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Role Reversals: A Case Study of Dialogic Interactions and Feedback on L2 Writing

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Highlights:
- Dialogic interactions facilitated participant's increased audience awareness
- Author's lack of content knowledge led participant to rely on verbalized revision
- Dialogic interactions helped reduce acts of appropriation

Abstract

Much scholarship on second language writing feedback has focused on teacher-L2 writer dialogic interactions. Many of these studies, however, adopt the concept of scaffolding (Hyland & Hyland, 2006) which in its application could be considered a deficit model (Cumming & Riazi, 2000) as the teacher addresses linguistic limitations of the learner. This study explored reversing these roles, drawing on the Bakhtinian (1981) concept of dialogism to explore feedback interactions where the L2 writer and I (the researcher) were both developing understanding. An 11-week participant-researcher case study sought to examine the role of dialogic interactions in which I had more advanced English language skills, but had less extensive knowledge about the content, while the participant was developing (an already advanced) English proficiency, but held critical knowledge in the content area. Results showed that dialogic interactions facilitated the linguistic revisions of the participant's writing by contributing to the participant's increased awareness of audience, and also providing her a channel, through speech, to clarify text excerpts that I struggled to understand in writing.

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Introduction

Dialogic interactions are frequently utilized in teacher feedback on L2 writing. On one hand, they bolster written feedback, which by itself serves mainly an informational role for teachers to channel reactions and advice to L2 writers (Hyland & Hyland, 2001). On the other, these interactions, by providing a vehicle to exchange information and convey messages, facilitate the involvement of multiple participants in the social construction of a text (Perpignan, 2003). In addition, dialogic interactions enable teachers to help students understand "their strengths and weaknesses, develop their autonomy, [and] allow them to raise questions on their written feedback" (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 5).

Studies that adopt dialogic interactions for feedback on writing, however, tend to involve teachers with an "upper hand," namely teachers who either possess enough content knowledge of an L2 writer's writing or can readily identify and address particular linguistic issues to guide writers in the next progress-making steps of their writing. Consequently, although the interactions may include some degree of teacher-writer negotiation, the interactions serve primarily as a complement to written feedback, providing what is hoped to be a more effective avenue for teachers to communicate content- or linguistic-related issues to writers.

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of dialogic interactions utilized not only by a teacher to discuss an L2 writer's written linguistic issues, but by the writer to clarify for a teacher the meaning of specialized content, which helped to ease the challenge of distinguishing linguistic- from content-related writing issues. This becomes particularly important in the case of

highly-advanced L2 writers, who often hold more subject-specific expertise than their teachers (Tardy, 2006). As these L2 writers (e.g. graduate students, post-doc students) progress in their field, dialogic interactions may help them to recognize that further advancements in their writing may hinge less on a tutor's scaffolding strategies than on the adoption of alternate methods of communication to elicit pre-existing knowledge. The interdependent relationship formed in this study addresses the critical need of improving teacher-student interactions and also responds to the call for more purposeful and active engagement with feedback on the part of students (Hyland, 2010).

Dialogic Interactions and L2 Writing Feedback

The Bakhtinian (1981) concept of dialogism suggests that a word has no meaning until it has been infused with meaning by an individual or individuals: "Every utterance is the product of the interaction between speakers and the product of the broader context of the whole complex social situation in which the utterance occurs" (Bakhtin, 1994, p. 41). Within the context of L2 writing, responding to a text in writing alone (i.e., without dialogism) increases the likelihood of a teacher misinterpreting the meaning of or intention behind the writing, because no means beyond the text are employed by the teacher or the L2 writer to communicate concerns or ideas about the text.

