at her class. Around thirty students sit in and the first several rows are full. When she stands behind her table, two or three students come to her. One girl asks for a rain check for her presentation, and another girl asks a sick left for her dorm mate.

Class begins. She speaks English confidently and sometimes some Chinese key words. Today’s topic: blueprint... Jane talks for the first 50 minutes. Then three students share good writing for around 25 minutes. Only 8 minutes is left for face-to-face feedback, and 1 student gets the chance to discuss with Jane. After the class, three students rush to her and they discuss heatedly on the problems of writing exercises. And I overhear some concepts such as “run-on sentence”, “logic in writing”.

Factors constraining teacher change in this case involve inadequate communication between students and the teacher, inadequate teacher preparation, inadequate knowledge on the new ways of teaching, and inconsistency between teacher belief and practice. When I realized something maybe wrong in Jane’s class, I was reluctant to tell her. But at last, I mustered up my

courage and sent her e-mails. She replied and shared with me her puzzles. She told me I was always welcome in her class.

At the end of the semester, she reflected her teaching. "Though I did not prepare well and communicate with my students much, their workload was a little beyond their control, they all made progress. Next time, I will make clear the teaching plan, and slow down the application of the new methods. Make sure students know more about process-centered writing and face-to-face feedback."

5. Conclusions

As an EFL writing teacher in China, Jane had not received any training on how to teach in the EFL writing class and became quite dissatisfied with her class before her journey to the United States. Therefore, it was no surprise that she wanted to make a change when she met a good textbook showing what to do in her class.

Based on Guskey (1986)'s linear model, Jane was between the second step and the third step when the paper was being written. Some problems and troubles required her to think and reflect. Jane had been wrestling with the question of how to best integrate writing practices with her teaching context. Despite her inexperience in making teaching planning and giving proper feedback, Jane made some breakthroughs in her teaching. She chose a process-centered approach and conferencing as a new way to give feedback on students' work. She began to realize the importance of collecting information of her student' needs and their backgrounds, which would help her find ways to enable students to invest more time and energy into their writing practices.

Any methods can be adapted and find suitable ways of existence when the teacher takes the local contexts and the needs of students into consideration. Hopefully, Jane will succeed in making a modified version of the process-centered writing and conferencing feedback in her following teaching practice.

The factors enabling and constraining Jane's agency in becoming a better EFL writing teacher shed some light on EFL writing teacher education programs. Generally, such programs need to provide chances for teachers' reflection on their teaching practice, for training in process-oriented writing and feedback, and more importantly, for broadening teachers' perspectives on teaching writing and helping them construct their identity as EFL writing teachers.

References

- Arndt, V. (1993). Response to writing: Using feedback to inform the writing process. In Brock, M. & Walter, L. (eds.). *Writing around the Pacific Rim* (pp. 90–114). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Briscoe, C. (1991). The dynamic interactions among beliefs, role metaphors and reaching practices: A case study of teacher change. *Science Education* 75/2, 185-199.
- Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe and do. *Language Teaching* 36, 81–109.
- Bradley, T., & Orleans, M. (1989). Adapting peer-writing techniques to Asian technologies and cultures. *Journal of Educational Techniques and Technologies*, Spring, 6–8.
- Casanave, C.P. (2009). Training for writing or training for reality? Challenges facing EFL writing teachers and students in language teacher education programs. In Manchon, R. (ed.). *Writing in Foreign Language Contexts: Learning, Teaching and Research* (pp. 256–277). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Doyle, W. & Ponder, G. (1977). The practical ethic and teacher decision-making. *Interchange* 8/3, 1-12.
- Griffin, G.A. (1983). *Staff Development: Eighty-second Year Book of the National Society for the Study of Education*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Guskey, T.R. (1986). Staff development and the process of teacher change. *Educational Researcher* 15/5, 5–12.
- Hirvela, A. & Belcher, D. (2007). Writing scholars as teacher educators: Exploring writing teacher education. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 16/3, 125–128.
- Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 16/3, 148–164.
- Lamie, J.M. (2004). Presenting a model of change. *Language Teaching Research* 8/2, 15–142.
- Lee, I. (1998). Writing in the Hong Kong secondary classroom: Teachers' beliefs and practice. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* 3/1, 61-76.
- Lee, I. (2004). Error correction in L2 secondary writing classrooms: The case of Hong Kong. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 13/3, 285–312.
- Lee, I. (2008). Understanding teachers' written feedback practices in Hong Kong secondary classrooms. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 17/2, 69–85.
- Lee, I. (2010). Writing teacher education and teacher learning: Testimonies of four EFL teachers. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 19/3, 143-157.
- Lee, I. (2013). Becoming a writing teacher: Using "identity" as an analytic lens to understand EFL writing teachers' development. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 22/3, 330-345.
- Leki, I. (2001). Materials, educational and ideological challenges of teaching EFL writing at the turn of the century. *International Journal of English Studies* 9/2, 197–209.
- Li, K. (1994). Using annotation in a process approach to writing in a Hong Kong classroom. *TESL Reporter* 27/2, 63 –73.

