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TAs' Beliefs and Knowledge about Teaching Academic Writing in ESL Writing Courses

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TAs' Beliefs and Knowledge about Teaching Academic Writing in ESL Writing Courses

by

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A Thesis

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is: (1) to develop a comprehensive model that describes TAs' beliefs and knowledge about ESL writing courses in a categorized manner and (2) to examine the categories of TAs' beliefs and knowledge and find the relations between them, with the goal of better harmonizing TAs' beliefs and knowledge and consequently developing the ESL writing program in a university. The participants were nine TAs enrolled in the MA TESL program in the university. Data was gathered through one-on-one semi-structured interview, and a comprehensive model with nine categories of TAs' beliefs and knowledge was developed. The model showed that seven of the categories were connected well with each other; however, the other two categories were not well connected to the others. In this paper, the TAs' beliefs and knowledge is described according to the nine categories, and following this, the two disconnected categories are close looked at and the implications are considered.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

One summer day 3 years ago, when I was looking for references for my Rhetoric and Writing master's (MA) thesis, I was attracted to an academic journal by its title—"Completely different worlds": EAP and the writing experience of ESL students in university course. I started thumbing through the article, and then my eyes rested on a students' comment:

This is just completely different worlds, the engineering and English. The purpose here [in EAP (English for Academic Purposes) writing class] is express yourself. You practice your writing. But in there [science class] you not just express yourself. In introduction, introduce other person's work and combine your result with their result. Explain some phenomenon. (Leki & Carson, 1997, p. 55)

I then remembered my confusion in the first undergraduate course I took just after finishing the Intensive English Program (IEP). In the undergraduate course, students were required to write a 750-word response paper to the readings on a weekly basis. I immediately got stuck because I had never heard the word "response paper" in the IEP, and I had also never written following reading such a long text in the IEP writing course. I was like, "Okay, I've read the chapters. What should I do then? What is response anyway?" During the first few weeks, I was upset and just wrote 750-word five-paragraph essays about the topic of the week.

One year later of the summer day, I started my second master's program, Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) in the same university in the Midwestern United States. I returned to the IEP program as a teaching assistant (TA) and was assigned to teach the intermediate writing course. At the time, part of my belief in teaching academic writing in English as a second language (ESL) writing courses had been affected by my own experience of confusion in the first undergraduate course. I was thus thinking strongly that, "I don't want my

students to feel, 'This is just completely different worlds' when writing for their university courses as I did," and I was then believing that, "ESL writing courses should help international students move to university writing as smoothly as possible."

I was trying to embody my belief by fully using my knowledge of academic writing that I had accumulated based on my own learning and teaching experience. However, at the same time, I was concerned whether my lessons designed based on my belief and knowledge of academic writing could provide my students with enough learning and experience to develop their academic writing skills in their university courses without feeling confusion. In other words, part of my inquiry at the time was whether my belief and knowledge of academic writing instruction was appropriate and balanced enough to design writing lessons necessary and useful for my students to understand and produce academic writing and to move to university writing smoothly.

And this time, I have developed the concern and inquiry that I was having at the time, which I stated above, into research questions for this study in order to gain an overall picture of TAs' beliefs and knowledge that would be used to design their ESL writing courses. The research questions of this study are:

1. What are TAs' beliefs and knowledge about teaching and learning academic writing in ESL writing courses?

2. How can TAs' beliefs and knowledge be categorized and the relation between them be shown?

The purpose of this study guided by these research questions is: (1) to develop a comprehensive model that describes TAs' beliefs and knowledge about ESL writing courses in a categorized manner and (2) to examine those categories of TAs' beliefs and knowledge and find the relation

between them, with the goal of better harmonizing TAs' beliefs and knowledge and consequently developing the ESL writing program in the university.

For this investigation, I collected interview data from TAs enrolled in the MA TESL program in the university and developed a comprehensive and multifaceted model of TAs' beliefs and knowledge. Then, in this paper I describe what beliefs and knowledge the TAs have about teaching and learning academic writing in ESL writing courses in the form of categories, ranging from the purpose of ESL writing courses, what and how to teach/learn in the courses, who international ESL students are, the gap between the demands of the courses and the needs of ESL students, to issues in the ESL writing courses. I also describe what categories of TAs' beliefs and knowledge are connected well with each other (and thus harmonized as a whole), and whereas what categories of their beliefs and knowledge are not connected well to the other (and therefore not harmonized to the others). In later discussion, I close look at the categories that are conflicting or inconsistent with the other and consider the implications of the discussion in order to better harmonize TAs' beliefs and knowledge and consequently to develop the ESL writing program in the university. In this study, when I say TAs' beliefs and knowledge (beliefs/knowledge), I mean what the TAs described in the interviews.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To better understand the nature of teachers' beliefs and knowledge, this chapter explores three categories of literature. I begin with the literature that discusses consistency between teachers' belief and practices. In the second section, I explore the literature that describes contextual factors that immediately impact teachers' practice. I then move on to consider the literature discussing teachers' prior experiences as language learners.

Consistency between Teachers' Beliefs and Practice

The literature about teachers' beliefs and practice demonstrates that what teachers believe to be necessary and the most effective for teaching and learning determines what to teach and how to teach it in the classroom (Burns, 1992; Johnson, 1992; Kuzborska, 2011; Tan & Lan, 2011). Although there has been a lack of consensus on the concept of belief, numerous studies in language education fields have examined the relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom practice and have shown the consistency between them (Borg, 2001).

Methodological beliefs. According to Johnson (1992), theoretical beliefs, or "belief systems" (p. 84), that teachers have fostered and possess are a significant part of teachers' instructional decisions and practices. In her study, Johnson found that most of ESL teachers had theoretical beliefs that stemmed from dominant methodological approach of second language (L2) teaching, such as skill-based, rule-based, and function-based approaches, and their literacy instructions clearly reflected their theoretical beliefs. That is, ways that ESL teachers "perceive, process, and act upon information during literacy instruction" (p. 101) are consistent with their theoretical orientation of the methodologies. Johnson also found that the ESL teachers' theoretical beliefs strongly related to methodological approaches that were dominant when they started teaching despite the theoretical and pedagogical shifts in the ESL field. That is, ESL

teachers maintain, or might stick to, the instructional methods they are familiar with as their pedagogical beliefs, and their belief systems powerfully keep informing their classroom language instructions.

Kuzborska's (2011) study, which investigated the relationship between eight EAP reading teachers' beliefs and practices in the Lithuanian university context, strongly supported Jonson's study. Kuzborska found that the language teachers in her study possessed theoretical beliefs about reading instruction, which originated from a skill-based approach, and their classroom instruction consistently reflected their beliefs. In their classrooms, the eight teachers emphasized teaching language skills such as vocabulary, and they stated that extensive vocabulary knowledge was essential to develop reading skills. Kuzborska also found that the methodological approach that the eight teachers employed for their reading instruction was prominent when they were learning or started teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and which did not "seem to have been greatly re-evaluated or modified during the course of their teacher development" (p. 120). In short, as Johnson (1992) and Kuzborska (2011) found, teachers' theoretical beliefs, which are strongly supported by the methodological approach that they have been valuing, despite the theoretical shifts, consistently impact their instructional practice in the language classroom.

Language use. In addition to the methodological beliefs, teachers' beliefs about language use in instruction are also associated with their teaching practices in the classroom (Burns, 1992; Tan & Lan, 2011). Tan and Lan's (2011) study examined what beliefs secondary mathematics and science teachers in Malaysia had regarding language use of content instruction and how their beliefs affected their classroom practices. In Malaysia, although Bahama Malaysia (BM) had been the medium of instruction for all subjects for a long time, with the change of the

educational system, English became the medium of the high-stakes exams for mathematics and science. As a result, mathematics and science teachers were expected to conduct their classes in English and to use BM only when students asked for clarification in BM. Tan and Lan, however, found that many teachers had belief that students who were less proficient in English should be supported in BM to better understand the content. One teacher in Tan and Lan's study commented, "Explanations given in English are less effective because not all students are fluent in the use of English. The explanations need to be translated into BM" (p. 15). Tan and Lan's classroom observations showed that most of mathematics and science teachers who had such belief "[resorted] primarily to translating from English to BM to help [weak] students grasp the content being taught" (p. 16). That is, teachers' beliefs that even contradict external expectation, such as BM use based on a clarification request from students, can be effective and are consistent with their instructional practices because their beliefs have that much power.

Burns (1992) investigated the relationships between ESL teachers' instructional practices incorporating written language in beginning ESL classes and their beliefs that motivated them. Burns explains that there was a commonly held theory that the development of spoken language was the primary aim in the beginning learner classroom, and written language was "something that may come later, when leaners had become more proficient in speaking" (p. 60). However, Burns found that "there was a considerable reliance in [beginning ESL] classroom practice on written language" (p. 60). One teachers of Burns' study commented, "The purpose of written language is to support the oral" (p. 60), and another teacher commented, "What is written down here is more correct, it's not broken English" (p. 59). In other words, the language teachers had beliefs that written form of English helped ESL beginner learners to build up accurate grammatical and sound system of English, and their instructional practices reflected their beliefs

about language use. In fact, teachers' beliefs about written language were much powerful than "the strong orientation toward spoken language" (p. 60), and teachers were motivated by their own beliefs and implemented them in their classrooms.

Contextual Factors: Inconsistency between Teachers' Beliefs and Practice

As discussed above, teachers' beliefs are powerful enough to consistently influence their instructional practices despite theoretical shifts, external expectations, and commonly held motions. However, teachers' classroom practices "do not ultimately always reflect teachers' stated beliefs, personal theories, and pedagogical principles" (Borg, 2003, p. 91).

Studies have shown that "the social, psychological and environmental realities of the school and classroom" (Borg, 2003, p. 94) impact on teachers' beliefs and instructional practices as immediately antecedent factors, and such contextual factors may hinder teachers' ability to implement instructional practices which reflect their beliefs.

Institutional culture and demands. Studies suggest that the consistency between teachers' beliefs and practice is limited by the power structures, such as institutional culture and demands, because teachers are required to align their actions with the expectations of the power (Beach, 1994; Crookes & Arakaki, 1999; Flores & Day, 2006). Crookes and Arakaki (1999) investigated how difficult working conditions affect ESL teachers' selection and use of teaching sources. At the site of this study, an intensive English program, most of the ESL teachers worked at two or three institutions, and their reported average workload was approximately 50 hours a week. The teachers of this study commented that overwork and a lack of preparation time negatively impacted their instructional practices. One teacher explained that there was no choice but to lower the quality of his lessons due to the lack of time saying that, "I will often choose or create an exercise [even though] I know there could be a better one, but I just can't do it within

the time that I have" (p. 18). Another teacher confessed that he was using the teaching materials repeatedly saying that, "Honestly…I will be recycling all my own class notes. I put everything on the computer and take photocopies. I know I'll be teaching the same class" (p. 18). In other words, creating better lessons or the use of new pedagogical ideas, even though teachers believe and desire, tends to take a second place to "a need for less sophisticated but readily applicable ideas" (p. 19) under difficult working conditions in institutions.

According to Beach (1994), the context of the classroom, school, and community impacts on teachers' beliefs and practices because teaching is "a social activity" (p. 193), and teachers are socialized and become "part of a particular school culture" (p. 194). Beach found that while elementary teachers in Eastside applied their beliefs about teaching and learning literacy to their classroom practices, teachers in a Westside elementary school did not, though they all had similar beliefs. Beach explains that the Eastside elementary school has been serving students from lower middle to working class for a long time, and the school principal wants teachers to help each student to achieve the individual goals. Therefore, teachers teach students in the way that they believe is the most effective. On the other hand, the Westside elementary school is relatively new, and the student population is from middle to upper middle-class professionals. The principle requires teachers to teach preprogrammed curriculums so that all students receive the equal education and achieve the standards. As a result, teachers give higher priority to the school policy rather than their own beliefs and they learn "how to act correctly within the specific culture of their school" (p. 189).

Flores and Day (2006) examined the impact of the school culture, such as "unwritten and implicit rules at school" (p. 229) and relationships among teachers, on new teachers' perceptions and attitudes of their teaching and professional growth. Flores and Day found that new teachers

tended to comply with the school norms "despite the fact that they did not match their own beliefs and values" (p. 229). For example, descriptions of the new teachers showed that, as they became aware of the existence of implicit expectation of "bureaucracy within teaching" (p. 229), compliance and routines emerged in their attitudes and teacher identities. Also, as getting to know the culture of teacher-teacher relationships, such as individualism, low commitment among teachers, and lack of support from leader teachers, participants' learning at workplace "became more and more a lonely process" (p. 229) by complying with the way in which their colleagues operated. That is, as Beach (1994) and Flores and Day (2006) found, institutional culture and demands, which includes student population, school policy, and teacher-teacher relationship, can be power to persuade teachers to abandon their instructional beliefs and practices and to become members of the school society.

High-stakes standardized testing. Another external power that affects and hinders the consistency of teachers' beliefs and practice is the high-stakes testing system (Pizarro, 2010; Smith, 1991) because "if [teachers] find that they have to use a specified test they may find teaching to the test almost unavoidable" (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p. 33). In her study, Smith (1991) states that state-mandated testing systems make teachers give up their instructional beliefs and practices and drift towards test-like teaching. For example, multiple-choice testing system leads teachers to multiple-choice instruction because their students need to understand how to deal with multiple-choice questions to get higher scores in the tests. Smith points out that "over time and with increased testing stakes, teaching becomes more test-like" (p. 10), and teachers' experiences under oppressive state-mandated testing systems are "incorporated into the teachers' identities and subsequent definitions of teaching" (p. 8). As a result, teachers gradually weaken

their capacities to implement their beliefs and also reduce subject matter knowledge and instructional methods they have fostered through the history of their teaching.

Pizarro (2010) points out that high-stakes tests deprive teachers of their freedom to make decisions on the methodologies, and their methodology is "clearly adopted to the requirements of the test" (p. 164). In Spain, the site of Pizarro's study, the English test that all high-school graduates had to take in order to enroll a Spanish university, consisted of reading and writing sections (at the time of the study). Due to the pressure of improving students' reading and writing skills that would be evaluated by the high-stakes English test, most of the teachers in her study did not spend any class time practicing oral communication skills, and thus, "the principles and practices of most teachers' communicative philosophy" (p. 164) were sealed in their classrooms. However, over 80% of the participant teachers answered that they would make the lessons more communicative by using more communicative methods and activities, which they valued, "if they were not bound by the [English test]" (p. 164). In Pizarro's study, it was clear that the high-stakes tests required the teachers to align their instruction and methodology with the expectation of the power and hindered the consistency of their beliefs and practice.