Writing conferences (such as those afforded by writing centers), which tend to be one-on-one and face-to-face, can address these concerns because they act as a conduit for dialogic interactions. In these conferences, tutors are generally advised to adopt a hands-off, collaborative approach in which they use leading questions to help writers develop learner autonomy and formulate their own revision plans (Williams & Severino, 2004). In turn, the teacher and writer regularly swap roles to arrive at mutual understanding (Hyland, 2000b). The conferences also

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enable tutors to better understand the intended meanings of writers' texts (Tardy, 2006), and students to actively participate and clarify teachers' responses (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990). Further, writing conferences can aid in the development of metacognitive awareness, as well as discussion and reflection on both the process and product of writing (Hyland, 2000b). In short, the aim of conferences is to move away from teachers simply correcting or responding to texts and instead to focus on construction of meaning of a text between both the teacher and the writer. The interactions within these conferences thus embody "an interactive exchange in which interpretations are shared, meanings negotiated and expectations clarified" (Carless, Salter, Yang, Lam, 2011, p. 396).

Yet these interactions, particularly between NS-tutor and NNS-tutee, are not without their drawbacks. Communicative impasses may be more common, as tutees misread writing center best practices (e.g. silence) as impolite, or misinterpret "speech acts that do not map directly between linguistic form and function (imperative = directive; interrogative = question)" (Thonus, 1999a, p. 259). Other challenges include the tutor's use of mitigation strategies to avoid direct criticism (Thonus, 2004), and the competing notions of a writing conference's "quasi-instructional setting" and a tutor's goal to "coach from the sidelines" (Thonus, 1999b, p. 227). These dilemmas of contrast serve to undermine the notion of equilibrium in writing tutorials.

These interactions, because of the two-way negotiation they entail, serve also to empower L2 writers; L2 writers are better positioned to negotiate the outcome of their writing, one that challenges the unequal distribution of power typical in student-teacher relationships (Hyland, 2000a). For instance, their more active role in the process of creating a text encourages L2 writers to clarify and defend their choices, which can help them to build greater ownership of their texts

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(Tardy, 2006). This tipping of the scales, in turn, reduces the view of the teacher as an authoritarian figure (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

While dialogic interactions provide ample opportunity for both teacher and writer to communicate their concerns, the crux of the interactions revolves around scaffolding, a concept "at the heart of the writing conference" (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 5). Scaffolding (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) involves the process by which a more capable individual guides a writer towards acquiring a set of skills and, ultimately, learner autonomy. The concept of scaffolding was inspired by Lev Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), or the distance between what a learner can accomplish alone versus what a learner can potentially accomplish with the aid of a more capable other. In the context of feedback on L2 writing, these concepts are employed by a teacher who wishes, for instance, to communicate to a writer a number of linguistic issues in a piece of writing that the teacher has already identified, or to better understand linguistic issues in a piece of writing by asking for a writer's clarity or insight, after which point the teacher can again guide or aid the writer.

The constant negotiation involved in scaffolding implies that dialogue is utilized to create or maintain some level of equality or equilibrium between the teacher and the writer; scaffolding, however, also implies that the interaction, although inviting to both parties, is used by the teacher largely to educate the writer more than vice versa, as it enables the teacher to "respond to the diverse cultural, educational, and writing needs of their students, clarifying meaning and resolving ambiguities" (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 5). In other words, within these interactions exists the belief that the teacher has identified (or can identify) linguistic limitations of a writer's writing and is now faced with communicating these issues to the writer.

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Ewert (2009), for instance, employed the frameworks of negotiation and scaffolding to investigate the discursive nature of writing conferences involving prematriculated adult ESL learners. Negotiation facilitated moves such as comprehension checks, confirmation checks, and clarification requests, while scaffolding enabled the tutor to assist a less proficient learner; yet, by definition, these two frameworks function only if the tutor can diagnose the issue. Asymmetrical collaboration is thus a hallmark of scaffolding; while a student has more power to initiate collaboration and determine the direction a session takes, the tutor still holds more skill and expertise in the subject matter than the student (Thompson, et al., 2009).

