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**TEFL Trainees' and Teachers' Knowledge of Writing:
A Case of China**

Summary of the PhD Dissertation

by

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INTRODUCTION

Writing in both one's mother tongue (L1) or in foreign languages (L2) plays a vital role in people's effective communication in academic, economic, social, and cultural settings as well as at the workplace. It helps convey ideas, solve problems, and understand the changing world (National Writing Project n.d.) and improves communication skills, critical thinking, and creativity. Therefore, effective writing skills are undoubtedly essential in our life.

In China, with the development and improvement of English education, students' ability of listening and speaking has been gradually enhanced. It is agreed to counterbalance the relationship between reading-writing and listening-speaking in teaching. It is also suggested that the quality of English learners could be improved by placing a high value on the training of reading and writing abilities (Zhang, 2012), so that they are able to compete in the international scientific fields (Cai, 2011). In fact, students' written English skills have always been the focus in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in China.

When it comes to English teaching in elementary and secondary schools, the Ministry of Education published the New English Curriculum in 2011, giving guidelines for teachers in various aspects, such as objectives, level standards, suggestions for teaching and assessment, etc. However, there seems to be a problem with implementation, as there is not enough help for teachers to enlarge and renew their professional repertoire to be effective in their instruction under the conditions of the new curriculum. Generally, teachers are more keen of conventional instructional approaches which are normally guided and dominated by the exam-oriented culture in China.

No matter what methods teachers use in their teaching of writing, the teacher knowledge base and knowledge levels are the most important components for ensuring and improving the effectiveness of learning and instruction in writing. In the context of research on learning and instruction, the focus was shifted from how teachers teach (e.g., Dahllöf, 1971) to how students learn (e.g., Wertsch, 1998) and how teachers learn to teach (e.g., Grossman, Wilson, & Shulman, 1989). In the teaching of EFL (English as a foreign language) writing, however, little is known about teachers' knowledge of writing. Likewise, little is known about trainees' knowledge of writing or their development through pre- to in-service experiences.

Given the importance of writing in today's global communication, and the decisive impact of teacher knowledge on the effectiveness of writing instruction, as well as the scarcity of research on both TEFL trainees' and teachers' knowledge of writing, the dissertation is designed to examine what these groups know about writing. In particular, it aims to (1) explore and compare TEFL trainees' and teachers' conceptions of writing and their perceptions of the teaching of writing; (2) examine and compare TEFL trainees' and teachers' skills in the assessment of writing.

This dissertation constitutes five parts. The first part briefly introduces the context of research, issues in the teaching of EFL writing, research objectives and significance, and the general research questions. Part two provides the theoretical and empirical literature in various domains related to the research projects presented in the dissertation, including the conceptual issues of EFL writing, assessment of writing, feedback on writing, trainees' development in the practicum, and development of TEFL teachers through pre-service to in-service. Part three presents the cultural background of the studies, briefly portraying the curriculum and instruction of EFL (especially writing) and corresponding TEFL teacher education in China with particular emphasis on the practicum. Part four provides the design of the empirical studies and presents their results. Altogether five studies are conducted. Study 1 examines what pre-practicum trainees think about writing; Study 2 explores how post-practicum trainees estimate their knowledge of writing; Study 3 investigates what teachers perceive their knowledge of writing to be; Study 4 explores the changes in teachers' knowledge of writing through pre- to in-service; and Study 5 discusses the changes in teachers' skills in assessing writing through pre- to in-service. Finally, Part five summarizes the findings and discusses conclusions and limitations of the dissertation study, and addresses implications for relevant practices and future research.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A plethora of research has clarified writing from the perspectives of linguistics, cognition, and sociocultural considerations. The current framework of understanding writing is based on the three general approaches to researching writing: text-oriented, writer-oriented, and reader-oriented (Hyland, 2015). It has been commonly agreed that effective writing is an integration of the writer, the text product, and the audiences (Osterholm, 1986). Therefore, writing involves the cognitive and social processes through which a writer expresses ideas in a text to address specific readers in both L1

and L2. So, writing is ‘socially and culturally shaped and individually and socially purposeful’ (Sperling, 1996, p. 55).