Student factors. In addition to the institutional culture/demands and high-stakes standardized testing, the third contextual factor that leads teachers to compromise their beliefs and prevents them from implementing their classroom practices is student factors, such as student's motivation and ability (Altinsoy & Okan, 2017; Graden, 1996). According to Altinsoy and Okan (2017), although research has indicated that "teachers modify their instructional practice in line with their beliefs" (p. 54), student contextual factors have a great impact on such a decision process. In their study, Altinsoy and Okan investigated the relationship between six contextual factors and teachers' belief and practices, and their quantitative data showed that

student-oriented contextual factors mostly impacted teachers' decisions and practices. Also, in the interviews, student factors, such as their motivation and attitudes towards lessons, were most frequently mentioned by teachers in a negative manner compared to the other five contextual factors, such as school policy and management. Altinsoy and Okan concluded that, even though many contextual factors exist in school contexts and classrooms, student factors can be the most immediately antecedent factor to impact teachers' beliefs and practices.

Foreign language teachers in Graden's (1996) study had belief in the strong relationship between frequent reading and increased comprehension and in the efficacy of using the target language during reading instructions. However, Graden found that students' low motivation and poor language proficiency often made language teachers abandon their beliefs about appropriate reading instructions but instead made them resort to practices that they believed to be less effective. One Spanish teacher expressed annoyance when only four of 14 students in her class completed a reading assignment. She explained that students' unwillingness to read that stemmed from their low motivation often prevented her goal of having students read frequently to improve comprehension. Also, another Spanish teacher reluctantly gave up using Spanish and resorted to English when students did not comprehend the reading due to their poor language proficiency. Graden explains that "the teachers' choices to accommodate their students took precedence over their beliefs about appropriate reading instruction" (p. 393). That is, the realities of the classroom, such as students' low motivation and poor ability, are so compelling that teachers are forced to subordinate their instructional beliefs and practices to these student factors.

Teachers' Prior Learning Experiences

As mentioned in the previous section, research has shown that contextual factors, such as school culture and demands, testing systems, and student motivations, can be immediately

antecedent factors over teachers' beliefs and practice and determine the extent to which they can

implement instructional practices based on their beliefs. However, at the same time, research has

shown that teachers' previous experiences as learners are less immediate but sustainable factors

and continue to affect teachers' beliefs and practice about teaching (Brown, 2010; Flores & Day,

2006, Golombek, 1998; Johnson, 1994; Numrich, 1996; Richards & Pennington, 1998). Also,

research have suggested that teachers' beliefs established through their extensive experiences as

learners are resistant to change even when conflicting with newly acquired knowledge and

beliefs (Johnson, 1994: Richards & Pennington, 1998). It is because "being a student is like

serving an apprenticeship in teaching" (Lortie, 1975, p. 61), by creating "[a] belief system about

what teachers should do and what students should do. (Hampton, 1994, p. 128). In short, "The

average student has spent 13,000 hours in direct contact with classroom teachers by the time he

graduates from high school" (Lortie, 1975, p. 61), and our belief system "continuously

reinforced and reconfirmed by events…is rarely articulated and consequently rarely examined"

(Hampton, 1994, p. 129).

Impacts on current beliefs and knowledge. Studies haves suggested that language

teachers' early learning experiences as students establish their beliefs and knowledge about

language teaching which "form the basis of their initial conceptualizations of L2 teaching during

teacher education, and which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives"

(Borg, 2003, p. 88). In other words, teachers' prior experiences as leaners are the origin of their

knowledge and beliefs about teaching and teacher identity, and thus continue to impact their

views of teaching and of themselves as teachers. Numrich (1996) found that preservice ESL

teachers decided what teaching techniques to employ or reject based on their own positive or

negative L2 learning experiences. One major teaching strategy that was positively replicated by

teachers in Numrich's study was integrating cultural factors into their lessons because most teachers enjoyed learning L2 cultures as L2 learners. One teacher noted that, "Just as my [Spanish] teachers showed cultural aspects of the culture in order to make the language learning come alive, so I wanted to do the same for my students" (p. 138). On the other hand, a teaching technique that was consciously rejected by the teachers was error correction because of their humiliated, uncomfortable experiences of being corrected in the classroom. Another teacher noted that, "Why I avoided error correction was a reflection upon the negative experiences I had as a language learner when I was made to feel bad about making mistakes" (p. 140). That is, language teachers' prior experiences as leaners, such as what teaching strategies were the most or least successful, obviously affect their beliefs about language teaching and learning and directly inform their classroom practices.

One TA in Golombek's (1998) study also reported her hesitation of correcting students in her class due to her own negative L2 learning experience in the intensive Russian program. She described her experience and fear by saying that, "A little old guy constantly [corrected my grammar] and I became terrified of speaking in his class because I know that I was going to be corrected…That was kind of a traumatic experience" (p. 454). She believed that her Russian teacher inhibited her from speaking, and her experiences as a language leaner made her, as a language teacher, choose not to interrupt and correct students and not to harm them. She commented, "I just I wouldn't want somebody doing that to me" (p. 454). In short, her knowledge (fear of being hypercorrected) and belief (how a teacher should treat students in language classrooms) were shaped by her own prior experiences as an L2 leaner, and her knowledge and belief directly influenced her instructional practice (avoiding error correction).

Flores and Day (2006) point out that beginning teachers' prior experiences as leaners, such as observing their teachers and their styles of teaching, play "a strong mediating role" (p. 223) when they construct their classroom practices and their teacher identities. One participant commented,

> Maybe the experience of my former teachers during my secondary education helped me to behave the way I do, because they did exactly what I am trying to do now. Actually, there was this teacher of Chemistry who I admired a lot and who I try to follow as a model. (p. 223)

In other words, for beginning teacher, their prior favorite teachers' personal characteristics and the way of teaching serve as a major source of the type of teacher they want to be and the type of teaching they want to implement in the classroom. Flores and Day state that "former teachers (and their teaching) were seen as a frame of reference in their making sense of teaching…and in their understanding of themselves as teachers" (p. 224). In fact, former teachers' beliefs and practice, which beginning teachers experienced as learners, are borrowed when forming their initial conceptualization of teaching and teacher identity, and thus which would "continue to be influential throughout their professional lives1" ((Borg, 2003, p. 88) as part of their beliefs and practice.

Resistance to change. Research has shown that preservice language teachers bring with them accumulated beliefs and knowledge that are rooted in their early experiences as learners into college teacher education programs and that such beliefs and knowledge tend to be "quite stable and rather resistant to change" (Johnson, 1994, p. 440) or "impermeable and difficult or impossible to change" (Hampton, 1994, p. 129) even when contradicting newly acquired beliefs and knowledge. Richards and Pennington (1998) investigated how graduates of a BA Teaching

English as a Second Language (TESL) degree coped with their first-year teaching in Hong Kong secondary schools and the extent to which they could apply what they had studied in the teacher preparation course. Novice ESL teachers (graduates of the BA TESL) in Richards and Pennington's study were familiar with the Hong Kong educational tradition such as teacher-centered and grammar focused instruction before entering the university TESL program. However, on graduation, they were expected to be able to teach according to the principles and practices of communicative language teaching and learner-centered teaching, to which they had been centrally exposed throughout the teaching education program. At the beginning of the school year, the novice teachers were motivated and started teaching with a strong belief in the principles of communicative language teaching. However, Richards and Pennington found that, once the novice teachers confronted classroom realities, such as "large classes, sometimes unmotivated students, and examination pressure" (p. 181), their decisions to deal with these challenges in their classrooms clearly reflected their prior experiences as students in the Hong Kong school system, which values teacher control and examination. For example, one novice teacher abandoned communicative activities and shifted to "discipline and routine checking of exercises" (p. 182) when discipline problems happened in her class. Another teacher "felt grammar teaching was [also] important and made use of regular grammar-focused instruction" (p. 181). Richards and Pennington explain that novice teachers' inexperience of how to adjust newly gained knowledge and beliefs to the realities of classroom life and the teachers' desire "to achieve consistency in their lessons, their own behavior, and the behavior of students" (p. 188) drove them to stick to their prior knowledge and beliefs rather than to challenge the practical realities with newly acquired methods. In fact, the teacher preparation course was not convincing

enough to impact and change the novice teachers' robust schema of L2 teaching and learning, and their prior beliefs and knowledge remain largely unchanged.

Brown (2010) examined how preservice teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning, who were educated almost entirely in high-stakes standard-based education systems, can be impacted by their teacher education program that trained them to be prepared to teach under the state's mandated curriculum. When entering the program, they brought negative views towards both of the mandated curriculum and the state-based standardized tests, stating that such policies merely provided students with limited knowledge and students' learning was controlled only for the tests. One participant commented with frustration, "My high school teachers taught to the test, and I felt that that was a disservice to me as a student because I wasn't being challenged academically" (p. 481). As the course progressed and learned how to use the state's mandated curriculum in an effective manner, such as student-center instruction, Brown found that they started to wane their irritation with the idea of teaching the mandate curriculum in their daily instruction. However, at the same time, Brown also found that preservice teachers' prior experiences in high-stakes classrooms, where their teachers paid attention to test results and thus they were taught to the tests, led them to question whether they could really teach the curriculum to their future students in the way they were taught in their teaching program. In other words, the preservice teachers who spent a thousand of hours witnessing what and how their teachers taught in high-stakes environment were so skeptical about whether implementing high-stakes tests and teaching the curriculum in an effective manner really went together in the same classroom. One participant stated, "I want to teach for the rest of my life. I don't want to be like these teachers I see that are there for 3 years and leave, and I'm scared that I will get burned out and that freaks me out" (p. 486). In short, preservice teachers who were educated in high-stakes education

system are struggling between their desire of achieving the image of productive teachers, which include teaching the state's mandated curriculum in an effective manner, and "the shadow" (p. 485) of high-stakes testing system, which they gained when they were students and have been always having.

Preservice ESL teachers in Johnson's (1994) study explained that projected images of themselves as L2 teachers (the type of teacher they want to be) and of L2 teaching (the type of L2 learning experiences they wanted to provide for their students) were conflicted with the images of L2 teachers and teaching from their formal L2 learning experiences. One teacher described, "I can't help but contrast what I want to be like as a teacher and the many teachers that I have known who merely go through the motions. I know I don't want to be like them" (p. 445). Another teacher commented, "I desperately want [my students'] experiences in my class to be meaningful and useful, that is something I rarely experienced as a student" (p. 449). In other words, the preservice teachers were motivated to challenge the images of L2 teachers and teaching from their formal L2 learning experiences and to reconstruct a model representing their projected images of L2 teachers and teaching. However, Johnson found that they (unconsciously) relied on the lasting images of teachers, materials, activities, and classroom organization that they experienced as L2 learners, and they taught their students in the way they were taught. One teacher showed frustration during watching herself teaching on video tape: "It's been really frustrating to watch myself do the old behaviors…I know now that I don't want to teach like this…It's like I just fall into the trap of teaching like I was taught" (p. 446). In other words, her prior knowledge and beliefs as a student continued to have a powerful impact on her perceptions of L2 teachers and teaching and "completely override" (p. 449) her projected images. At the same time, Johnson found that the preservice teachers were "feeling powerless to alter their

instructional practice" (p. 449) due to a lack of clear models of their projected images of L2 teachers and teaching. One teacher said, "[I want] to teach by giving students an opportunity to carry out realistic activities…but I have very little prior knowledge or experiences in doing this" (p. 445). In fact, it is difficult for preservice teachers to overcome prior knowledge and beliefs because of not only the apparent power of lasting, vivid images from early learning experiences, but also the limited access to alternative images that were "less prominent in their apprenticeship of observation, but central to their projected images" (p. 450) of L2 teachers and teaching.

In summary, the literature in the first and second section suggests that, although teachers' beliefs are generally consistent with their practices and the connection between them are strong, external contextual factors impact on the consistency of the beliefs and practices and can prevent teachers from implementing their practices that reflect their beliefs. The literature reviewed in this section suggests that, while external contextual factors impact teachers' beliefs and practices as immediate, antecedent factors, teachers' prior extensive experiences as leaners have continued to affect their beliefs and knowledge of teaching and learning over a long period of time as less immediate but rather sustainable factors and have continuously informed their classroom instructions.

Taken together, due to the consistency between teachers' beliefs about teaching/learning and instructional practices in the classroom, better understanding and harmonizing existing TAs' beliefs/knowledge is crucial in order to consequently develop the ESL writing courses in the university. Also, due to the complex nature of teachers' beliefs and knowledge, which have been "shaped by a wide range of interacting and often conflicting factors" (Borg, 2003, p. 91), developing a comprehensive model that describes TAs' beliefs/knowledge about ESL writing courses in a categorized manner is an effective means in order to gain an overall picture of TAs'

beliefs/knowledge, examine each category of the beliefs/knowledge, and analyze the relation

between them

Chapter 3: Method

The purpose of this study is to develop a comprehensive model that describes TAs'
beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses in a
categorized manner, and to examine different categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge and find the
relations between them, with the goal of better harmonizing TAs' beliefs/knowledge and
consequently developing the ESL writing program in the university, which is the site of this
study. To achieve the goals of this study, I conducted qualitative research. I recruited TAs from
the MA TESL program in the university and collected interview data from them. Then I analyzed
the interview data in order to detect categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge, find relations between
the categories, and describe TAs' beliefs/knowledge in a comprehensive and multifaceted
manner. In the following sections, I describe details of the research method for this study:
participants, data collection, and data analysis.

Participants

The participants in this research study were nine TAs enrolled in the MA TESL program
in the university in the Midwestern United States. To achieve the goal of this study, better
harmonizing TAs' beliefs/knowledge and consequently improving the university ESL writing
program, where any TAs can be placed in a writing course in the IEP or EAP, not only TAs with
experience teaching writing but also TAs without experience teaching writing yet were recruited,
and consent was obtained from nine TAs.

During the semester I was gathering interview data (Spring 2019), the nine TAs (4 male
and 5 female) were in their second, third, or fourth semester teaching as TAs and were teaching
in the IEP or EAP. Background information of the nine TAs, which was gathered from the

survey, is summarized with pseudonyms in Table 1, and these pseudonyms are used through this paper. The survey questions (See Appendix A) were asked before the interviews with emails.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

	Paul	Ian	John	Dan	Alice	Eva	Lucy	Julia	Sara
I am teaching in this semester.	EAP	EAP	EAP	IEP and EAP	EAP	IEP	EAP	IEP	IEP
This is my th semester teaching as a TA.	4	4	2	2	4	2	2	3	4
I received my BA degree in the US.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
My first language is English.	Yes	No	Yes bilingual	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes bilingual	No
I studied teaching ESL/EFL for my BA degree or minor.	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
I have previously worked as an ESL/EFL instructor.	Yes 2 yrs	No	Yes 12 yrs	Yes 4 yrs	No	No	Yes 2 yrs	Yes 3 yrs	No
I have taught academic writing in the IEC or EAP.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
I have previously worked as an ESL/EFL academic writing instructor.	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No

The nine TAs had varied educational and teaching experiences prior to enrolling in the MA TESL program. Five of the nine TAs received their undergraduate degrees in the US, while the other four TAs received their undergraduate degrees in their own countries. Three of the nine TAs answered that they studied teaching ESL/EFL for their undergraduate degrees, and five of the nine TAs answered that they had taught ESL/EFL in the US and/or abroad. Also, seven of the nine TAs reported that they had taught academic writing in the IEP/EAP or prior to enrolling in the MA TESL program.