Several studies have investigated the role of scaffolding in L2 writing conferences. In Williams' (2004) study, for instance, dialogic interactions were used to examine both scaffolding by the tutor and negotiation of meaning on the part of the participant-writers. In Hyland's (2000b) two case studies on writing workshops, the dialogic interactions served for the teacher to clarify previous feedback or for the student to seek help on an issue that arose as they composed. Weissberg (2006) examined how tutors adopted scaffolding in their discussions with L2 writers to identify specific discourse mechanisms, with the goal of looking beyond the sentence level to consider how scaffolded feedback addressed global issues such as planning, organizing, and revising. In another study, Belcher (1994) adopted the perspective of legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) as she investigated the relationships between three advisors and their doctoral students in developing their research and scholarly writing skills; the most successful of those three relationships involved a co-participatory, or dialogic, relationship between the advisor and the student. As this relationship was more egalitarian than hierarchical, it enabled the student to develop or maintain ownership of the text she was writing and also served as a springboard to gain the membership that she sought in a particular academic community.

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By employing scaffolding, however, a common thread within these studies emerged, namely the researcher's ability to pinpoint beforehand the issues with the L2 writers' texts that needed to be reconciled. Consequently, the identification of these issues served as the backbone of the teacher-student interactions. For example, the overarching goal of adopting scaffolding in Williams's (2004) study was to gauge the effect of the interactions on the student's revision process and the uptake of tutor advice. Similarly, in Weissberg's (2006) study, scaffolding was used to address, among other issues, one participant's heavy usage of personal pronouns in a lab report (an easily identifiable problem), in contrast to the preferred usage of passive voice. In Belcher's (1994) study, while legitimate peripheral participation aimed to initiate students into the advanced literary practices of specific academic communities, it still relied on the assumption that the teacher, as a field expert or member, possessed more extensive and superior knowledge than the student, and thus guided the student towards becoming a full-fledged member of that community. In this way, the practice of legitimate peripheral participation adopts scaffolding as one of its core components, as a participant is "a newcomer to a community of practice, who participates to a limited extent and with limited responsibility in the actual work of an expert" (Belcher, 1994, p. 24).

To this end, in all of these studies, the dialogic interactions were not so much a sharing of roles between the teachers and L2 writers, in which the teachers would have depended equally on the writers for understanding, but a role "extension" for the writers, in which they were encouraged through different avenues to find ways to understand their teachers' feedback in order to make progress on their writing. In De Guerrero and Villamil's (2000) study, "mutual scaffolding" was adopted by the participants in collaborative sessions, but only as a part of peer review between two ESL college students. Neither participant truly functioned or was trained as a tutor; the

intermediate level of the participants, for instance, posed challenges to the nature of scaffolding itself, as at times the participants, who focused only on surface-level issues such as modals or tense, "were unsure or unaware of standard forms or uses of the L2 language and settled on their own creative alternatives" (p. 65).

Typically, in studies on dialogic interactions and L2 written feedback, less attention is paid to a scenario in which an L2 writer displays not only an exceptional level of English proficiency, but also highly-advanced content knowledge, both of which render the interaction more problematic, as the teacher must now rely more heavily on the writer in order to make appropriate recommendations to the writer's text. The purpose of this paper was to examine the role of dialogic interactions as a supplement to L2 written feedback in which both the teacher and L2 writer bring different points of knowledge to the table, and must in equal parts tap into each other's knowledge to make progress on the writer's writing. Dialogic interactions served not solely as more fluid pathways to tap into the intended meaning of the participant-writer's writing, but to fuse the different knowledge bases and perspectives that both the participant and I had to offer. This particular context led to the following guiding questions of this study:

1. What roles do dialogic interactions play in facilitating the graduate L2 writer's revision process?

2. How did the dialogic interactions serve to shape the roles of the tutor-student relationship?

Methods

My role in this study as a researcher-participant cannot be underestimated. I thus begin this section by discussing how this role affected my approach to and handling of the study. I then discuss the background and core components of the study, whose timing and organization were critical in collecting and analyzing the study's multiple data sources.

Participatory research and case study. Given the nature of this study, namely working with a participant to revise her writing, my role in the study was threefold. First, as a researcher, I planned and administered the study, and also conducted the data analysis. Second, as a tutor, I provided feedback to the participant regarding areas of her writing that I felt needed revision. Five years of teaching writing at the university level in Korea aided me in this regard. And third, as a student (of my participant), I became more familiar with the content I was reading, which helped me to provide better linguistic feedback. In all three roles, I was, to some extent, a participant in the study.