Many studies have attached importance to writing activity as a cognitive process. For a long period and even till now, the most influential model of the writing process was developed by Flower and Hayes (1981). Their model gave a whole picture of the recursive process of writing: purpose, goals, audience, generating and translating ideas, evaluating and revising texts. Hayes (1996) later elaborated on the environmental and personal factors and emphasized motivation, cognition, and working and long-term memory in writing. The work of Flower and Hayes has been enjoying by great popularity in L1 and L2 writing instruction alike, although in a modified and simplified version as a phase model of activities including pre-writing, writing and reviewing (cf., Tankó, 2005).

In general, the research community has reached a consensus on writing that learners and instructors need to bear in mind. Writing involves linguistic, cognitive, social, and cultural aspects for particular communicative purposes in a specific context. Accordingly, based on the above influential models of writing, many studies have addressed models for teaching writing, such as text-modeling, process-modeling, and sociocultural modeling.

In the practices of assessment of writing, there are two main strands: assessing writing as a product or a process. The assessment of writing, like educational assessment in general, also aims to evaluate student writing ability and give references to teachers’ instruction of writing so as to improve the effectiveness of both learning and instruction of writing. However, it is not without difficulty to assess student writing due to the complexity of writing and its teaching.

Many factors, such as teacher perception of scoring criteria, severity or leniency, and the complexity of the rating process can influence teachers’ assessment of student text (e.g., Lumley, 2005). A great deal of research has explored raters’ weight on scoring criteria, decision-making actions, and bias in employing rating criteria. Research has identified several strategies in making decisions when teachers assess student texts (e.g., Vaughan, 1991; Wolfe, 1997). Research has probed into teachers’ practices of assessment of writing from various perspectives, covering rater differences, rating criteria and tools, the focus of teachers’ assessment, and so forth. These findings have informed further research addressing primary and secondary school teachers’ assessment of EFL student text as well as the development of their assessment skills.

The writing paradigm has experienced a shift from product-oriented to process-based. Accordingly, teacher feedback on student text has also undergone such changes from a dominant focus on issues regarding language errors to issues concerned with content and organization. Research has suggested that teachers give balanced weight to content, organization, language, etc. in their feedback on student texts (e.g., Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Still, there is evidence that teachers prefer to give feedback on language issues (e.g., Lee, 2008). In spite of important findings, we still know a little about how pre-service TEFL teachers give feedback on EFL student texts, neither do we know much about the differences between teachers' and trainees' feedback on student texts.

In the domain of TEFL teacher training, the practicum is regarded as one of the most important aspects of teacher education program (e.g., Farrell, 2007). Studies relevant to TEFL trainees' practicum cover various facets of their knowledge base, including beliefs, reflective practice, and professional development, etc. (e.g., Kourieos, 2014). As widely acknowledged, the concept of teacher knowledge was originated from Shulman's (1987) classic theoretical base. Informed by research based on his framework, the present study targets the components Subject Matter Knowledge, Curriculum Knowledge, General Pedagogical Knowledge, Knowledge of Learners and their Characteristics. Indeed, the teacher knowledge base is treated as the foundation for constructing the framework of teacher knowledge of writing.

Prior research has shown that TEFL trainees experience most development in four areas during the practicum: (1) changes of beliefs regarding the English language, learners, learning, teaching, teaching role and teacher identity (Yuan & Lee, 2014); (2) teacher knowledge, including general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of learners, interactional skills and self-efficacy (Merç, 2015); (3) competence of teaching behaviors, such as lesson planning, classroom management, and assessing students' learning (Liyanage & Bartlett, 2010); and (4) consciousness and ability of reflection (Rass, 2014).

Teacher professional development is a continuing and dynamic process through the entire progression of a teacher's teaching career (Lin, Shen, & Xin, 1999). From pre-service to first-year teaching, Kagan (1992) observed improvement in three aspects: (1) knowledge of learners; (2) ability to employ such knowledge to adjust and rebuild their teacher identity; and (3) skills in classroom management and instruction. Recent research confirmed and refined these findings (e.g., Wright, 2012 on classroom management; Farrell, 2012 on reflection). These findings underlined the importance of

continuing support to pre-service and novice teachers. However, pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training in China are basically two disjointed systems with minimal exchange of information between them (Liu & Fu, 2014). Stakeholders have understood this problem but no efficient solutions have been proposed. Relevant research has been published but it mainly employed speculative methods relied little on evidence in discussing the possibility of integrated pre-service and in-service teacher education (e.g., Li, 2010). Prior studies have focused on general issues of the development of teacher knowledge. The present studies aim to explore a domain-specific area of EFL.