Data Collection

For this qualitative research study, semi-structured interviews were employed. In order to develop a comprehensive and multifaceted model that describes TAs' beliefs/knowledge, qualitative data elicited by TAs should be holistic and detailed. Therefore, it was necessary to employ a data collection method that would make TAs' theoretical and empirical knowledge visible enough during interviews and that would elicit explanations and descriptions from TAs fully and precisely. As to the advantages of interviews, Mackey and Gass (2016) explain that interviews enable researchers to "investigate phenomena that are not directly observable, such as…self-reported perceptions or attitudes. Also, since interviews are interactive, researchers can elicit additional data if initial answers are vague, incomplete, off-topic, or not specific enough" (p. 225). Mackey and Gass also explain that "for semi-structure interviews], the researcher uses a written list of questions as a guide, while still having the freedom to digress and probe for more information" (p. 225). In short, semi-structured interviews were suitable for the purpose of this study, allowing the researcher to elicit detailed descriptions of TAs themselves, to clarify their answers, and probe for additional information.

Each TA met with the researcher twice for one-on-one interviews, and each meeting took roughly 45 minutes to one hour. At the first meeting, TAs were asked to answer to 14 prepared interview questions in the order that they were listed (see Appendix B), and at the second meeting TAs were asked to answer to proving and/or additional questions that were raised by the first interviews. Each interview was audio-recorded on the researcher's digital audio recorder and uploaded to her secure password-protected personal computer. Then, all semi-structured interviews were transcribed for analysis.

Data Analysis

Mackey and Gass (2016) state that "transcriptions of oral data can yield rich and extensive second language data, but in order to make sense of them, they must be coded in a principled manner" (p. 117). Therefore, in order to develop a comprehensive model that describes TAs' beliefs/knowledge in a categorized manner, the transcribed interview data was coded and analyzed. The process of analysis involved: (1) preliminary category definition and development, which is sometimes known as "open coding" (p. 137), and (2) two stages of actual data analysis according to established categories. Once the categories were established and defined, they served as the tool for the actual data analysis.

Preliminary stage: open coding. The goal of preliminary category definition and development was to establish categories, which could describe the interview data and serve as the tools for the later actual data analysis, and to find potential relations between categories. This preliminary stage began with intensive reading of transcripts of the interview data. The major focus during the reading was finding TAs' beliefs/knowledge, which included their perceptions and experiences, regarding the teaching and learning academic writing in ESL writing courses. Other focuses alongside the reading were developing different categories, naming and defining the category in a way that best suited the description, and finding possible relations between categories. The outcome of this preliminary stage was a list of nine defined categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses (see Table 2) and a temporal model that simply showed the relations between the nine categories.

Table 2

9 Categories and Definitions of TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge

	Category	Definition
1	Purpose of the courses	Beliefs/knowledge of goals for and importance of ESL writing courses
2	What to teach/learns	Beliefs/knowledge of what to be taught and learned in ESL writing courses
3	ESL students	Beliefs/knowledge of ESL students' knowledge/skills that they brought and their difficulties when producing US academic writing
4	Gap between the demands and the needs	Beliefs/knowledge of the gap between what to be taught/learned in the courses (demands) and ESL students' ability/skills and difficulty (needs)
5	How to teach/learn 1: Step by step	Beliefs/knowledge of step-by-step teaching/learning of the academic writing process
6	How to teach/learn 2: Feedback	Beliefs/knowledge of goals for and importance of teachers' feedback to students in ESL writing courses
7	How to teach/learn 3: Trial and error	Beliefs/knowledge of experiential learning and environment in ESL writing courses
8	Issue 1: Plagiarism	Beliefs/knowledge of the issues about plagiarism in ESL writing courses and of possible reasons why students plagiarize
9	Issue 2: Language teaching/learning	Beliefs/knowledge of the issues about language teaching/learning in ESL writing courses

Actual data analysis 1. The goal of the first actual data analysis was to describe TAs'

beliefs/knowledge according to the nine categories that were established through open coding in

the preliminary stage. In this first stage in the analysis, the transcripts of the interview data were

coded and classified in terms of the nine categories according to Mackey and Gass' (2016)

instructions that "coding involves making decisions about how to classify or categorize particular

pieces or parts of data" (p. 112). To classify the transcribed data, nine worksheets were created

by the researcher. Each of the nine worksheets was headed by one of the nine categories of TAs'

beliefs/knowledge described in Table 2. For example, one of the worksheets was headed by beliefs/knowledge of purpose. Then, particular pieces of data, which had been coded according to the nine categories, were copied from the transcripts and pasted to the matching worksheets so that each worksheet was full of descriptions of TAs dealing with the same category. For example, the worksheet headed by beliefs/knowledge of purpose was full of descriptions of TAs dealing with goals for and importance of ESL writing courses. The outcome of this first data analysis stage was the description of TAs' beliefs/knowledge, which were classified into the nine categories and were organized in the nine separate worksheets.

Actual data analysis 2. The second actual data analysis was the final stage in the analysis. The goals of the final analysis were: (1) to consider subcategories within each of the nine categories, which could provide more detailed insight into TAs' beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses, and (2) to develop the temporal model of TAs' beliefs/knowledge created in the preliminary stage. The final stage in the analysis consisted of a close examination of each category of TAs' beliefs/knowledge separately. The descriptions of TAs within each category were compared and summarized and then classified into two subcategories within each of the nine categories. The two subcategories under each category were named in a way that best suited the description, and the temporal model was developed by adding the subcategories in a hierarchical manner. The outcome of this final stage of analysis was the subcategories that provided detailed descriptions of the TAs' beliefs/knowledge and the comprehensive model that described TAs' beliefs/knowledge of teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses in a categorized manner.

The three analysis stages above—the preliminary stage and two actual analysis stages— were described separately, but rather I actually had to go back and forth between stages

throughout the analysis. More precisely, I had to be always going back and forth between developing and defining categories, finding the relations between the categories, and classifying TAs' descriptions according to the categories until I reached "the goal of closely reflecting and representing the data" (Mackey & Gass, 2016, p. 137). In fact, the analysis for this study had developed in a gradual, recursive manner. The outcome of a set of analysis—the comprehensive model that described TAs' beliefs/knowledge about ESL writing courses in a categorized manner, and the descriptions of TAs' beliefs/knowledge in terms of the nine categories—are presented and described in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Results

By analyzing the semi-structured interview data from nine TAs, I developed a comprehensive and multifaceted model that describes TAs' beliefs/knowledge about teaching and learning academic writing in ESL writing courses (see Figure 1). The model presents nine categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge and illustrates the relation between the categories. Thick lines between categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge indicate a "connected well" relationship between them. What I mean by "connected well" with each other is that the relation between the categories is natural and reasonable. For example, the thick line between "Purpose of the courses" and "What to teach/learn" indicates that these two categories are connected well with each other, and the relationship between them is natural and reasonable. On the other hand, the dotted lines between categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge indicate a "not connected well" relation between them. What I mean by "not connected well" to the other is that the relation between the categories is (partly) conflicting or inconsistent.

In addition, this comprehensive and multifaceted model shows that seven categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge, which are surrounded by a thick frame, are connected well with each other, and thus they are harmonized and work as a whole. However, the other two categories—"Issue1: plagiarism" and "Issue 2: language teaching/learning"—are not harmonized to the other seven categories because these two categories are (partly) conflicting or inconsistent with some of the categories surrounded by the frame.
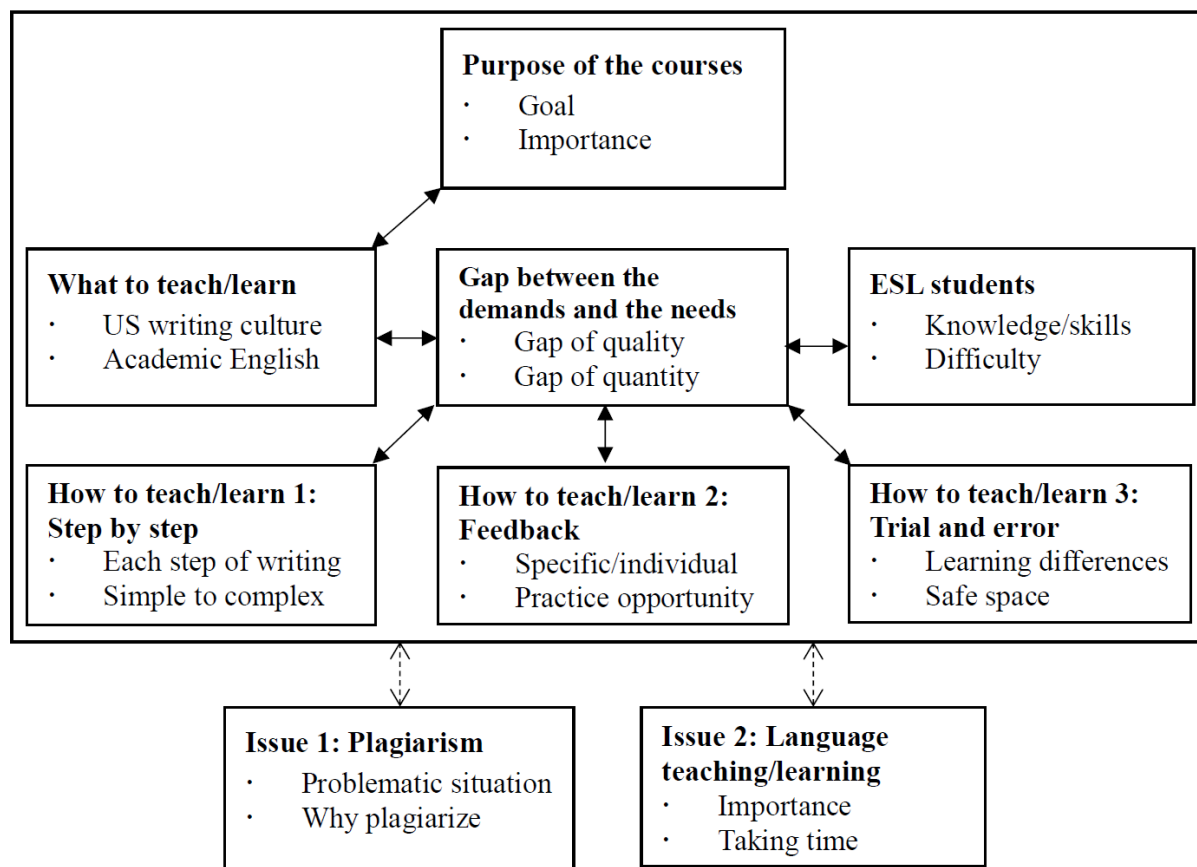
Purpose of the courses
· Goal
· Importance

What to teach/learn	Gap between the demands and the needs	ESL students
· US writing culture	· Gap of quality	· Knowledge/skills
· Academic English	· Gap of quantity	· Difficulty

How to teach/learn 1: Step by step	How to teach/learn 2: Feedback	How to teach/learn 3: Trial and error
· Each step of writing	· Specific/individual	· Learning differences
· Simple to complex	· Practice opportunity	· Safe space

Issue 1: Plagiarism	Issue 2: Language teaching/learning
· Problematic situation	· Importance
· Why plagiarize	· Taking time

Figure 1. Comprehensive and multifaceted model of TAs' beliefs/knowledge.

In the following sections, I describe TAs' beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses according to the nine categories presented in Figure 1. For this purpose, the descriptions of TAs' beliefs/knowledge are based on the nine separate worksheets developed in the second analysis stage. Firstly, I describe the seven categories that are connected well and thus harmonized as a whole. Then, I describe the other two categories— "Issue1: plagiarism" and "Issue 2: language teaching/learning"—which are not harmonized well to the other seven categories. Also, I describe the relation between categories presented in Figure 1 by using thick lines and dotted lines—what categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge are connected well with each other, and whereas what categories of their beliefs/knowledge are not

connected well. When I say TAs' beliefs/knowledge through the description, I mean what TAs described in the interviews.

The nine TAs had varied educational and teaching experiences prior to enrolling in the MA TESL program as shown in Table 1. Thus, each of them had different perceptions of the learning and teaching about the academic writing in ESL writing courses. However, the purpose in this chapter is not to present their theoretical and empirical beliefs/knowledge as case studies of individual TA. Rather, I present the semi-structured interview data in a way that describes the beliefs/knowledge shared by nine TAs, the group of TAs who teach in the ESL program in this university.

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about Purpose of the Courses

Goals of ESL writing courses. TAs considered ESL writing courses were absolutely necessary to help ESL students develop their academic writing knowledge and skills to be successful in the rest of their classes here. TAs described two major goals of the writing courses that should be achieved by the end of the course.

Understanding US expectations. The first goal TAs mentioned in the interviews was to have ESL students understand US academic writing expectations at a university level regardless of where they were from. For example, John explained that the writing courses should train ESL students to know standards of academic writing in US universities because the standards were different from the writing culture the students brought. John said, "One of the main goals of the ESL writing courses is to familiarize…students that come from different areas…[with] what is expected of them being here in the US [university]…it's kind of like standardization of what [writing here] is looking for." Sara, meanwhile, referred to American peers who acquired the knowledge and skills of academic writing in high school and transitioned into the university.

Sara said, "[ESL writing courses] are designed to introduce what writing culture in America is and what is required in university setting…[because] other native [speakers of English] have already been taught [theses] in high school." She stated that ESL writing courses should help students know US expectations at the level with the other American students.

Producing US academic papers. Another goal that turned out to be important was to prepare ESL students for writing well by themselves in their other classes. In other words, the point mentioned by TAs was that the writing courses needed to help students not only to understand US writing expectations but also to apply the knowledge to their skills to produce academic writing appropriately. For example, Julia stated that students should be able to write papers acceptable in university courses once they were out of the ESL writing courses. Julia said, "[ESL writing courses should] give our students the tools and the knowledge that they need…[in order for them] to write adequate papers for their classes" Lucy, in addition, emphasized that the courses should push students to become independent writers when they leave the courses. Lucy explained, "Nobody else is going to teach them how to do citations or to structure an essay out. After [ESL writing courses] none of their other professors are going to…be like 'This is a thesis statement, and this is a topic sentence.'"

I kind of see myself as this buffer person. Alice said that, to help her students better understand and produce US academic writing, she always tried to stand in the middle of the two sides, "the American classroom" and her students' "first language and culture." Alice explained that, "Our job is to help train the students to know how to write academically for this specific setting in an American university…[but part of our job is] to help the students…make the transition and recognize the differences" because US expectations of writing was very different from what they were used to. Alice said, "I kind of see myself as this buffer person," and she

continued, "I [don't] want to make them American, but I want them to understand this is how we do thing…[so] that they can succeed." Alice seemed to perceive that, in order for ESL students to achieve the goals of ESL writing courses—understanding and producing academic writing well—we need to not only teach students US writing expectations but also to help them fill the gaps between US writing culture and their writing cultures.

Importance of achieving the goals. When asked about importance for ESL writing courses to achieve the goals that they mentioned, TAs talked about two general expectations of writing that existed in US universities. Also, they pointed out that all students, even ESL students, needed to follow the expectations of writing to be success in the university.