To this end, my role in the study was one of "collaborative partner." In such a relationship, the researcher is a complete participant, and this identity is known to the participant; further, the researcher and participant are considered equals in the research process (Merriam, 2009). What results in such an approach, for both the researcher and the participant, is an increased sense of collaborative ownership during all stages of the study (Patton, 2002). A participatory approach thus lent itself well to this study's dialogic interactions, which were adopted as a means of empowerment for both the participant and me, as the researcher.

The research approach I employed was a case study. According to Simons (2009), a case study is "an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a 'real life' context" (p. 21). In the social sciences specifically, a case study is seen through an interpretive lens (Thomas, 2011). Although a case study restricts a researcher from making generalizations about findings, the depth and richness procured from a case study enable a researcher to particularize (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000). As such, the cases themselves in a case study – not the variables at play – take the spotlight (Ragin, 1992). Throughout this study, dialogic interactions were utilized not only to move

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the study forward, but also as a means to make sense of the challenges that my participant and I faced in discussing and revising her writing. In this way, a case study approach enabled me to examine in detail the uniqueness and complexity of our interactions (Glesne, 2011).

Researcher and participant backgrounds. This research was conducted at a large public university located in the Midwest of the US. I recruited a participant who was a non-native English-speaking student in a doctoral program in Second Language Acquisition. The participant also displayed an advanced level of English and wanted to improve her academic writing outside of her coursework. Lu (a pseudonym) fit this description for two reasons. First, as a Chinese national, she had majored in Chinese Language and Literature at a university in China, and had also been studying English for 14 years, including four years in the US (two years in a master's program, and two years thus far in a doctoral program on foreign language acquisition and education). Second, Lu was highly motivated to participate in the study. At the time, she was writing a book chapter for graduate students on Chinese L2 acquisition with her doctoral advisor; the book chapter was co-authored, with Lu listed as the first author, and her advisor (who worked in a supervisory capacity), as the second. The better part of a semester provided us enough time to discuss Lu's writing and for Lu to submit a draft to her advisor for feedback.

My background (as a native-English speaking US national) also informed my role in the study as a researcher-tutor. Prior to starting my doctorate, I studied one year of Japanese as an undergraduate, followed by three years of study while working in Japan as an English teacher. While these experiences by no means made me an expert on Chinese L2 acquisition, the Japanese language's use of Chinese characters aided me as I provided feedback to Lu. In addition, I have extensive experience as both a writing instructor (including 5 years as a teacher trainer and visiting professor at a university in South Korea) and a proofreader (including 6 years working at a

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translation company). At the time of this study, I was completing my third and final year of doctoral coursework towards a PhD in Foreign Language and ESL Education at the same university as Lu. Two of my specialty areas are Second Language Writing and Intercultural Rhetoric. My role in this study, as a peer-tutor, was thus to provide feedback on linguistic issues of Lu's writing, with the possibility of touching upon content issues, given my background.

Book chapter. The book chapter Lu was writing with her advisor centered on Chinese L2 character learning and was roughly 13,000 words (see Table 1 for an overview of the book chapter's sections). These chapter sections would ultimately guide a reader through several components of L2 Chinese character learning, but also served as stopping points in my feedback on Lu's writing. In most cases, I would read and review one section of the chapter, and then discuss the section with Lu before we moved onto a subsequent section.

Study components. Prior to our meetings, Lu sent me an MSWord file of a chapter section. The Word file was single-spaced, and typically ranged from one to three pages. By using the MSWord "Comments" function, I wrote feedback in the margins (Ferris, 1997; Hyland 1998; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005) for Lu to consider. I then emailed the files back to Lu one to two days before our meeting, providing her enough time to process them.

Some of my comments addressed grammatical errors; however, although these comments provided insight into the type and general location of the error, they only provided clues regarding the corrections. This most closely aligned itself with forms of indirect feedback, in which teachers bring errors to students' attention but do not provide corrections (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). For example, at times I wrote in a comment to Lu that she should rely more on stronger verbs and less on nominalization, leaving her to decide what word choice revisions should be made. If Lu felt

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confident in making these revisions, she did so on her own, and they would not be discussed in our one-on-one meetings.