The literature review revealed that TEFL trainees' and teachers' knowledge of writing does not get much attention, and the improvement of their knowledge from pre-service to in-service is rarely researched. Learning about teachers' knowledge through different professional stages could support the teacher training processes by providing evidence for shaping the curriculum.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The practices of learning and instruction are widely affected by educational policies, culture-bound conventions, etc. In particular, the teaching of EFL, especially writing, in China is deeply influenced by EFL curriculum standards, descriptors for writing skill objectives, as well as the efficiency of pre- and in-service teacher training.

The teaching and learning of EFL in China have a relatively short history. English has become the major foreign language in education four decades ago after a three-decade hiatus in the early PRC (People's Republic of China). English classes have begun in secondary schools in the early 1980s and started in primary schools in the 1990s. In 2011, China has initiated the New English Curriculum for primary schools and junior and senior middle schools (MOE of China, 2011) (translated by Martin). In the chapter of cultural background, the nature of the New Curriculum, General Objectives and Level Descriptors are introduced. Also, EFL instruction in China is presented, including the length of English education, large class size, and exam-driven culture in Chinese schools. Furthermore, EFL writing course and instruction and its tests are introduced.

In addition to outlining central curriculum regulations and assessment, the dissertation also introduces the characteristics of TEFL teacher education programs in China. It discusses current issues, such as 'the subject-centered emphasis, theory-laden orientation, and centralized state management' (Lo, 2008), and the disjunction between

the pre-service education programs and primary and secondary teaching (e.g., Wang & Clarke, 2014), as well as the short period of training and massive content without focus of the in-service training programs, etc.

The new curriculum standards of 2011 aim to address several of the above problems. However, the implementation process is hindered because school administrators, teachers, students, and parents strongly focus on exams. Thus, teachers teach and students learn what examinations require but leave out the basic communicative aims of English language education. In turn, this results in students' poor language use. It is, therefore, of great importance to explore TEFL teachers and trainees' knowledge base regarding domain-specific respects of English so as to identify possible problems as well as to provide perspectives for the improvement of English learning and instruction in China.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the purposes and objectives, the corresponding research questions were formulated. For **a general overview** of trainees' and teacher' knowledge of EFL writing:

RQ 1: How do pre-practicum Chinese TEFL trainees perceive their knowledge of EFL writing?

RQ 2: How do post-practicum Chinese TEFL trainees perceive their knowledge of EFL writing?

RQ 3: How do Chinese TEFL teachers perceive their knowledge of EFL writing?

RQ 4: What are the differences between pre- and post-practicum Chinese TEFL trainees' and teachers' perceived knowledge of EFL writing?

For **a specific issue** of trainees' and teacher' skills in the assessment of EFL student writing:

RQ 5: What are pre-practicum Chinese TEFL trainees' skills in assessing student text?

RQ 6: What are post-practicum Chinese TEFL trainees' skills in assessing student text?

RQ 7: How does trainees' writing ability influence their assessment of student text?

RQ 8: What are Chinese TEFL teachers' skills in assessing student text?

RQ 9: What are the differences between pre- and post-practicum Chinese TEFL trainees' and teachers' assessment of student text?

RQ 10: How do rater groups' assessments compare to artificial intelligence ratings?

SAMPLES

The cross-sectional method is employed. Participants engaged in the studies targeting research questions one to four constitute three groups. Namely, Chinese pre-practicum TEFL trainees ($N_1=101$), post-practicum TEFL trainees ($N_2=204$), and TEFL teachers ($N_3=490$) responded to a questionnaire. In addition, 59 pre-practicum trainees and 31 post-practicum trainees participated in the assessment of an EFL writing sample as well as completed a writing task, and 32 teachers assessed the same writing. These three subsamples were involved in the studies addressing research questions five to ten.

INSTRUMENTS

In the studies, various instruments are used to get information about participants' knowledge of writing:

- Pre-practicum TEFL trainee questionnaire (RQ 1)
- Post-practicum TEFL trainee questionnaire (RQ 2)
- TEFL teacher questionnaire (RQ 3)
- A simulation task for assessing an EFL learner's text (RQ 5–10)
- Trainees' EFL writing task (RQ 7).

All of these instruments were self-developed in English and then translated into Chinese because an earlier pilot study indicated that more information can be gathered through communication in participants' mother tongue (cf., Kong, 2017).