General expectations of writing in US universities. The first general expectation that TAs mentioned was that students were required to write a lot across all disciplines, and the other expectation required students to write well. Alice explained that she had to write many papers for her undergraduate degree, and she said, "Academic writing in US universities is an important part of many majors especially certain majors have more writing in them, but it's something that any major the students are expected to do that well." Lucy mentioned that US universities were specific on how to write academic papers and said that "US university teachers have a set of expectations for what they think their students will be producing." TAs emphasized that without understanding academic writing and producing that well, ESL students would not be able to deal with university courses, much less succeed in the university.

Expectations for ESL students and their products. In addition to the general expectations in US universities, to write a lot and well, TAs referred to professors' attitudes toward ESL international students and their written products in order to explain the importance of achieving the course goals. TAs explained that professors in US universities generally would

not give consideration to ESL students and their own writing cultures if their first language was not English. Julia referred to the reality of university courses, which might be a hard situation for ESL students, and said, "[Professors] don't care if you're an international student. They don't care if English isn't your first language…They care what you produce." Alice referred to professors' unfamiliarity with ESL students' written products and difficulties of transition to the new writing culture. Alice said, "I don't expect that [professors] are so much aware of the cultural differences...If [ESL students'] thesis at the wrong place…or they accidentally plagiarize, I don't expect [professors] to be very understanding…[because] they [are not] used to non-native speaker errors."

Professors do not really care if a student is from a non-English speaking country. Dan said that ESL students cannot succeed in US universities without understanding and producing academic writing well because "there're the expectations that they should be able to write at a university level by their professors." Dan explained, "I think a lot of university admin culture doesn't differentiate between ESL and native speaker, that's all viewed the same…Professors don't…really care if a student is from a non-English speaking country…So I think that's why [ESL writing courses are] necessary." Dan continued and said, "I had professors say, 'You are university students. You've been accepted to the university. So, there's a standard and everyone will be held to that standard.'" Dan explained that the professor spoke to everyone in the class, but the professor sounded like he was speaking to ESL students specifically. Dan said, "Like, you're here, your IELTS or your TOEFL score says you are here." Dan seemed to perceive that ESL students cannot expect professors' generous consideration in US universities; rather, ESL students should seriously learn and practice US writing expectations in ESL writing courses and get ready for their academic courses.

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about What to Teach/Learn

US academic writing culture. TAs stated that, because ESL students came from different writing cultures, they needed first to know about US academic writing cultures, which they would have to follow in the US university. Paul referred to the need for making students aware of US writing culture in the first place, and he said, "I just start [my class] talking about, 'This is what you need to do…This is how we do in the US.'" Alice, on the other hand, referred to the multifaceted nature of academic writing in the US, and she said, "We need to be teaching students more than just the act of writing because so much goes into [US academic] writing."

Researching skills. TAs pointed out that main part of "more than just the act of writing" (Alice) of US academic writing culture is to research. John stated, "Research is an essential core in academic writing [in US universities], because without it, it becomes just the mechanics of writing something…You can't…say, 'This is my paper' without having any references or without sourcing correctly." John emphasized that ESL students should learn researching skills in ESL writing courses as the main part of US academic writing. Lucy stated that ESL students should understand that academic writing in US universities was more than grammar and reporting. Lucy said, "Academic writing in the US isn't just to show that you can…write [using correct grammar] or that you can [report] other people's ideas, but rather [should show that] you're …closely examining something and coming to a conclusion of your own [through the research]. Paul also stated that US academic writing was more than reporting sources. He referred to students who were used to copying and pasting someone else's work into their writing back home, and said, "I think a lot of them need to learn [the research] for US academic writing, writing a paper is not just copying from a bunch of sources…It's looking at the sources, understanding them and then synthesizing them, trying those different ideas together somehow."

Sara, in addition, referred to assignments that students should work on in ESL writing courses. Sara said, "Writing assignment [in ESL writing courses should involve] researching process, [instead of] just like response papers after watching movie, or writing about themselves [like] narrative papers." She emphasized that ESL students needed to practice researching skills and should become accustomed to it.

  Writing skills. Because "research is an essential core in academic writing [in US universities]" (John), being able to research really matters. However, TAs pointed out that "being able to explain [the research] by paraphrasing…ideas that are taken from the references, [being able to cite] those references…appropriately" (John) also matters. TAs emphasized that ESL students needed to know what was expected of them about not only researching skills but also writing skills to produce academic work in the US university.

  TAs stated that the first important academic writing skill that ESL students should learn in ESL writing courses was paraphrasing. Alice said, "They have to be able to use sources in their writing. [So], they have to be able to use paraphrasing [to reproduce the source in their own papers.]" Alice said that she would spend a lot of time working on paraphrasing in her class because this concept was very new for students. John referred to ESL students' struggle with understanding this new concept for them. John said, "[Students ask] me something [about paraphrasing], 'Why do I have to process it in my head, and then purposely find different words in order to not say what somebody said?'" John continued and said, "But that's how rigid academic writing is, and so this is what we do [in US universities]." TAs stated that students needed to learn and practice this new concept to produce academic papers in US universities anyway.

Another important academic writing skill that TAs mentioned was citation. Paul said, "Pretty much everybody needs to learn the citation. Some of them may have heard of it, may have done it a few times, but they're not really familiar with…citing [sources]." Paul explained, because many countries that students came from did not have the requirement for citation, students should intensively learn how to cite sources in ESL writing courses. Paul said, "A lot of students…come from countries where [the citation rule] don't exist…They can take whatever information they want, and just put it in their paper and they don't need to cite it [back home]. But…[they] need to play by [our] rules if [they] are going to write in the US."

Academic English skills. In addition to US academic writing culture, TAs stated that academic English skills should be also taught and learned in ESL writing courses. For example, Lucy said, "I think…there should be some [academic language] activities in [ESL writing courses] because not only there is an expectation of form [of writing], but there also an expectation of what kind of words you'll use [in your papers]."

Grammar and vocabulary. TAs explained that there were some sentence structure and vocabulary issues that ESL students should deal with in order to produce written work that would fit expectations for US university academic writing. Lucy referred to her students and explained that they wrote their papers as if they had a conversation with her. Lucy said, "[They should be learning a higher level of language, such as] varied sentence structure and…academic vocabulary [instead of] writing in the same way you would talk or using the same vocabulary you would use to send a text to your friend." Paul pointed out the need for students' improvement in academic English skills to produce academic written work that provides clear communication. Paul said, "Some of them definitely need to build that grammar skill so that

their sentences are coherent, so their ideas are coherent. Almost all of them need to build on their vocabulary so they can choose academic words instead of just casual, speech sort of words."

Importance of academic vocabulary development. Although TAs mentioned both sentence structure and vocabulary as the academic language issues ESL students should work on and improve in ESL writing courses, TAs tended to emphasize the more importance of academic vocabulary development. For example, Alice mentioned that academic vocabulary knowledge was highly correlated with the comprehension level in reading academic sources. Alice said that some of the students in her class showed high level of reading ability, but some other students "don't understand what [an academic source] said [because] the vocabulary is too hard for them to understand [that]. So…there's usually a pretty significant need to work hard [on academic vocabulary so that they can] understand a source [and] integrate that source." Also, Alice and Lucy referred to the need for providing students with the strategies for academic vocabulary development in ESL writing courses: Alice said, "We want them to learn [academic] words in our classes, but we also really need them to learn to how to learn vocabulary…They need to know how to use a dictionary well." Lucy said, "At least, [we need to] show students how they can grow their academic vocabulary."

Paraphrasing requires a lot of vocabulary. Lucy explained that paraphrasing was a hard concept for ESL students to understand, and this concept required students not only to learn a new way of thinking but also to develop and demonstrate their academic language skills. Lucy said, "I think it's probably partially language ability." Lucy continued and said, "It requires a lot of vocabulary to do paraphrasing well, to know what words you can change and what words you can't change and how you can reorder the sentence." Lucy seemed to perceive that academic

English skills were essential for the cognitive process of paraphrasing, and thus students should develop this particular language skills in ESL writing courses.

Language-wise. As part of the reason for the importance of academic English skills for ESL students, TAs mentioned professors' high expectations for language-wise products in the US university setting. Ian said that professors would assess student's paper based on its content, but they would also assess student's language skills in writing. Ian said, "They can take points off for bad English…Some professors can punish you for bad English." Alice referred to professors she had had and said, "There were even teachers that I had who said, if there are significant grammar errors, I'm taking 10% off of your grade." Then, Alice commented that "I would say most teachers do expect, at least most of the teachers I've had, they do expect [language-wise] academic writing." TAs pointed out that improving academic English skills should be important for ESL students to be successful in US universities.

Relation between Categories (1)

In the previous two sections, firstly TAs' beliefs/knowledge about purpose of ESL writing courses was described, and following this, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn in the courses was described. Throughout the descriptions of TAs, I found that these two categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge were connected well, and the relationship between them was natural and reasonable. The relation can be characterized by the direct influence from the purpose of ESL writing courses to the what to teach/learn in the courses.

In the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about purpose of the courses, TAs stated that the two major goals of ESL writing courses were understanding US academic writing expectations and being able to produce US academic papers. As to the importance of achieving these goals, TAs described professors' high expectations for students' written products in general

and very few considerations for ESL students' first language and their products. These perceptions of TAs, regarding the purpose of ESL writing courses, directly and naturally impacted their beliefs/knowledge of what to teach/learn in ESL writing courses.

In the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn, TAs stated that US academic writing cultures (or expectations) should be taught and learned in the first place, and this perception was related well to their descriptions of the course goals. TAs also stated that ESL students should develop their academic English skills in the courses to be able to produce language-wise academic papers, and this idea was directly related to their descriptions regarding the importance of achieving the goals. In short, for TAs, their beliefs/knowledge about purpose of ESL writing courses was working well as their important guideline in deciding what to teach and learn in the writing courses. In addition, it was obvious, from TAs' descriptions, that they framed their role in ESL writing courses as both a cultural informant (of US academic writing) and a language teacher (of academic English).

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about ESL Students

Knowledge/skills ESL students brought. TAs stated that the range of knowledge and skills of the language (use) that ESL students brought were very different depending on students. For example, Lucy said, "My Japanese students are very strong in vocabulary…and some students are really good in grammar…and their schooling background is kind of plays into that…Each student brings a variety of different levels of skills and different skill sets into the [ESL writing] classroom." However, at the same time TAs pointed out that overall ESL students' knowledge and skills of English might not be good enough to be able to produce expected level of US academic writing.

Vocabulary. ESL students' language knowledge and skills that TAs firstly referred to was vocabulary. TAs stated that ESL students' vocabularies tended to be limited to social ones because of very few opportunities to be exposed to academic vocabulary back home. Julia said, "[They] know how to produce and talk in social language, but once they have to… write an academic paper, their feedback a lot of time is that, 'You need to use academic words.' But a lot of time, the students don't know what those academic words are." Ian, on the other hand, referred to the narrow range of academic vocabulary knowledge that ESL students brought into ESL writing courses. Ian said, "I believe that for majority of the international students, vocabulary is the biggest weakness. So, I mean they have very basic [vocabulary]." Lucy, meanwhile, stated a possible reason for their limitation of academic vocabulary knowledge. Lucy said, "Unless they are coming from really rigorous schooling in English, vocabulary is really hard. They wouldn't have had a lot of exposure to academic vocabulary [back home]."

Structure. TAs also talked about ESL students' language knowledge and skills regarding sentence structure. TAs pointed out that, although ESL students brought basic knowledge and skills of English grammar, their lack of the knowledge of US writing expectations might inhibit them from utilizing their language knowledge and skills in the expected way in the US university. Eva referred to ESL students' lack of knowledge about paragraph structure of US academic writing. Eva stated that "[because] they have basic skills [of structure] in English, they can produce some basic sentences. [But]…they don't know how to construct paragraphs…in [which] they need one topic sentence and detail sentences and conclusion." At the same time, Ian referred to their lack of knowledge about essay structure of US academic writing. Ian explained, "They do not know…what a thesis statement is and how important it is in America, or the

development of an essay…They know how to write, like grammar wise or syntax wise, but they don't know the structure of an academic paper."

Organization. TAs pointed out that, because every culture had some idea of organization—how people are expected to use language for writing in the culture—every ESL student brought their style of organization into ESL writing courses. However, at the same time TAs pointed out that the style of organization students brought might almost always have to be updated for the US academic audience. Dan said, "They also bring some of their own writing tradition, …the way that arguments are formed…They bring that into their writing. And some may need to be altered for academic writing [in the US]." Ian also said, "My students, some of them bring [ability to write back home] with them…But…usually…I regard this ability as an obstacle for their writing in America."

We are Chinese. We write with balance. Paul said, "I think everybody brings their own writing tradition, but not necessarily those skills that we need in American academics." Paul started to tell a story with his Chinese student: "I have one student who is a Chinese student and we were trying to write a persuasive paper. And I kept telling him, 'You need to persuade me, you need to argue to me, you need to convince me of something.' [But he said,] 'No, but we are Chinese, we write with balance.'" Paul continued, "So, he has that skill and he knows how to write in that Chinese style, balance. But in the US, if you're writing a persuasion paper, I don't care about balance. I care about you convincing me of something." Paul seemed to respect ESL students' skills to write for their first language audience. However, at the same time he seemed to perceive that the writing skills they brought and the stance of defending their own writing traditions can prevent them from communicating with the US audience.

Difficulties ESL students face. TAs' beliefs/knowledge regarding ESL students was not only about knowledge and skills of language (use) that they brought into ESL writing courses. TAs also described difficulties that ESL students would face when trying to produce US academic writing.

Forming an opinion. TAs pointed out that ESL students were having a really hard time forming their own opinions about something. Alice described what her students would do when she asked for their opinions. Alice said, "[They] just start to explain back to the teachers sort of what the teacher said, or maybe what a source said rather than having their own opinion on something." Although Alice showed some understanding of students' difficulties for having an opinion, by saying that "that's a new thing for many students," she emphasized that, "If they have to write a paper in an American class…there is an expectation that [you'll have an opinion], you make a statement, and you'll defend it." Paul referred to ESL students who came from countries where they simply copied and pasted other's knowledge when writing their academic papers, and said, "It's going to be challenging for them to take idea A and transition to idea B and then come to my conclusion C, and make that $1 + 1 = 2$, instead of you know, 1, 1, 1, 1."

Demonstrating thoughts in English. Another ESL students' struggle that TAs described in the interviews was their difficulties in demonstrating their thoughts on their papers in English. Sara pointed out the gap between ESL students' knowledge and thoughts in their first language and their English proficiency. Sara explained, "When I discussed [with my students] about the topic…I can see [they] know what to say about [the topic] and [they] know about the topic…But then, they have a hard time translating…the knowledge they have inside of their head into writing [in English]," and she added, "They [just] don't know how to express that in English." John also referred to the gap between their first language and English skills: "The struggle is not

that they don't know how to write…The problem is the cognitive part in connecting their L2 and L1 in the production that they want to put on the paper." TAs stated that, while ESL students' thinking skills in their first language had been mature because they had already done a lot of schoolwork back home, they had not yet developed enough English vocabulary and sentence structures that would help them fully express their knowledge and thoughts in their papers.