The majority of my comments, however, provided suggestions or asked questions concerning text excerpts that confused me or I felt needed to be revised. This required Lu, in turn, to consider the comments before making revisions, which resulted in one of three actions. First, if Lu agreed with my suggestion, she would implement it (and we would therefore not discuss it in our meetings); second, if Lu did not understand my comment, she would wait until we met face-to-face to ask questions about or confirm her understanding of my intention; and third, if Lu understood my comment but disagreed with it, she would wait until our meeting to inform me as to why she had opted not to make revisions. It is the latter two actions that are the focus of this study.

Study timetable. Lu and I met a total of 17 times from late February until late October 2016: 12 times from February through April to discuss Lu's early drafts, 4 times in August and September to discuss Lu's final drafts, and once in October to conduct an end-of-study interview (see Table 2 for meeting schedule). For the first 12 meetings, we met once or twice a week, for a total of almost 13 hours, with each meeting lasting roughly an hour (our shortest meeting was 35 minutes; our longest 83 minutes). Our meetings took place in a reserved, private room within a larger educational learning center in one of the university's buildings. The room contained a computer and a large flat screen affixed to the wall, which Lu and I used to view and discuss the files I had provided feedback on. Lu simultaneously complemented the large screen with her own laptop, which she used to take notes and make revisions. Most of our meetings centered on discussing comments I had made on Lu's texts that Lu did not understand or for some reason was

hesitant to implement. The study thus adopted a dialogic learning environment (Bakhtin, 1994) in which our interactions helped to shape the meaning of Lu's writing.

The four meetings for Lu's final drafts were held in the same location, between August 19 and September 6 at the end of the summer, for a total of just over four hours. Lu and I used these meetings to discuss subsequent revisions or additions that Lu had made to final drafts of chapter sections before she would submit them to her advisor for a final review. Lu and I also met one final time in October 2016 for an interview, in which I asked Lu, using semi-structured questions, about her experience of taking part in the study. Although Lu and I did not discuss the final draft of the book chapter she submitted to her advisor, I used the final draft as a data source to determine what revisions she had made.

Data analysis. All sessions were audio recorded and later transcribed. As I read through transcriptions, I underlined potential themes and jotted down notes in the margin. Using the constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009), I examined notes and themes within and across the transcribed files. Because I wanted to focus on our roles as we developed understanding, a vital component of data analysis entailed analyzing interactions in which I prompted Lu to provide more information about text excerpts. To accomplish this, I employed three phases of coding – open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2007) – to analyze the questions I asked Lu or the suggestions I made to Lu (see Figure 1). Open coding entailed locating and identifying all questions and suggestions. Axial coding included dividing the questions and suggestions into two categories: first, interactions in which I depended on Lu's knowledge to help her revise, and second, questions in which I could identify and address writing problems on my own, and thus adopt cognitive scaffolding for Lu's revision process. I disregarded the interactions

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that fell into the second category, as cognitive scaffolding embodies traditional tutor-tutee interactions. The third and final phase, selective coding, involved dividing my questions and suggestions that depended on Lu's knowledge into categories based on three types of interactions: interactions in which Lu and I discussed content, and Lu would then inform me that my understanding was *correct*; interactions in which Lu and I discussed content, and Lu would then inform me that my understanding was *incorrect*; and interactions in which Lu would simply educate me on content that I did not understand at all (see Appendix for examples). Examining the role of dialogic interactions in the facilitation of Lu's revision process also involved three phases. First, I revisited text excerpts that were called into question during our face-to-face sessions. Second, I considered these text excerpts in conjunction with our discussion surrounding the excerpts. Third, I read the final draft Lu submitted to her advisor to see what revisions had been made; I also read our final interview several times to determine how Lu's perspectives regarding revision were potentially informed by our interactions.