PROCEDURES

Snowball and convenience sampling were used to approach participants. The main data were collected in Spring and Autumn 2017. All questionnaires were administered on a Chinese online platform which can be accessed easily by participants through a laptop or a mobile phone. A paper-and-pencil instrument was used to collect data for the assessment of writing. The trainees' writing task was completed on a word processor.

For the questionnaires, all data was downloaded, recoded, and transformed into SPSS 24 for quantitative analyses. As to the evaluation task, participants rated the EFL learner's text using traditional variables of writing assessment. They were also asked to respond to the strengths and weaknesses of the sample text: to identify problems, to give written feedback, and to make suggestions. Their responses were recoded into seven aspects: holistic, content, structure, style, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

Multifaceted Rasch analysis was used to present participants' ratings on the same student text. With respect to trainees' own writing, data was evaluated through Coh-Metrix (McNamara, Graesser, McCarthy, & Cai, 2014). Their own written texts were recoded into eight aspects: descriptive statistics, readability, lexical diversity, syntactic complexity, word information, latent semantic analysis, connectives, and referential cohesion.

STUDY 1. HOW DO PRE-PRACTICUM CHINESE TEFL TRAINEES PERCEIVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF EFL WRITING?

Study 1 aimed to examine how pre-practicum TEFL trainees think about writing. A questionnaire was developed to target conceptions of writing, the understanding of curriculum standards and writing objectives, opinions toward issues regarding the teaching of writing, and factors influencing their perceived knowledge of writing. Simple descriptive and inferential analyses were run to address the relevant research questions.

Results indicated that the participants normally accepted writing as a product and a process but many doubted its social nature. They paid more attention to the functions of writing concerned with the self and self-expression but much less to those focusing on the addressee. They considered reading activities as the most effective intervention to develop writing. They rated their curricular knowledge low.

With regards to instructional issues, the participants understood the importance of learning about students' writing levels when they start to teach in future. They generally rated highly the importance of comprehensive activities, such as lesson planning and tasks of writing instruction. They put emphasis on groups of possible audiences for students' texts involved in interaction related to their studies and everyday activities. They paid more attention to text types and tasks concerned with functional genres and exam-based assessment of writing. When asked about their instructional objectives, they focused on coding and linguistic aspects and there was less emphasis on cognitive aspects of written composition. They favored teacher-directed instruction with relative neglect of the engagement of, and interaction between, students. Interestingly, they did not expect much difficulty in teaching writing. They put stress on what feedback to give rather than how and when to give it. They generally rated assessment items low. Background variables (e.g., years of learning English, self-rating of proficiency level) did not have a systematic influence on participants' targeted opinions.

The findings are twofold. For one thing, the participants did not report a complete understanding of writing. For another, they did not seem to be aware of the complexity of writing instruction. Findings also suggest that pre-practicum trainees' knowledge base of writing is less than optimal.

STUDY 2. HOW DO POST-PRACTICUM CHINESE TEFL TRAINEES PERCEIVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF EFL WRITING?

The purpose of Study 2 was to learn about the knowledge of post-practicum TEFL trainees, using the instrument of Study 1 and complementing it with questions on the practicum. More advanced inferential analyses were conducted.

Results showed that post-practicum participants generally tended to be product-oriented, self-focused, and neglecting the audience. As for curricular goals and objectives, they also rated their knowledge relatively low. In terms of their instructional experience, they reported that they did not fully identify students' writing levels. Rather, they focused on only what to teach when planning lessons. They recognized the importance of writing tasks for learners. Similar to pre-practicum trainees, they centered on coding and linguistic aspects in their teaching of writing and preferred teacher-directed approach. Post-practicum trainees did not report giving learners varieties of genre types targeting different audiences. They mostly focused on linguistic issues when giving feedback to learners but were not intensively involved in the assessment of student writing.

Results also indicated that the practicum itself did not systematically influence the participants' ideas of writing, but the teaching experience affected their understanding of curricular goals and objectives. The length of the practicum and the location of the school (e.g., urban or rural) influenced their perceptions of experience in teaching writing to some extent. The level of schooling and the number of writing lessons taught in the practicum impacted their assessment of writing.