They have good thoughts in their first language. Lucy stated that ESL students were smart enough in their first language and that their struggle with demonstrating their thoughts and research on their paper in English was attributed to their lack of English language, such as vocabulary and sentence structure. Lucy said, "[ESL Students] know a lot in [their first] language…They have good thoughts [in their first language]…They just don't have the right words maybe yet to describe it in the second language." Then, Lucy sheared her experience when having her students write papers about a social justice issue from their home country. Lucy said, "[They] picked issues that they were passionate about, and they had a lot of ideas and a lot of things they wanted to talk about in that…Even if they weren't expressed very well…I could tell that they had thought a lot about it and done the research." Lucy stated that, in order to help students to translate their ideas more clearly into their writing in English, "giving them the language, like the sentence structure and the vocabulary to say the thoughts that they already have is really important."

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about the Gap between the Demands and the Needs

Gap of quality. TAs pointed out that qualitative gaps between the demands of ESL writing courses and the needs and characteristics of ESL students were so huge. For example, TAs stated that understanding concepts of US academic writing must be a hard task for ESL

students because US writing concepts were qualitatively (culturally) different from the concepts that they were used to back home.

Hard to understand new concepts. John stated that plagiarism would be one of the most challenging concepts for ESL students to understand, and the process of understanding this "very rigid and very tricky" idea can be a harsh experience for ESL students. John explained that, because meaning of plagiarism were different in different cultures, ESL students did not really know how this concept would apply here in the US. John said, "[ESL students] don't know anything about plagiarism [in the US]…It's not their fault…If the student is 18, 19 years old, and only thing he's done is live in his country…never been outside…Then the first semester, you say, 'Oh no, That's plagiarism.'" John continued, "[It is like] you're telling the student [who does not know meaning of plagiarism here], you're doing a big problem, a big offense, and you might get in trouble." John lastly stated that, "[In US universities], there seemed to be no middle ground" between ESL students and "teachers of English that are extremely strict about plagiarism."

I thought it was a relatively simple concept. Alice explained that how difficult it was to have ESL students understand what a thesis was. Alice said, "I thought that [students] just understood [what a thesis is] because I just understood. I thought it was a relatively simple concept…Then as I was teaching them thesis, I found 'Oh my goodness, this is hard. This is much more difficult than I thought it would be." Then, Alice shared her experience in her first semester teaching academic writing: "I thought I had done everything I could to teach them about thesis well. And I get their thesis and they weren't correct. They weren't what I was looking for." Alice stated that to have a thesis might be one of the hardest concepts to understand "if you're not from the US," and she also stated that there was a huge gap between understanding

US academic writing culture, which was part of the demands of ESL writing courses, and ESL students' existing knowledge of it. Alice said, I'm from the US and I grew up in this [writing] culture and expectation…[but] they just jump into this new way of doing writing…[So], students need a lot of help [to learn this different writing culture]."

Hard to change habits of writing. As described above, it is obvious that understanding new concepts of writing in the different culture is a huge task for ESL students. In addition, TAs pointed out that, even if students understood new concepts to some extent, changing their own writing habits according to the new concepts was also a huge task for ESL students. Sara said that she had a hard time helping students understand the need of citing sources, while, she showed her understanding of students' struggles with leaning the citation by confessing her own experience. Sara said, "[Citing correctly] was…hard for me [as well] because I also grew up in a culture where it was not a big deal of borrowing someone else's work without giving the credit to the author." She referred to the difficulty of putting ideas in one's head into action, and said, "[So], even [students] know reasons [for citation]…it's not easy for them to change their writing habit."

But his paper has never changed. When talking about difficulty for ESL students to fill a cultural gap of writing, Paul shared a story with the same Chinese student above, who stuck to writing tradition back home—balance. Paul explained that he told his Chinese student about how to write American persuasive papers many times throughout the semester, but the Chinese student defended the way of writing that he brought. Paul said, "We talked about that and I think he understood that, but his paper has never changed. He kept writing with that balance all the time." Then, Paul explained his analysis of the student's defending the "balance." Paul said, "I don't think he wanted to reject the [US writing] culture. I think…he has always written with that

balance. And maybe, I think he was pretty new to America, maybe this is the first time somebody said to him, 'No balance. Choose one and do it.'" Paul continued, "I think…maybe it was the first time he tried persuasion and he's not just good at it yet. I think he just needed practice." Paul emphasized that ESL students' adherence to their own writing tradition was not a rejection of US academic writing culture, but rather difficulty to change the writing habits that they had been familiar with.

Gap of quantity. TAs mentioned quantitative gaps between the demands of ESL writing courses and the needs and characteristics of ESL students as well, and they pointed out that quantitative gap was also huge. For example, John referred to the difficulty for ESL students to develop both their English skills and US academic writing skills at the same time. John said, "[English is] a second language [for them], and top of that, we're asking them to understand another skill (US academic skill) other than learning a second language…now we're asking to do the double duty to an ESL student."

There's a lot to be done. Lucy said ESL writing courses might place too much demand on ESL students. Lucy stated, "[American students have] been trained, 'This is how you write a paper' for our whole lives. And we're asking our students to know all these things after 4 months…It's just a lot of little nitpicking things that are just require a lot of practice." She pointed out that students might feel a lot of pressure under too much expectation. Dan referred to academic vocabulary building, which ESL students should tackle in order to better understand academic sources and produce more appropriate academic papers in US universities. Dan said, "AWL (Academic Word List) feels very intimidating…because it's so many words." He explained that he gave his students a list of words to learn, gave a cellphone quiz app as well,

and quizzed them on the words every other week because he felt "it's challenging to be hands-off." Dan repeated, "It (working on that so many words) is very challenging."

Relation between Categories (2)

So far, four categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge were described: purpose of the courses, what to teach/learn, ESL students, and the gap between the demands and the needs. As stated before, TAs' beliefs/knowledge of purpose of the courses and beliefs/knowledge of what to teach/learn related well with each other. TAs used their own beliefs/knowledge of course goals and importance of achieving the goals as the guideline in deciding what should be taught and learned in ESL writing courses. In addition to this connection, from all descriptions of TAs in the four categories so far, the second "connected well" relation between categories was found. This relation can be characterized by a balance between TAs' beliefs/knowledge of what to teach/learn and beliefs/knowledge of ESL students in their influence on beliefs/knowledge of the gap between the demands and the needs.

On one hand, as described in the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge of what to teach/learn, TAs were aware that both US academic writing culture and academic English should be taught/learned in ESL writing courses. On the other hand, as described in the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge of ESL students, TAs were also aware that what vocabulary, grammar skills, and style of organization ESL students brought and what difficulties they would face when producing academic work according to US expectations. Sequentially, both of these two categories of beliefs/knowledge served to make TAs aware that the huge gap was existing between expectations of ESL writing courses and ESL students' knowledge, skills and difficulties.

In addition, as described in the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge of the gap between the demands and the needs, TAs were aware that, although ESL writing courses expected ESL students to understand US writing expectations and to be able to produce the US academic writing, it was hard for students to understand culturally different concepts and change their habits of writing because of the knowledge and skills that they had ideologically acquired back home. TAs were also aware that, although ESL writing courses required ESL students to develop academic English skills to meet professors' expectations for language-wise products, it was a huge burden for students to develop both US academic writing skills and academic English skills at the same time because there were a lot to be done, such as tackling AWL. In other words, TAs were aware of and describing the existing gap between the demands of the courses and the needs of ESL students from the perspective of both a cultural informant who would fill the cultural gaps, and a language teacher who would fill the gaps of the language skills.

In short, both TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn, which was directly affected by their beliefs/knowledge about purpose of the courses, and TAs' beliefs/knowledge about ESL students reasonably impacted on their beliefs/knowledge of the gap between the demands and the needs. It was obvious that the four categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge (purpose of the courses, what to teach/learn, ESL students, and the gap between the demands and the needs) were connected well with each other, and thus they were all harmonized as a whole.

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about How to Teach/Learn 1: Step by Step

Go through the whole writing process step by step. TAs pointed out that ESL students should learn the whole process of US academic writing in ESL writing courses because they were expected to produce academic papers for their other courses independently once they were out of the writing courses. More importantly, TAs emphasized that, in order to help them fill this

huge gap—understanding culturally different writing system—teaching/learning of the whole writing process should be step-by-step. For example, Eva said, "[ESL students] need to experience the whole process [of producing an academic paper]," and also said, "They need to know each step of writing—from choosing the topic to revising their drafts." Ian explained that an advantage of step-by-step teaching/learning was that it can provide students as much as they can manage at a time. Ian said, "The final paper should be divided into pieces, into digestible pieces" so that students can handle each step and be moving toward the final product at the end. Dan referred to the importance for students to be aware of each step of the academic writing process. Dan said, "You show them step by step how to build everything together…to build a paper…So it's buttoning things up…[Then] they can do it on their own later.

  Single project. TAs stated that, in order to provide students with step-by-step learning experiences regarding the academic writing process, ESL writing courses should focus on single writing project in one semester. John stated that a semester-long project would provide students with opportunities to focus on practicing each step and know how an academic work should be constructed. John said, "I would use like a project that is broken down on a weekly basis or little steps that are achievable steps, that build a bigger project [so that I show] to students what steps are needed in order to write an academic paper." Paul referred to time constraint of the course, and said, "I don't think we really have enough time. If you are doing a few larger academic papers throughout the semester…there's [no] enough time for [having students experience each step fully]." He explained that learning different steps of academic writing, such as choosing good sources and citing the sources correctly, takes time. Paul said, "So, I would rather just slowly move towards the final draft of the paper instead of…producing a bunch of [papers]…Yeah, quality over quantity."

Show the end product first. TAs explained that another condition for the success of step-by-step teaching/learning of academic writing process was showing students the end product at the beginning. For example, Alice said, "One of the important things [for a step-by-step process] is to show them where [we] want [them] to be, what are the goals...So, at the beginning of the semester, I gave them a paper of a previous student and had them read it." Ian referred to the need for students to have a clear picture of their goals. Ian said, "At the beginning, I say, 'By the end of the semester, you will be able to do this, this and that. And…all the activities…help you step-by-step acquire knowledge that is necessary for you…to write this final research paper.'" Ian explained that once students had a clear goal that they would achieve in the end, they can make a connection between each activity and the end product, and therefore can be motivated to work on a series of activities.

From simple to complex, and from small to large. As described above, TAs emphasized that the academic writing process should be taught/learned step by step so that students can be aware of each step of the culturally different writing system and can digest the steps. Then, TAs applied the idea of step-by-step teaching/learning of the writing process to classroom activities and writing assignments; TAs explained that the activities and assignments should move in a phased manner, from simple to complex ones and smaller to larger ones. For example, Alice said, "[We] start with a paragraph…After paragraph, we move on to a 5-paragraph essay…[which includes] introduction and body paragraphs and conclusion…[Then] we move on…to work on a research paper…[in which students need to] compile a lot of things together." Lucy referred to the need for scaffolding students' learning. Lucy explained, "If you don't know how to write a clear one paragraph…it's very difficult to write a whole paper. [Instead], if they know how to write one good individual paragraph, they can write ten paragraph

that are related, and they have their paper." Lucy said that she always wanted to give her students

"manageable chunks" of work in order to move students progressively toward stronger

understanding and greater independence in academic writing.

It takes some of the burden off. Lucy stated that, before moving to the final seven-page

research paper, she designed a two- or three-page writing assignment that required her students

more simple and smaller tasks. Lucy started to explain, I did the research for them…[and] gave

them two sources. I said, 'Use these two sources to write a paper on this topic and show me that

you can combine and use quotes and paraphrase…and citations." Lucy said that she "[took]

some of the burden off of them to go find the sources" and had students focus on practicing

incorporating the sources in their writing. Lucy continued, "Because the final paper is going to

be a social justice issue in their own country, I gave them articles on [a social justice issue from a

country that none of them are from]…And the articles are all one or two pages long…so they

would be easier to [comprehend]." In short, her students, before moving to their own seven-page

research paper, practiced putting sources into their writing by saving their time to find sources,

and they also deepened understanding of the topic by reading comprehensible articles. Lucy

stated, "[ESL students] are coming in…[and] asked to write research papers, but then what

they're having to read, the research, to write the research paper, is far above their level…I don't

want to make [a task] too easy, but I also don't want to ask them an impossible task."

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about How to Teach/Learn 2: Feedback

Should be specific and individual. The first method necessary for teaching/learning

US academic writing was step-by-step. Another method that turned out to be important in the

interviews was teacher's feedback to students. In particular, TAs emphasized that, in order to fill

the gaps between the demands of the courses and the needs of ESL students, teacher's feedback to students should be specific and individual.

Specific feedback. Julia pointed out the importance of providing students with specific feedback instead of general feedback. She explained that general feedback would not only explain anything to students, but would not provide them any tools to work on their weakness. Julia said, "If you just give general [feedback] like, '[Here's the final grade] and it could be better,' then students would say, 'What could be better? What could I improve?'…But when you give detailed feedback for the students, they can really work on those issues." Paul said, "I don't like to write, 'Good job!'…or 'Needs improvement' on a paper. I want [students] to be 'Oh, this is good because A, B, C.' 'Maybe you can work on blah, blah, blah'…I always want the feedback to be meaningful and something they can use actually in their paper." He emphasized that feedback to ESL students should be specific enough to enable students to move forward. In addition, Paul explained that specific feedback sometimes could be questions that would help students to be aware of their mistakes and would guide them to the right path. Paul explained, "If they plagiarized a bunch in their first paper, 'Well, No, this is not what we need…Who are these people? What are they saying? What can you use from them to support your own idea?' I think those are thinking process that they need to experience with."

Individual feedback. TAs stated that, while specific feedback would provide students with opportunities to improve their academic writing skills, individual feedback would make those opportunities more effective and enhance students' learning. Sara referred to the importance for teachers to more focus on individual ESL student's characteristics and needs. Sara said, "The most important thing in ESL writing class [is that students] get individual feedback, [which] differentiates the curriculum for each of them, because students come from

different cultures and…[some] know a lot about writing and [others don't]." John referred to the need for taking account of individual difference in the level of learning and understanding, saying that, "Maybe for you, it will take two months to know something. Maybe for another person, it will take two years." Then, John emphasized that, "If we don't take attention to the individual, [such as where they're stuck] and what they need in order to progress, then we're missing the point."

Providing practice opportunities. TAs explained that one of the important purposes of feedback in ESL writing courses was to provide students with a lot of practice opportunities, which were essential to develop their academic writing skills. For example, Lucy shared her own experiences of practicing writing with her mother, who was a freelance copy editor. Lucy said, "My mom was always good at just highlighting my mistakes. She never just corrected it for me. She was like, 'Can you go check this out?' And I [thought] learning to correct my own writing was really helpful". She said that having lots of practices with feedback from her mother made her a strong writer. Paul referred to the importance for ESL students to learn US writing expectations through practicing and experiencing them. Paul said, "They need to be introduced to [US writing culture], but they also need practice with doing that…If you give them [feedback and] many opportunities to get them to understand that idea, partially by doing it, so that just really helps them experience with it." Sara also said, "The most important part in ESL writing classes is giving lots of feedback [and] making them have writing experience [with feedback]." She emphasized that feedback was critical to create practice opportunities for students.