- McLaughlin, M.W. & Marsh, D.D. (1978). Staff development and school change. *Teachers College Record* 80, 69-93.
- Reichelt, M. (1999). Toward a more comprehensive view of L2 writing: Foreign language writing in the US. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8/2, 181-204.
- Sampson, G. (1984). Exporting language teaching methods from Canada to China. *TESL Canada Journal* 1/1, 19-31.
- Schon, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schon, D. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Shi, L. & Cumming, A. (1995). Teachers' conceptions of second language writing instruction: Five case studies. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 4/2, 87-111.
- Tikunoff, W.J. & Ward, B.A. (1983). Collaborative research on teaching. *The Elementary School Journal* 83/4, 453-468.
- Tsui, A.B.M. (1996). Learning how to teach ESL writing. In Freeman, D. & Richards, J.C. (eds.). *Teaching Learning in Language Teaching* (pp.97-119). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- You, X. (2004) 'The choice made from no choice': English writing instruction in a Chinese university. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 13/2, 97-110.
- van Lier, L. (2002) An ecological-semiotic perspective on language and linguistics. In Kramsch, C. (ed.) *Language Acquisition and Language Socialization: Ecological Perspectives* (pp. 140-164). New York: Continuum.
- Zigarmi, P., Betz, L. & Jensen, D. (1977). Teachers' preferences in and perceptions of inservice. *Educational Leadership* 34/7, 545-551.
- Zhang, D.L. (2005). Teaching writing in English as a foreign language: Mainland China. In Shum, M.S.K. & Zhang, D.L. (eds.). *Teaching Writing in Chinese Speaking Areas* (pp. 29-45). New York: Springer.
- 刘学惠 (2007) 探究教师建构性学习--一个英语教师课堂研究小组的案例, 博士学位论文。北京: 北京师范大学。
- 杨鲁新 (2010) 高校英语专业教师写作教学信念和教学实践—经验教师个案研究, 《外语教学理论与实践》2: 59-68.

Appendix

Public life

Blueprint we specific 9/2011 (Page 2) 024

宋志远

② Exemplification

(1) Studying in a university always causes a lot of stress

It is generally acknowledged that people who don't have access to a university are inclined to admire those who can sit in a classroom to tap into the areas that they are interested in, especially those who win laurels on studying. Yet, in fact, studying in a university is not always the same as they thought or they are thinking of. If anything, it causes a lot of stress for college students. ^{results that comes from competitive peers, modern society and expectations from parents}

As for a student at a prestigious university, he or she is confronted with ferocious competition. Take me ^{myself} for ^{as} an example. I am a sophomore, majoring in Medical English at BUCM. In order to win ^{which award? be more specific} (an award), I need to compete ^{a first-class scholarship} with other 61 students in my class, who are comparatively ^{we} excellent ^{the students} from all parts of the country. Under this the

Date _____ Page _____
 circumstances, I have to make a ^{light} schedule to arrange my
 spare time more appropriately ^{for instance, get up at 6:30 and do my morning reading.} so that I can have an advantage
 over some of them, which, once in a while, puts me in
 a melancholy and ^{gloomy} depressed state.

^{Nice transition}
 Not only are they under great stress from their peers,
~~but also~~ but also they need to face the stress from the rapidly
 developing society. ^{Be specific} in which people are always ^{competing} to chase money ^{and fame!}. Doctor Ding is a ^{fellow townsman} compatriot of me. ^{mine}

During his study at BUCM, he spares no efforts to make
 a study ^{study} of Chinese medicine, but ^{after} ~~when~~ he finishes it, ^{be more specific}
 he gets trapped in finding ^{searching for} an ideal job, ^{clarify} so he has no
 choice but to return to his hometown, working as an ^{in which he can be acted as a} average ^{doctor} college teacher. It is conspicuous ^{we} that students
 studying in a university are like a ^{we} (swing candle) in the
 wind, who are prone to being influenced by the

WENZHANG

Name: 王國偉 Student ID: 20110621004

Fib correction

Independent Correction Sheet

Write the Sentence Where the Problem Occurs Here	Write a Corrected Version of the Sentence Here	Identify the Problem(s) Here	
I am assisted to be an English major.	I am assisted in becoming an English major.	grammar word choice run-on commas clarity spelling	punctuation sentence structure verb tense documentation active voice
Troubles in health	Troubles with health	grammar word choice run-on commas clarity spelling	punctuation sentence structure verb tense documentation active voice
A long-term struggling	A long-term struggle	grammar word choice run-on commas clarity spelling	punctuation sentence structure verb tense documentation active voice
She is back to her feet again.	She is back on her feet again.	grammar word choice run-on commas clarity	punctuation sentence structure verb tense documentation active voice