Results and Discussion

Because of my limited content knowledge (coupled with Lu's advanced-level knowledge), the crux of our dialogic interactions was associated with questions or comments that I posed to Lu regarding my lack of understanding, and subsequently how Lu's responses to these questions or comments informed her writing. Specifically, I strove to determine if my issues with Lu's writing stemmed from my lack of (or misunderstanding of) content knowledge, or a lack of linguistic clarity on Lu's part in communicating her content. Thus, this section focuses on the role that dialogic interactions played in facilitating revisions to Lu's writing and the attendant themes that emerged from the study. Because I argue that previous scholarship tends to put learners in a

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position of dependence within dialogic interactions, I focus specifically on themes of role balance or role reversal, namely those in which I depended as much as (if not more than) Lu on our interactions to make sense of the content of her writing and, in turn, to aid her in revising her writing. Similarly, I focus on instances in which dialogic interactions seemed to encourage Lu to rely on herself (and thus become more independent) when making decisions about her writing. To this end, I discuss three major themes in conjunction with dialogic interactions: first, Lu's heightened awareness of audience, or reader; second, the role of orally verbalizing thoughts in revision; and third, Lu's ability to avoid appropriation, which aided her in achieving the two aforementioned points.

Increased Audience Awareness

The first theme that arose from our dialogic interactions involved Lu's increased awareness of audience, which stemmed from her realization that she needed to communicate her ideas more clearly. Specifically, Lu recognized that while the highly technical nature of her content often merited complex prose, communicating simpler ideas with more basic prose would not discredit the tone of sophisticated academic writing she was trying to achieve. In our post-study interview, Lu noted the following about her audience: "I imagined my potential audiences to be native speakers of Chinese graduate students and professors in the field. Or nonnative speakers of Chinese but have a certain proficiency in Chinese." Yet Lu also alluded to the need to address a general academic audience:

> I think maybe I kind of have like a high demand regarding the academic writing for myself sometimes because I have to write a lot of academic writing and I know how like a sophisticated – not sophisticated – but a clear but sophisticated academic writing looks like. And so I have that feeling… I kind of memorize that feeling when I'm reading… And when I'm reading… I can just feel the discrepancy. I thought it's just because I'm a second-language [learner].

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What resulted was dissonant prose: on one hand, Lu appropriately integrated field-specific content into her writing for her audience; on the other, much of Lu's writing seemed to focus more on achieving a scholarly "standard" than on how easily an audience might digest that standard. Our dialogic interactions thus served to increase Lu's audience awareness regarding cognitively taxing syntax and word choice.

This desire to write "academically" could be seen on several occasions. In one instance, in which Lu described a study's survey components, she wrote: "In contrast, open-ended questions are those without any pre-determined options and those encourage participants to generate their idiosyncratic answers." Lu would later change this to "In contrast, open-ended questions allow participants to respond freely." In another text excerpt, Lu discussed the timing of introducing Chinese characters to beginner L2 Chinese students. She wrote, "…when is the optimal time lag for this delay" to which I replied, "You mean, basically when should they start, right?" As I read these text excerpts prior to our dialogic interactions, I wavered between the competing notions of Lu expressing simple ideas with unnecessarily complicated prose, and my not understanding the complex ideas Lu was properly expressing with complicated prose.

These examples of considering one's audience draw parallels to Bakhtin's concept of dialogism (1994), which posits that a word is always half someone else's; both speakers and listeners populate words with their own meaning. This concept also applies to written texts, in which words are not static entities, but take on meaning both as an author writes them and an audience constructs meaning of them. Of consequence, then, is the role that teachers and learners play in bringing these words to life. Goldstein (2004), a writing center scholar, summarizes this aptly:

> Students need to learn that the words they inscribe on paper are not static and that meaning resides not only in these words but also in what the audience brings to the reading of these

words. This can only be understood if students get feedback from readers, feedback that shows the writer where what they have intended has been achieved and where their texts may have fallen short of their intentions and goals. Teachers of second language writers can explain where the text is not accomplishing what the author would like and why and provide strategies for remedying these problems. (p. 64)

To be fair, in most cases, Lu was simply developing her writing skills. She frequently mentioned that she had developed a cache of "favorite" words or expressions (e.g. time lag) and thus tried to incorporate them into her writing. While at times I found these attempts successful, at other times they clouded the meaning of her content or lengthened her prose. Lu was conscious of these efforts, noting, "[I] try to make my words fancy, or do the variations, like elegant variations, but sometimes that cause confusions to my readers."