I require students to revise the essay. Alice explained that she did not always give her students detailed feedback, and it depended on assignments. Alice said, "There are certain assignments that I'll prioritize given them more feedback, and they are generally assignments

that I'm going to require them to revise." Alice continued, "[For example], I have them write a 5-paragraph essay at the beginning of the year, and they're given detailed feedback. But then I require them to revise that essay, so they have to read my comments [and then rewrite and edit their own work]." She said that she wanted to give her students clear tools as to how to improve their writing when reworking on their work. Alice explained, "I want them to have a clear path…as they're trying to improve with their academic writing…[by showing] them where they need to improve [specifically]." Alice seemed to believe that revising process provided students with opportunities to be aware of what their errors were and to practice about the errors a lot, and that such learning opportunities should be enhanced by teachers' specific, individual feedback.

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about How to Teach/Learn 3: Trial and Error

Recognizing and negotiating differences. TAs stated that, for ESL students, learning and practicing US academic writing in ESL writing courses must be a continuing process of trial and error. TAs emphasized that one of the essential tasks that students had to tackle in this trial and error environment was recognizing and negotiating differences between their own knowledge about academic writing back home and US academic writing expectations. Paul said, "[They] might not like [the way of writing here] as much, but those are set of rules that we play by. [They need to know that] it's not better than your rules, it's not worse than your rules, it's just different." Dan also said, "If…[their] writing tradition…is pretty opposite of the [US] style…[they need to know] that [the US style is not] the correct way, but it's the correct for the situation."

Okay, I need to kind of change the way I do it. John said that the first thing for ESL students to do in ESL writing courses in a trial and error manner was to recognize that differences existed between their own knowledge about writing and expectations in the US. John

continued, "They maybe compare between the two…[and would realize] there's a clear difference, [and US writing] is not the same. So [they] should…be open in learning a new way of academic writing instead of using their prior knowledge and assumptions that they know." John shared his own experience recognizing differences of writing in the US:

> When I started writing in [a freshman composition course], my teacher clearly told me that's not how in America we'd write. So, it was a realization for me that my prior knowledge from another country is not going to help me and I needed to understand how to write [in the US university]. And for me, what helped me is trying to assimilate my prior experience to American experience, and then see that it's not going to match…I kind of realized, "Okay…I need to kind of change the way I do it."

He explained that the freshman composition course helped him recognize the differences, negotiate his prior knowledge about academic writing, and learn a new way of writing in the US

I don't want to hurt anyone by assuming your culture is wrong. Julia said that we needed to help ESL students achieve "a good balance" between their prior knowledge and US academic expectations because ESL writing courses were "not a monolingual situation." She stated that our students came from different parts of the world and brought different cultural expectations that might conflict with the US cultural expectations. Julia said, "I have a certain group of students that cheating isn't wrong in their culture…For them, it's just helping each other out…[But] how can I address [this cultural difference] by being culturally sensitive to them, by helping them understand that it's not [accepted] here?" Julia continued, "I don't want to offend or hurt anyone by just assuming your culture is wrong…[Just there is] the expectations we have to follow [here]." She explained that she wanted to help her students to know their

culture was not wrong but different than US academic expectations and to recognize and work out the differences in the process of trial and error.

Should be a safe space. TAs emphasized that, because ESL students develop their academic writing skills through trial and error, ESL writing courses should be a safe place where students can try and practice new knowledge and skills without fear of failure, and can learn from their own errors without any shame.

Not be afraid of a few grammar errors or using the wrong word. Lucy described the creative writing class she took in college and explained how safe the class was for students to express themselves. Lucy said, "[My professor] created the culture in the class where we would discuss things…and I didn't feel there was one right answer that she was looking for… Everybody's voice was respected and [we] weren't ashamed for the wrong answer." She pointed out that such a safe environment should be applied to ESL writing courses. Lucy said, "That's what I want my class to be. It's a safe place for students…to write [their thoughts freely] and not be afraid of a few grammar errors or using the wrong word, but they can still fill the space to express their ideas." She emphasized that ESL writing courses should be a space where students "feel confident expressing their own thoughts and their own critical thinking and their own opinion" in their own words. Lucy said, "I would rather see a paper loaded with grammar errors and really hard to read, that was their own work than like a plagiarized work that is perfect."

I'll allow them another chance instead of failing them. Dan shared his experience with his English teacher in high school where he misunderstood a writing assignment "very badly." Dan said, "My teacher, instead of failing me, had me meet with her after class and go through the writing prompt and what I had written…and nothing matched the prompt. So, she gave me time to brainstorm and had me resubmit the paper later." Dan continued, "The teachers said, 'Okay,

we view this as your second rough draft, [not the final one]. Take everything I wrote as comments for what to improve and change it and resubmit the paper.'…She kind of taught me that [writing is] a process." In short, his English teachers provided him with not only a chance to revise his paper but also an opportunity to learn what revising process was about and how important it was to improve written products. Dan said, "[This experience] really occurred to me that writing is like writing, and then revising, and then writing and then revising, just that sort of cycle." It was obvious that if his teachers just failed him because of the incompleteness of the paper, Dan would miss a chance of learning and practicing of the writing process. Dan said, "If [my students' work] is clearly misunderstood thing, I'll allow them another chance to write it again based on the comments that I've given them…[I'll give them] more revising opportunities…Year, you learn by doing things, experiential."

Relation between Categories (3)

In the first four sections, four categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge were described: purpose of the courses, what to teach/learn, ESL students, and the gap between the demands and the needs. As stated before, these four categories were connected well with each other, and they were harmonized well as a whole. Both TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn (that was directly impacted by their beliefs/knowledge about purpose of the courses) and their beliefs/knowledge about ESL students had a reasonable influence together on their beliefs/knowledge about the gap between the demands and the needs.

In the following three sections, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn in ESL writing courses was described, which included three categories of the beliefs/knowledge: step-by-step, feedback, and trial and error. Through the descriptions of the seven categories of TAs beliefs/knowledge, another "connected well" relation between categories was found. The relation

can be characterized by the strong influence of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about the gap between the demands and the needs on their beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn (step-by-step, feedback, and trial and error).

In the section of beliefs/knowledge of the gap between the demands and the needs, TAs described ESL students' difficulties to understand concepts of US academic writing and to change their writing habits due to the cultural difference and the knowledge and skills of language and writing that they had ideologically acquired back home. TAs also described a huge learning burden for ESL students to develop their academic writing skills and academic English skills at the same time. All of their perceptions about the gap served to make them consider how US academic writing culture and academic English skills should be taught and learned in ESL writing courses.

In the sections of TAs' beliefs/knowledge of how to teach/learn, TAs emphasized that the whole academic writing process should be taught/learned in a step-by-step manner so that ESL students can understand and digest this culturally different writing system. TAs pointed out that teachers' feedback to ESL students should be specific and individual in order to provide a lot of opportunities for students to practice and experience the new writing culture. TAs also pointed out that ESL writing courses should be a safe place because ESL students needed to recognize and negotiate cultural differences through the process of trial and error and to try and practice newly learned knowledge and skills without fear of failure. It was clear that TAs' perceptions of how to teach/learn (step-by-step, feedback, and trial and error) were fairly affected by their beliefs/knowledge about the gap—how huge the gap between the demands of ESL writing courses and the needs of ESL students were and how hard for ESL students to fill the gap and meet the expectations of the writing courses—and thus, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about how to

teach/learn was the results of their consideration of how to help ESL students to fill the huge gap and achieve the course goals.

In short, the seven categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge described so far were connected well with each other, and their relations were reasonable and fair. Both TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn (that was directly influenced by their beliefs/knowledge about purpose of the courses) and their beliefs/knowledge about ESL students reasonably affected on their perceptions about the gap between the demands and the needs. Then, their beliefs/knowledge about the gap fairly impacted their perceptions about how to teach/learn (step by step, feedback, and trial and error). TAs' seven categories of beliefs/knowledge about teaching and learning academic writing in ESL writing courses were all harmonized as a whole and work together well so far.

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about Issue 1: Plagiarism

Problematic situation. Plagiarism was a major issue for TAs in the interviews. TAs described how problematic the situation was and how hard it was to have ESL students understand plagiarism was a big deal in the US.

They don't understand. Alice shared what was going on regarding plagiarism in her writing class. Alice described, "[I] talked about plagiarism in class, and then [students] turn something in, and they plagiarized. So, we talked about it in my office, and then they plagiarize again…And they [told] me, "Oh I know I wasn't supposed to do that. I just ran out of time, so I plagiarized."" She stated that her students might not understand how big of a deal it was. Paul also shared some stories concerning plagiarism in his class. Paul said, "All semesters I'll say, 'No, you need to cite this.' And I have to believe they understand me, but still at the end of the

semester they're plagiarizing…I don't know if they think they can get away with it, or they don't think it's that important." He confessed that it was a little frustrating and challenging to him.

We don't have tools. While TAs considered this situation—ESL students did not understand that plagiarism was a big deal in US universities—as problematic, TAs considered their lack of effective knowledge—how to effectively teach that plagiarism was a big deal in the US—as also problematic. For example, Dan said, "During the plagiarism, citation section…I explained several times. I explained out loud, give them a handout, and an activity, PowerPoint, pictures, everything I can think of…But they just didn't [work]." John pointed out that TAs did not really have "tools" to teach ESL students what plagiarism was about and why it was important in the US university settings. John said, "We expect ESL students to know what plagiarism [is] by just saying to them, 'Plagiarism is bad…If you do plagiarism, then you can be…removed from the university.'" Sara also pointed out that "it's not like making them understand but just like forcing them to follow the rule." Sara explained that she usually introduced her students some example stories caused by academic dishonesty or possible problems that might occur if you do not follow the US academic rules. Sara said, "[Because] I heard that [American students] go through the problem at least once in high school or at the freshman year in college, [and] that's how they understand the importance." However, she also confessed that she had been feeling "I kind of threaten them."

I'm not going to fail them. After telling about his students who plagiarized, Paul said, "How do I make [them] understand this can be a big deal?" Paul continued, "Maybe what I need to do is fail them on a paper and they'll understand this is a big deal, and this can happen in other classes…[But] if somebody is plagiarizing in my class, I'm not going to fail them…[because] I don't feel like that would be appropriate to do." He explained that he would give them notes and

give them a bad grade, but he would not fail them for that. Paul said, "Maybe they get the idea of that, 'Oh, he's not going to fail me for it.' But I hope that's not what they believe but that's part of it too. Maybe…it's where they get kind of a wrong impression about how serious it can be." Paul had been exploring a way to have students understand plagiarism can be a big deal other than to use force—to fail them—but he had not known an effective and appropriate way.

Why ESL students plagiarize. TAs seemed to be trying to make sense why ESL students continued to plagiarize despite having repeatedly received instructions, by analyzing students' cultural backgrounds and current situations. TAs' perceptions ranged from sympathetic ones attributed to students' cultural difference, to negative ones attributed to their motivation, but TAs seemed to be not exactly sure why students continued to plagiarize.

Cultural difference. Alice referred to a short period of time to give students to understand this culturally different concept. Alice explained, "[We] just [have introduced] students to this one semester rather than a whole life building that. All of high school, we're talking about plagiarism. All of my college career, we talked about plagiarism." Julia pointed out that students might accidentally plagiarize based on the idea of universality. Julia said, "In their country, maybe plagiarism isn't a big deal, or it is looked at differently. So, when they come to the US, they are transferring those [knowledge] from their first language and think this is okay, but they're actually committing plagiarism." Lucy, referred to some other cultures, where the goal of writing was producing a perfect product in appearance. Lucy said, "When I taught in [another country]…[students] wanted their work to be perfect. It didn't matter if somebody else has done it…So, I caught them cheating all the time."

Motivation. Another reason behind ESL students' plagiarism that TAs mentioned in the interviews was students' motivation. Paul pointed out that students who plagiarized might not be

so motivated to become familiar with US writing culture. Paul explained, "Maybe they have [such an] idea like, "Well, yeah, I'm in the US right now but then I'm going home. So, it's not that important if I learn this. I need to do it for a few years…But I'm going home and I'm going to write the way I'm used to." John, referred to students' general motivation, and said, "There are some students who want to cheat…[They're plagiarizing] on purpose, [they do] not want to put the time on and just wants to have an easy life."

I don't know, I don't know. Lucy mentioned her two students who plagiarized last semester. She explained that she had her students turn in multiple drafts before the final paper, and their drafts were not plagiarized until then. Lucy said, "When I got the final paper, it was totally different—completely plagiarized. I was very confused. I didn't know why that happened." Then, she started to tell about possible reasons why they plagiarized. As to one student, Lucy said, "I don't know…but I wondered if it was an issue of time constraint, like he felt like he didn't have enough time to do it." Lucy continued, "And then the other student…I don't know…but I think he plagiarized because there was a lot of life things happening. He was busy, [he worked a lot], he got sick a lot, he just couldn't manage school and all of his other responsibilities." She concluded that students might plagiarize when they were overwhelmed with many courses and had pressures of life things beside school "because that seems like an easy out." Then, however, she kept thinking about other possible reasons for that. Lucy said, "I don't know. I think part of it could be they don't understand the weight of it…even if I mentioned it multiple times…Or they think I won't find out. I don't know. I don't know…[Or] maybe they didn't understand incorporating sources." Lucy came up with several possible reasons, but she seemed to have been feeling wired and confused about the problematic situations and not make sense at all.

TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about Issue 2: Language Teaching/Learning

US writing culture is more important. In addition to plagiarism, another issue in ESL writing courses that was emerged in the interviews was how language teaching/learning should be dealt with in the writing courses. TAs first of all emphasized that there were a lot of things to cover in one semester and that there was never enough time to cover them. Then, TAs stated that, although they were aware of the need for ESL students to develop their academic language skills to produce acceptable academic papers in US universities, ESL writing courses should focus on teaching/learning US academic writing expectations under limited time constraint. In other words, they seemed to believe that teaching/learning US academic writing culture was more important in ESL writing courses than language teaching/learning. For example, Sara said, "We have limited time but still even when there's time constraint, there are so many things to [cover]…Yeah, I think…introduction to the US writing custom is more important and takes a bigger role in [ESL writing] class than just language learning."

Need for rest of their university classes. Paul pointed out that it was essential in US universities for students to produce a written product that can communicate with their audience—mainly their professors. Paul said, "I focused on kind of a broader skill [such as organizations]…[so that students] are going to be able to write a paper that the teachers understand…and to me that's more important than if they have perfect grammar…or good vocabulary in their paper." Alice also referred to more importance for ESL students to know US expectations in order to write papers in the rest of their classes here. Alice said, "Maybe they need more help with grammar or vocabulary, but…I'm gonna [help them] state an opinion, a thesis, and…explain why. Cause that's a skill that's really essential for them…if we can help them do that, it will take them a long way, I think."