Study 2 enabled to construct a full portrait of how post-practicum trainees estimate their knowledge of writing. Although the participants experienced notable development in writing instruction related skills, the intensity of the practice teaching was not enough to impact their thinking about writing. Findings also clearly show that post-practicum trainees are moving from being EFL learners to become potential competent practitioners but still with various problems and challenges.

STUDY 3. WHAT DO CHINESE TEFL TEACHERS PERCEIVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF EFL WRITING?

The aim of Study 3 was to explore how TEFL teachers estimate their knowledge of writing. This issue is more interesting because of the tensions between the modern language pedagogy and the exam-driven culture characteristic of China. The questionnaire administered shared most questions from Studies 1 and 2 and new questions targeted the teaching practices of the participants. The data were analyzed similarly to Studies 1 and 2.

Results showed that TEFL teachers normally viewed writing as a linguistic product and accepted the function of writing related to the self and self-expression but relatively neglected its role in communication and in exams. The participants rated their knowledge of the curriculum standards and writing objectives high.

With respect to their instructional experience, they considered they knew their learners well. They focused on targeting exams when planning a writing lesson. They considered learners' writing tasks to be important and focused on exams but did not present students with diverse genre types or different audiences. When using strategies and approaches to teaching writing, they favored giving rules and teaching with examples. They encountered numerous difficulties in teaching writing. Similar to post-practicum trainees, practicing teachers basically focused on linguistic issues and forms when giving feedback on learners' texts and did not put much emphasis on the assessment of student writing.

Participants' background (e.g., degree or school characteristics) did not systematically influence their conceptions of writing. However, the intensity of teaching writing significantly contributes to the participants' knowledge of writing.

Findings reveal contradictions between teachers' understanding and practice of teaching writing. It might be because teachers are confronted with the dilemma between targeting learners' communicative skills and meeting the requirements of exams.

STUDY 4. A COMPARISON BETWEEN CHINESE TEFL TRAINEES' AND TEACHERS' PERCEIVED KNOWLEDGE OF EFL WRITING

Study 4 was a cross-sectional exploration of changes in knowledge and experiences through four stages of teacher development: pre-practicum and post-practicum trainees as well as novice and experienced TEFL teachers. ANOVAs and MANOVAs were conducted to identify differences between the four subsamples.

Results showed that participants' perceptions of the natures of writing are basically in line with the research community. Their relative inattention to the social nature of writing seems to be strengthened as a function of professional practice. Also, their acceptance of the communicative function of writing increased with the accumulation of teaching experience. Teachers agreed more with the intervention to develop writing through addressing people. Compared to trainees, teachers valued lexical and handwriting features more when evaluating a text. As for the understanding of curriculum standards and writing objectives, teaching experience has a strong effect.

In light of issues related to the teaching of writing, teachers, as expected, reported more knowledge about students' writing levels. Teaching experience did not intensively change the participants' thinking about the comprehensiveness of lesson planning except experienced teachers saliently highlighted targeting exams. Teacher and trainee groups alike estimated the importance of learners' writing tasks highly but none of them paid much attention to address different audiences when designing students' writing assignments. They used limited varieties of genre types but invariably agreed on the importance of mock exams. When identifying the focal points of writing instruction, experienced teachers put more emphasis on mechanics than trainees, and they favored teaching with examples and giving rules. Also, they found more difficulties in motivating students. The length of teaching experience did not systematically influence participants' perceptions of giving feedback on student writing.

Findings in Study 4 have presented a relatively full picture of the changes of teachers' thinking about writing from pre- to in-service. Most notably, teaching experience raises teachers' awareness of targeting people when thinking about writing. However, it seems that they do not have a balance between addressing different audiences in real life situations and targeting exams in teachers' thinking and actions.

STUDY 5. A COMPARISON OF PRE- AND POST-PRACTICUM CHINESE TEFL TRAINEES' AND TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF EFL WRITING

Studies 1 through 4 revealed that Chinese TEFL trainees and teachers did not consider the assessment of student writing to be a prominent issue. This was an unexpected finding and thus its reasons are not explored in the present studies. In contrast to this finding, feedback to student writing as a contributor to meaning-making (Zamel, 1985) has been a central idea in international research on EFL writing instruction. Therefore, Study 5 focused on this area. Three subsamples: Chinese TEFL

trainees (pre- and post-practicum) and teachers were asked to assess the same authentic student text, identify and indicate problems and errors in it, and give written feedback. As a set of control variables, the student text was also evaluated by Coh-Metrix, an online tool for characterizing the cohesion and coherence of a text. In addition, Study 5 addresses the relationship between trainees' own writing skills and their assessment skills as they were given an additional writing task.