You really have to be choosy on what you would decide to include. While Lucy admitted that ESL students needed to develop their academic language skills to produce acceptable papers in US universities, she emphasized that she would place priority on teaching/learning of the US writing expectations in her class. Lucy said, "You' re only guaranteed one semester with the students and you really have to be choosy on what you would decide to include in that semester." Lucy continued, "And so, I think some grammar and vocabulary should be included in the courses, but the biggest things that I would focus on are other pieces…[such as] expectations." She explained the reason for this was that [US expectations] are necessary for the rest of their classes." Lucy said, "If I was teaching writing ESL in a different context, I would maybe have different goals. But when I think of my students here, I think of what do they need to be successful in other classes." Lucy seemed to give up including grammar and vocabulary activities in her writing class due to the time constraint of the course, while, her descriptions sounded that she seemed to believe that ESL writing courses should place a strong emphasis on teaching and learning the US writing expectations for students' success over language learning.

Language learning takes time. As described above, TAs stated that teaching/learning US academic writing expectations should be emphasized in ESL writing courses because knowing the expectations would more help ESL students produce acceptable papers in US universities rather than knowing grammar and vocabulary for academic prose. However, at the same time, TAs mentioned the difficulty of helping ESL students develop their language skills in one semester-long ESL writing courses because of the nature of language learning—language learning takes time.

Outside ESL writing courses. John stated that ESL students need to develop their language skills outside of class time by themselves because "language learning is a long

process." John said, "[Language learning] is not just something you come one semester, and say, 'Okay, I know English'… That's not possible because that's language. But what is possible is to give the shortcut to the student and say, 'you're going to have to work it by yourself." Paul stated (or might be hoping) that ESL students would be able to gradually develop their language skills later in other classes. Paul said, "Their [professor] would notice that maybe their vocabulary is not very high or that maybe they have some grammar mistakes here and there...[but their] grammar will grow, [their] vocabulary will grow in different classes."

Hard to know how to incorporate language learning in a class for that reason. Although Lucy explained the need to emphasize US writing expectations over language teaching/learning in ESL writing courses as above, at the same time she pointed out the difficulty for ESL students to develop academic vocabulary outside the classroom socially and implicitly. Lucy said, "Because they get limited exposure to it. They can't just watch a movie and hear academic vocabulary. They're not going to walk down the hall and hear people speaking in academic vocabulary." Also, she pointed out the need for ESL students to learn academic vocabulary explicitly and intensively to develop them. Lucy said, "They have to actually intentionally read hard things or study word lists, or everything they read is just gonna be every other word they're looking it up in the dictionary." Then, Lucy described her mixed feeling about including language teaching/learning in ESL writing courses: "I think, yeah, it does take a lot of time to learn [vocabulary] and it's hard to know how to incorporate them in a class for that reason…how much time in class time do I spend on those things? Or do I get students that as homework to do on their own?" Lucy seemed to find herself faced with a dilemma of language teaching/learning in ESL writing courses and not to know how to solve the dilemma.

Relation between Categories (4)

  First seven categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge. In this chapter, I described TAs'

beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses according

to the nine categories that were presented in the comprehensive and multifaceted model (see

Figure 1). By investigating each of the nine categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge and how nine

categories were related to each other, I found that the first seven categories of the

beliefs/knowledge were connected well with each other and worked together, and three specific

"connected well" relations were found within them.

  In the first relation between the categories, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about purpose of the

courses directly affected their perceptions of what to learn/teach. This relation showed that TAs

used their own beliefs/knowledge about course goals and the importance of achieving the goals

in deciding what should be taught and learned in ESL writing courses.

  In the second relation, there was a balance between TAs' beliefs/knowledge of what to

teach/learn and beliefs/knowledge of ESL students in influencing their perceptions of the gap

between the demands and the needs. This relation showed that both TAs' beliefs/knowledge

about what should be taught/learned in ESL writing courses and their beliefs/knowledge about

ESL students' knowledge, skills, and difficulties served together to make TAs aware that the

huge gap was existing between the demands of ESL writing courses and the needs of ESL

students.

  In the third relation, TAs' beliefs/knowledge of the gap between the demands and the

needs fairly influenced their beliefs/knowledge of how to teach/learn, which contained three

specific categories: step by step, feedback, and trial and error. This relation showed that TAs'

beliefs/knowledge of the gap—how huge the gap was and how hard for ESL students to fill the

gap—served to make TAs consider how US academic writing culture and academic English skills should be taught/learned in ESL writing courses in order to help students to fill the gap and achieve the course goals.

As described above, the first seven of the nine categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge were connected well, and thus they were harmonized as a whole and worked together. However, throughout the descriptions of the all nine categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge, I found that the last two categories described in the previous two sections—TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism and beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning—were not harmonized to the other seven categories because descriptions of TAs in the last two categories were (partly) conflicting or inconsistent with some of the seven categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge.

TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism vs how to teach/learn. In the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism, TAs described their lack of knowledge—they did not really have effective tools to teach and have ESL students understand that plagiarism was a big deal in the US. For example, John said, "We expect ESL students to know what plagiarism [is] by just saying to them, 'Plagiarism is bad," and Sara said, "it's not like making them understand but just like forcing them to follow the rule…I kind of threaten them." These descriptions of TAs were inconsistent with their beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn. As stated before, TAs' knowledge of how to teach/learn, which consisted of three specific categories: step by step, feedback, and trial and error, was the results of their careful consideration of how to help ESL students to fill the huge gap between the expectation of ESL writing courses (what to teach/learn) and students' needs (what they do not know/cannot do yet). Nonetheless, TAs stated that, as far as plagiarism was concerned, there was no effective tool to fill the gap. Alice said, "we talked about it in my office, and then they plagiarize again," and Paul said, "All semesters

I'll say, 'No, you need to cite this'…but still at the end of the semester they're plagiarizing." In other words, teachers' feedback to students, which was one of the ways to teach/learn in ESL writing courses that TAs described, did not help students fill the gap of the plagiarism. In addition, providing a safe environment where students would be able to recognize and negotiate cultural differences through trial and errors, which was another way of teaching/learning that TAs described, was also ineffective for plagiarism. Paul said, "If somebody is plagiarizing in my class, I'm not going to fail them…[But] maybe they get the idea of that, 'Oh, he's not going to fail me for it…It's where they get kind of a wrong impression about how serious it can be." In short, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism and beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn were (partly) conflicting and did not respond well to each other.

TAs' beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning vs what to teach/learn. Another "not connected well" relation was found between TAs' beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning and beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn. In the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn, TAs stated that not only US writing culture, but also academic English should be taught/learned in ESL writing courses by referring to US professors' expectations for language-wise products. For example, Lucy said, "because not only there is an expectation of form [of writing], but there also an expectation of what kind of words you'll use [in your papers]." However, in the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning, TAs emphasized that US writing expectations should be focused on over language skills in ESL writing courses. Alice said, "Maybe they need more help with grammar or vocabulary, but…I'm gonna [help them] state an opinion, a thesis, and…explain why," and Lucy said, "I think some grammar and vocabulary should be included in the courses, but the biggest things that I would focus on are other pieces…[such as] expectations." These

descriptions of TAs were inconsistent with their descriptions about what to teach/learn. This conflicting view of TAs, consequently, sealed their perceptions about ESL students' difficulties and impacted their descriptions about how to teach/learn.

In the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about ESL students, TAs described ESL students' difficulties in demonstrating their thoughts on papers in English. Sara said , "I can see [they] know what to say about [the topic] and [they] know about the topic…But then, they have a hard time translating…the knowledge they have inside of their head into writing [in English]" because they "don't know how to express that in English." Lucy also said, "[ESL Students] know a lot in [their first] language…They have good thoughts…They just don't have the right words maybe yet to describe it in the second language"; therefore, "giving them the language, like the sentence structure and the vocabulary to say the thoughts that they already have is really important." It was clear that TAs recognized the need for language teaching/learning in ESL writing courses to help students translate their ideas more clearly into their writing using academic English. However, in the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn, there was almost no attention paid to the language teaching/learning; TAs almost entirely described how to teach/learn US academic writing expectations. In short, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning and beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn were conflicting with each other, and this discrepancy consequently sealed their perceptions of ESL students' difficulties and descriptions of the way of teaching/learning academic English in ESL writing courses.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In the previous chapter, I presented the comprehensive model that described TAs' beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses in a categorized manner (Figure 1), and then I described TAs' beliefs/knowledge according to the nine categories and the relation between them. That is, I offered (descriptive) answers to the research questions: (1) What are TAs' beliefs and knowledge about teaching and learning academic writing in ESL writing courses? and (2) How can TAs' beliefs and knowledge be categorized and the relation between them be shown?

One of the important findings of this study was the mixture of the relation between categories including "well connected" and "not connected well" within the TAs' beliefs/ knowledge. On one hand, the first seven of the nine categories were "well connected" with each other, harmonized as a whole, and thus worked together. On the other hand, however, the last two categories—TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism and beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning—were "not connected well" to the other seven categories and thus did not work together. The descriptions of TAs obviously showed that the issue of plagiarism and language teaching/learning were existing in the ESL writing courses. In other words, TAs cannot deal effectively with these two issues by using their own existing (not well harmonized) beliefs/knowledge system.

Assuming that the comprehensive and multifaceted model developed in this study demonstrates the general structure of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about ESL writing courses, it would be expected that the structure of future TAs' beliefs/knowledge will be mostly the same as the structure of the comprehensive model of this study. Thus, future TAs also would be confused by ESL students' plagiarism, face a dilemma of language teaching/learning, and feel powerless

to deal with these issues in their classrooms. In fact, (future) TAs need alternative practice to better harmonize their beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses.

In addition, the literature that describes the consistency between teachers' beliefs and practice has shown that teachers' instructional practices in the classroom strongly reflect their beliefs and knowledge (Burns, 1992; Johnson, 1992; Kuzborska, 2011; Tan & Lan, 2011). In other words, the ESL writing courses, which reflect TAs' existing (not well harmonized) beliefs/knowledge, might not be able to provide ESL students with environment to tackle a culturally new writing concept—plagiarism—and to develop their academic English skills. In short, the ESL writing program in the university needs alternative practice to better harmonize TAs' beliefs/knowledge in order consequently to develop the ESL writing courses. In this chapter, I discuss possibilities of better harmonizing the last two categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge—beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism and beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning—with the other seven categories, and then I consider the implications of the discussion.

Re-visit TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about Plagiarism

In the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn, TAs describe three specific ways of teaching/learning (step by step, feedback, and trial and error) in order to fill the huge gap between the demands of the writing courses and the needs of ESL students. However, the descriptions in the category of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism show that, as far as plagiarism is concerned, both teachers' feedback to students and trial and error environment do not work. Thus, the relation between these two categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge is (partly) inconsistent.

Plagiarism as a cultural issue. Re-examining TAs' descriptions in the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism, it is obvious that TAs are likely to consider plagiarism in ESL writing courses as a cultural issue, which is caused by cultural difference. In other words, TAs tend to deal with this issue from the perspective of a cultural informant (of US academic writing). For example, Sara explains that she usually tells her students possible problems that might occur if not following the US academic rules because "[American students] go through the problem at least once in high school or at the freshman year in college, [and] that's how they understand the importance." John says. "We (TAs) expect ESL students to know what plagiarism [is] by just saying to them, 'Plagiarism is bad…If you do plagiarism, then you can be…removed from the university.'" These descriptions show that TAs focus on the cultural aspect and value of the plagiarism in the US and teach students what plagiarism means in US university as an informant of US academic writing culture.

Also, TAs' analysis of students' plagiarizing—why they continue to plagiarize despite having repeatedly received instructions—is mostly from the viewpoint of the cultural difference. For example, Lucy states, "When I taught in [another country]…[students] wanted their work to be perfect. It didn't matter if somebody else has done it…So, I caught them cheating all the time." Paul comments, "Maybe they have [such an] idea like, "Well, yeah, I'm in the US right now but then I'm going home. So, it's not that important if I learn this." These descriptions obviously show that TAs examine ESL students' backgrounds and situations from the aspect of cultural difference (as a cultural informant). However, at the same, the descriptions infer that ESL students' culturally and ideologically acquired notions and habits are so powerful that TAs cannot intervene this issue effectively. In short, TAs feel the limitation of their role as a cultural informant and powerless in the issue of plagiarism.

Plagiarism as a language skills issue. Re-examining TAs' descriptions in the other seven categories of the beliefs/knowledge, however, I found that TAs describe ESL students' language skills, but infer the issue of plagiarism in ESL writing courses at the same time, by framing their role as a language teacher (of academic English). For example, Alice explains that some of her students do not understand the source because the vocabulary is too difficult for them. Alice says, "There's usually a pretty significant need to work hard [on academic vocabulary so that they can] understand a source [and] integrate that source." Lucy explains that paraphrasing is a cultural concept of US academic writing but "partly language ability." Lucy states, "It requires a lot of vocabulary… to know what words you can change and what words you can't change and how you can reorder the sentence." These descriptions are categorized into the subcategory, "Academic English skills," within TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn, and it is obvious that TAs describe the correlation between academic vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension and paraphrasing from the perspective of a language teacher. However, these comments infer that if students cannot comprehend sources or cannot reproduce (or paraphrase) sources due to their lack of academic vocabulary knowledge, they might end up putting authors' words directly on their paper and might (reluctantly) plagiarize.

Also, Lucy comments, "[ESL students] are coming in…[and] asked to write research papers, but then what they're having to read, the research, to write the research paper, is far above their level." Therefore, when she designed a writing assignment that required her students to incorporate sources in their writing, two articles she chose for the assignment were "one or two pages long…so they would be easier to [comprehend]." This description is categorized into the subcategory, "From simple to complex, and from small to large," within TAs' beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn, and it is clear that Lucy describes the gap between

the tasks and ESL students' academic language skills by framing her role as a language teacher (of academic English). However, this comment infers that part of the reason ESL students end up plagiarizing is because of the tasks "far above their level," such as reading and comprehending a long academic article with tons of unfamiliar academic vocabulary. In short, even though TAs do not exactly describe the issue of plagiarism from the aspect of ESL students' language skills, TAs seem to perceive that students' limited academic English skills can lead to some (not all) types of plagiarism. In other words, more or less, TAs are aware that they can partly deal with plagiarism in ESL writing courses as a language teacher as well.

Implication of the discussion (1). As discussed above, since TAs are likely to consider plagiarism in ESL writing courses as a cultural issue caused by cultural difference, they tend to deal with this problematic situation as a cultural informant (of US academic writing). At the same time, due to cultural and ideological power, they feel the limitation of their role as a cultural informant and powerless in this issue. Whereas, TAs more or less seem to be aware that they can partly help ESL students fill the gap of this cultural concept of US academic writing as a language teacher as well because part of the reason students end up plagiarizing may be because of their limited academic English skills. Therefore, what if TAs positively consider ESL students' plagiarizing as a language skills issue and help students as a language teacher as well?