Results indicated that the trainee samples generally evaluated the text impersonally and fairly. Respondents in the teacher sample were relatively lenient when assessing the student text. They gave priority to grammatical issues when judging the problems, giving negative feedback, and making suggestions.

The Multifaceted Rasch analysis revealed that there was a difference between the subsamples when assessing the same student text. Both trainee groups rated more harshly than teachers. As for the holistic and the five analytic criteria (content, structure, style, grammatical correctness, and mechanics), style received the harshest rating, followed by structure and grammar. The overall quality of the text was rated the most leniently.

The results showed that the trainees' own writing levels did not systematically influence their assessment of the student text. Also, a cross-sectional analysis indicated that the practicum did not significantly influence trainees' opinions of the student text. All groups of raters' assessments were similar to the one by Coh-Metrix.

It is satisfying to find that trainees and teachers have promising skills in assessing EFL writing. Teachers tend to be more tolerant of student writing than trainees. Consistent with the emphasis of the literature on language (e.g., Lee, 2008), the focus of participants' written feedback to the student text was on linguistic issues. However, cognitive aspects of writing rarely emerged in their feedback comments.

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The primary purposes of the dissertation were to explore and compare TEFL trainees' and teachers' conceptions of writing and perceptions of the teaching of writing as well as these groups' skills in the assessment of student writing. Even though teacher knowledge is heavily researched, the studies presented are the first to explore domain-specific development. As such, they may help teachers' preparation for EFL writing instruction by providing a possible agenda for improving curricula.

With regards to the conceptions of writing, the majority of the participants generally hold opinions conforming with the research consensus (e.g., Hyland, 2015), but there is a notable problem with communicative issues. Subsamples' relative inattention to (especially pre-practicum trainees' serious neglect of) the social nature of writing and its communicative function raises issues for future research.

As for the teaching of writing, trainee and teacher groups rated their knowledge differently. Teaching experience impacts teachers' knowledge of subject matters of writing, curriculum knowledge of writing, knowledge of learners, and pedagogical knowledge of writing. Pre-service teacher trainees especially those who have finished their practicum are on the right track to become EFL teachers. Teachers, however, are encountering various perplexities and challenges. They are struggling to focus on either exams or students' communicative skills of writing. This predicament calls for teacher trainers' and policy-makers' attention. It might be addressed by resetting the teacher training curriculum and reshaping the requirements of EFL (especially writing) exams. Also, future research may investigate if teaching for exam success really improves their ability to communicate in real life situations.

Findings from Studies 1 through 4 had indicated that participants relatively neglected the issue of assessment in their thinking of writing. Therefore, a deeper investigation was carried out into their assessment behaviors. Both trainee and teacher groups rated fairly in their evaluation of the same student text. Still, they demonstrated significantly different behaviors in grading the learner's text. Teachers were more forbearing with student writing than trainees. When giving written feedback to the same text, the subsamples mainly focused on linguistic issues. However, they did not provide as much comprehensive and advanced feedback as expected, such as related to conceptual issues of the learner's text. It seems that the participants may have missed knowledge on, or been unconscious of, contributing to meaning-making in their written feedback for the improvement of student writing.

The studies presented have explored what Chinese TEFL trainees and teachers know about writing. However, a few limitations have also emerged. For example, the teaching of writing in a real classroom is not addressed in the studies. Thus, the classroom-based research on teachers' beliefs and practice of teaching writing and their changes remain to be investigated further. The longitudinal research method is not employed. This is admittedly another limitation of the studies, which keeps us from understanding the match or mismatch of teachers' notions of writing and actions in

teaching writing through pre- to in-service training. The sample characteristics are also a limitation due to its non-representativeness. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the whole population.

Nonetheless, the findings of the studies in the dissertation may support the understanding of TEFL trainees' and teachers' knowledge of EFL writing and inform further research in this area. Specifically, they give evidence for changing the pre-service programs to prepare trainees more appropriately for future teaching of writing. Also, they raise the issue for in-service training programs to help teachers seek an equitable relationship between targeting exams and fostering students' effective communicative abilities. Last but not least, they may support the development of assessment skills in both pre- and in-service programs.

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