If TAs more focus on the aspect of academic language skills when considering ESL students' plagiarizing, TAs' question then might change from "How do I make [them] understand this can be a big deal [in US universities]?" (Paul) to "What level of reading can this student comprehend and reproduce (paraphrase) in his/her own words?" In addition, if TAs more focus on ESL students' academic English skills and try to help students as a language teacher when they plagiarize, TAs' feedback might also change from just saying to them, "Plagiarism is

bad" (John) or "No, you need to cite this" (Paul) to providing specific vocabulary and/or sentence structure to be included when the student revises his/her paper by using his/her own words. In short, if TAs positively perceive plagiarism in ESL writing courses not only as a cultural issue but also as a language skills issue, and help students fill this gap not only as a cultural informant but also as a language teacher, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about plagiarism starts to be connected to their beliefs/knowledge about how to teach/learn (step by step, feedback, and trial and error), and as a result harmonize with the other seven categories as well. Consequently, ESL writing courses would develop by providing students with an opportunity to approach this "very rigid and very tricky" (John) concept from both cultural side and from language side.

Re-visit TAs' Beliefs/Knowledge about Language Teaching/Learning

In the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn, TAs describe that both US academic writing culture and academic English should be taught/learned in ESL writing courses for ESL students to be successful in the university. However, in the section of TAs' beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning, TAs state that US academic writing culture should be focused in the courses over language teaching/learning because of the more importance. Thus, these two categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge are conflicting with each other. Consequently, this conflicting view of TAs seals (or makes TAs ignore) their perceptions about ESL students' difficulties and impacts their descriptions about how to teach/learn; TAs describe almost nothing about how to teach/learn academic English in ESL writing courses.

Possible explanation 1: contextual factor. One of the possible explanations for this inconsistency—TAs state that both US academic writing culture and academic English should be taught/leaned in ESL writing courses, whereas TAs emphasize that teaching/learning US academic writing culture should be focused in ESL writing courses—may be because of time

constraint of the course. Sara explains, "We have limited time but still even when there's time constraint, there are so many things to [cover]…Yeah, I think…introduction to the US writing custom is more important and takes a bigger role in [ESL writing] class than just language learning. Lucy also explains that she believes "some grammar and vocabulary should be included in the courses" but "you' re only guaranteed one semester with the students and you really have to be choosy on what you would decide to include in that semester." These descriptions show that, despite their understanding the need for language teaching/learning in ESL writing courses, it is clear that TAs also need to consider and decide what kind of teaching/learning should take priority under limited time constraint. Borg (2003) states that "teachers' practices are…shaped by the social, psychological and environmental realities of the school and classroom" (p. 94). In reality, it is almost impossible for teachers to defend their beliefs/knowledge from external factors. In short, TAs' beliefs/knowledge that both US academic writing culture and academic English should be taught/leaned in ESL writing courses is challenged by the time constraint of the course. TAs' seem to feel that their role of a language teacher is limited by the contextual power; as a result, their descriptions are inconsistent.

Possible explanation 2: prior learning experiences. Another possible explanation for the conflicting descriptions of TAs may be because of their strong assumption that US academic writing expectations are more important for effective written communication over academic language skills in US universities. Paul states, "I focused on kind of a broader skill [such as organizations]…[so that students] are going to be able to write a paper that the teachers understand…and to me that's more important than if they have perfect grammar…or good vocabulary in their paper." Alice states, "Maybe they need more help with grammar or vocabulary, but…I'm gonna [help them] state an opinion, a thesis, and…explain why. Cause

that's a skill that's really essential for them…if we can help them do that, it will take them a long way, I think." These descriptions show that TAs have an assumption that US academic writing conveys meaning through the culturally shared writing systems and styles and the written products reflecting such values are acceptable in US universities.

In addition, a possible reason behind the TAs' assumption about US academic writing and its value may be because of their extensive experiences as leaners. Alice comments, "I thought that [students] just understood [what a thesis is] because I just understood. I thought it was a relatively simple concept…[because I'm from the US and I grew up in this [writing] culture and expectation." Lucy states, "[American students have] been trained, 'This is how you write a paper' for our whole lives." From these descriptions, it is probably true that TAs' assumption is consistent and strong because our belief system established as learners is "continuously reinforced and reconfirmed by events…[therefore, it is] rarely articulated and consequently rarely examined" (Hampton, 1994, p. 129). That is, TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to /learn is challenged by their own consistent, strong assumption that has been fostered through the "apprenticeship in teaching" (Lortie, 1975, p. 61) as leaners. TAs seem to frame their role in ESL writing courses as a cultural informant of US academic writing, supported by their own strong assumption; as a result, the discrepancy between TAs' beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn and their beliefs/knowledge about language teaching/learning are caused.

Possible explanation 3: lack of clear models. In addition to time constraint of the course and TAs' own strong assumption about US academic writing value, the third possible explanation of the inconsistent descriptions of TAs may be because of a lack of clear models of the language instruction in writing courses. Lucy says, "I think, yeah, it does take a lot of time to learn [a language] and it's hard to know how to incorporate them in a class for that reason…how

much time in class time do I spend on those things? Or do I get students that as homework to do on their own?" This description infers her dilemma between the need of the language instruction in her class and the lack of the clear model of it. Johnson (1994) explains that preservice teachers tend to feel "powerless to alter their instructional practice" (p. 449) due to a lack of clear models of their projected images of teaching (the type of instructions they wanted to provide for their students). For example, one teacher in Johnson's study comments, "[I want] to teach by giving students an opportunity to carry out realistic activities…but I have very little prior knowledge or experiences in doing this" (p. 445). That is, TAs' beliefs/knowledge that both US academic writing culture and academic English should be taught/leaned in ESL writing courses is challenged by their lack of clear model of language instruction in writing courses. TAs seem to limit their role in ESL writing courses to an informant of US academic writing culture, relying on plenty of models of the US writing expectations instruction; as a result, their descriptions are conflicting between the two categories of the beliefs/knowledge—what to teach/learn and language teaching/learning.

Implication of the discussion (2). The discussion above suggests that TAs' beliefs/knowledge is challenged, and therefore there are conflicting views between their beliefs/knowledge about what to teach/learn and language teaching/learning. The time constraint of the course, the strong assumption about US academic writing value, and the lack of clear models of language instruction in writing courses weaken TAs' perception that both US academic writing culture and academic English should be taught/leaned in ESL writing courses. As a result, TAs more focus on their role as a cultural informant of US academic writing rather than as a language teacher of academic English. Coxhead and Byrd (2007) state that the status of language instruction in writing courses "remains unclear for many teachers who want to teach

composition skill while faced with evidence in student writing that many of their students have yet to develop the linguistic resources necessary for communicative competence as academic writers" (p. 130). In other words, it might be hard and take time for (especially American) TAs to digest and adopt a "philosophical change in their approach to teaching writing" (Coxhead & Byrd, 2007, p. 144) due to their strong assumption gained through their extensive experiences as leaners about the value of US academic writing culture. However, although it seems to be not possible to change the policy of the program schedule and TAs' prior learning experiences that have fostered their assumptions, what if TAs gain a clear perspective as a language teacher in ESL writing courses by receiving adequate models and training of how to incorporate language instruction in the courses?

If TAs learn the effectiveness of language instruction in ESL writing courses, their perception then might change from "[maybe their] grammar will grow, [their] vocabulary will grow in different classes" (Paul) to "students can develop their academic English skills in ESL writing courses." In addition, if TAs gain adequate tools and models of language instruction in ESL writing courses, their question might also change from "How can I incorporate them in my ESL writing class?" to "What sentence structure and the vocabulary helps my students describe their thoughts in their papers?" In short, if TAs receive adequate training of language instruction in ESL writing courses and gain effective models of it, they might be able to approach the teaching/learning academic writing from the perspective of both a cultural informant and a language teacher in a balanced manner. As a result, TAs do not have to seal (or ignore) their perceptions of ESL students' difficulty in demonstrating their thoughts in English and start to describe how to teach/learn academic English in ESL writing courses. Also, TAs' beliefs/ knowledge about language teaching/learning starts to connect to their beliefs/knowledge about

what to teach/learn and harmonize with the other seven categories of their beliefs/knowledge as well. Consequently, ESL writing courses would improve by providing ESL students with an environment to develop not only US academic writing skills but also academic English skills.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This study was meant to better harmonize TAs' beliefs/knowledge about teaching/ learning academic writing in ESL writing courses and consequently improve the ESL writing program of this university, by developing a comprehensive model that describes TAs' beliefs/knowledge in a categorized manner to find the relation between the categories. Results from this investigation show that while the first seven of the nine categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge are well connected with each other and thus work together, the last two categories of TAs' beliefs/knowledge—plagiarism and language teaching/learning in ESL writing courses—are (partly) inconsistent with some of the seven categories and thus not harmonized with the others. It is the conclusion of this study that the descriptions of TAs infer that, on one hand they perceive both US academic writing culture and academic English should be taught/learned in ESL writing courses; on the other hand, however, TAs are more likely to focus on the cultural aspects of US academic writing than the language aspects of it for the instruction. In other words, TAs tend to limit their role in ESL writing courses to a cultural informant (of US academic writing) rather than a language teacher (of academic English); TAs approach the plagiarism almost entirely from the cultural side of this issue and prioritize teaching/learning US academic writing culture over academic English teaching/learning. Therefore, it is the alternative practice that TAs gain a clear perspective of a language teacher by receiving adequate models and training of language instruction in ESL writing courses so that TAs may be able to see both cultural aspect and language aspect of US academic writing teaching/learning in a balanced manner and frame their role in ESL writing courses not only as a cultural informant of US academic writing but also as a language teacher of academic English.

Since the findings of this study are based on the nine TAs in the context of the specific university ESL program and the nine TAs have particular educational and teaching backgrounds and experiences, the application of this study may be limited. However, I hope this investigation will help TAs and TA educators who are involved in the ESL writing program to develop their programs by better harmonizing TAs' beliefs/knowledge about teaching/learning academic writing in ESL writing courses.

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Appendix A: Background Survey

1. Name:

2. Nationality:

3. First language:

4. Do you speak any other language(s)? (other than your 1st language)

   ☐ No
   ☐ Yes
       ·   Which language(s)?

       ·   How long have you been studying the language(s)?

5. This is my ___th semester in the MA TESL at SCSU.

6. This is my ___th semester teaching as a TA.

7. What class are you teaching this semester?

   ☐ IEC:

   ☐ EAP:

8. What classes have you taught as a TA? (write all classes you have taught)

   ☐ IEC:

   ☐ EAP:

9. Did you study teaching ESL/EFL as an undergraduate degree?

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

10. Where did you receive your undergraduate degree?

   ☐ US (skip #11)

   ☐ Other:

11. Have you ever studied in a US university? (for example, as an exchange student)

   ☐ No
   ☐ Yes
       ·   When?

       ·   For how many years?

       ·   Why?

12. Have you previously worked as an ESL or EFL instructor?

- ☐ No (skip #13)
- ☐ Yes
  - · When?

  - · Where?

  - · What classes have you taught?

  - · For how many years?

13. Have you previously taught academic writing to ESL/EFL students?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes
  - · When?

  - · Where?

  - · For how many years?

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your understanding of academic writing in US university settings. You can explain your understanding as you like, such as by defining it, by explaining its importance or purpose, or describing factors it consists of.

2. What do you think US university writing culture expects of students' writing?

3. To what extent do you think you understand academic writing in US university settings and can produce it?

4. Tell me about your understanding of the goals or purposes of ESL writing courses or why ESL writing courses are necessary in US university settings.

5. What knowledge and skills do you think ESL international students bring to ESL writing courses?

6. What knowledge and skills do you think ESL international students should learn in the writing courses to be able to produce appropriate academic writing in US university settings?

7. What classroom activities would you choose or create? Are they group, pair, or individual activities?

8. What writing assignments would you choose or create for ESL international students?

9. What were the writing experience that really helped you become a better student writer?

10. What challenges do you think ESL international students may face when learning and/or producing academic writing in ESL writing courses and/or US university settings?

11. What challenges do you think ESL writing teachers may face when teaching academic writing to ESL international students?

12. What kinds of knowledge do you think ESL writing teachers should have to teach ESL international students?

13. Tell me about your understanding about roles and/or responsibilities of ESL writing teachers.

14. Who was your most influential writing teacher?

Appendix C: Informed Consent

TAs' Knowledge and Beliefs about Teaching Academic Writing to ESL Students

You are invited to participate in a research study about TAs' knowledge and beliefs regarding teaching academic writing to ESL students. You are selected as a possible participant because of your status as a TA in the SCSU MA TESL. This research project is being conducted by Seiko Hayashi to satisfy the requirement of a Master's Degree in TESL at SCSU.

Purpose
Purpose of this study is to analyze and describe TAs' existing knowledge and beliefs about teaching academic writing to ESL international students.

Procedures
If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to fill out a brief background survey, and participate in an audio-recorded interview that should take between 30-45 minutes twice. If direct quotes are used, you will be given a chance to review and edit the quotes before publication.?

Risks
There is no foreseeable risk. Also, I will provide you with my contact information in case you might have questions regarding any risk.

Benefits
Your participation will help me analyze and describe TA' knowledge and beliefs about teaching academic writing to ESL students that would contribute to writing instructions in future ESL writing classrooms.

Confidentiality
Data collected will remain confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in any published material and data will be presented in aggregate forms with no more than 1-2 descriptors. All data will be stored in the researcher's password-protected personal computer.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal
Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with SCSU, or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Contact Information
If you have questions about this research study, you may contact me, Seiko Hayashi, at 917-512-9905 or shayashi@stcloudstate.edu, or Dr. James Robinson, at jhrobinson@stcloudstate.edu. Results of the study will be published at the SCSU Repository.

Compensation
If you choose to participate, you will be compensated by $10.00 gift card at the end of the second interview. Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age, you have read the information provided above, and you have consent to participate. Thank you.

Name of Participant _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D: IRB Approval Letter

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Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South AS 210, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

Name: Seiko Hayashi

Email: hase1301@stcloudstate.edu

IRB PROTOCOL DETERMINATION:
Exempt Review

Project Title: TAs' Knowledge and Beliefs about Teaching Academic Writing to ESL Students

Advisor James Robinson

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: **APPROVED**

Please note the following important information concerning IRB projects:

- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes, significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).

- For expedited or full board review, the principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.

-Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.

- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and expiration dates.

- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process, survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time.

If we can be of further assistance, feel free to contact the IRB at 320-308-4932 or email ResearchNow@stcloudstate.edu and please reference the SCSU IRB number when corresponding.

IRB Chair:

Dr. Benjamin Witts
Associate Professor- Applied Behavior Analysis
Department of Community Psychology,Counseling, and Family Therapy

IRB Institutional Official:

Dr. Latha Ramakrishnan
Interim Associate Provost for Research
Dean of Graduate Studies

OFFICE USE ONLY

SCSU IRB# 1608 - 2433	**Type:** Exempt Review	**Today's Date:** 4/3/2019
1st Year Approval Date:	**2nd Year Approval Date:**	**3rd Year Approval Date:**
1st Year Expiration Date:	**2nd Year Expiration Date:**	**3rd Year Expiration Date:**