Lu's attempts at unnecessary sophistication are common in writing. In a study surveying English academic style manuals, Bennett (2009) notes that less experienced writers tend to "obfuscate and lose control of their arguments in their desire to sound sophisticated. It is this tendency that lies behind some authors' insistence upon excessive simplicity" (p. 52). Similarly, in an article titled "Why Academics Stink at Writing," Pinker recalls the methods section of an experimental paper: "Participants read assertions whose veracity was either affirmed or denied by the subsequent presentation of an assessment word"; Pinker would realize that the participants simply read sentences, each followed by the word *true* or *false* (2014b, p. 2). This transition, in which writers create such confusing terminology, is referred to as "functional fixity." Pinker suggests that this occurs because as our familiarity with something increases, "we think about it more in terms of the use we put it to and less in terms of what it looks like and what it is made of" (2014a, p. 71). Here, Lu's complicated description of an open-ended question mirrors Pinker's description of a true-false sentence.

As Lu worked through her drafts, she became more aware of the need to consider audience. As her advisor told Lu that he found her subsequent drafts more "reader-friendly," she responded, "[People reading my drafts] ask me why, why, why, and I really need to explain things clearly to them. And then I start to, it helps me to ponder the relationship of the concepts or the variables in my writing. And then I realize I didn't write it clearly because I didn't think it through." As doctoral students, Lu and I strove (and continue to strive) to become researcher-members of an academic community, and brought both similar and interdependent backgrounds to the table: me with native-English language skills, and Lu with advanced-level knowledge of L2 Chinese character acquisition, and both of us working towards the same goal of becoming academic writing experts in our respective fields. Although Lu had both the requisite linguistic ability and content knowledge to communicate concepts clearly in her writing, the dialogic interactions assisted her in realizing that achieving clarity in writing engenders a symbiotic relationship, one in which the writer must put at the forefront the needs of the reader.

Another example of our dialogic interactions increasing Lu's audience awareness involved Lu's consideration of the reader as a collaborator. As Lu revised – both orally, during our interactions, and afterwards as she worked on subsequent drafts – she revised both as a writer and a reader. As a writer, she included the content she felt was pertinent to the chapter; as a reader, she became more cognizant of the need to ensure that this content was communicated clearly for her readership. Lu touched upon this in our post-study interview: "I was curious about why you misunderstood me… So I feel like, from that point, I really start to develop this sense for the reader like, 'Why my reader misunderstood me?' instead of, 'What's wrong with my writing?'" Later in our interview, Lu further elucidated the dual roles of reader and writer in her writing and revision process:

I would say now I have this double identities in my mind when I'm writing. Like, I have both the writer and the reader identity in my mind. So by writer, I mean I'm trying to figure out what I want to express, and what point I want to make, and how do I want to arrange the information. But, at the same time, I also have this reader mind, and I try to figure out like what kind of information my reader needs to understand the subject.

The reader – real or imagined – plays a vital role in writers' revision strategies. In a study of the revision strategies of L1 student writers and experienced L1 adult writers, Sommers (2011) found that experienced writers adopted a more holistic approach to their revision and also embraced revision as a recursive process; they looked beyond themselves to determine what changes they would make to their writing. In short, they balanced the roles of both the reader and the writer as they worked towards their end product. As Sommers (2011) notes, the experienced writers "abstracted the standards of a reader and this reader seems to be partially a reflection of themselves and functions as a critical and productive collaborator – a collaborator who has yet to love their work" (pp. 50-51). Although the end product may result from the writer reconciling these two roles, the process itself is one of dissonance, as the writer constantly revises. It is these two components – recognition as well as resolution of this dissonance – that Sommers considers to be at the heart of revision.

The Role of Oral Revision

Throughout the study, as I read Lu's book chapter drafts, I inserted comments next to text excerpts that I struggled to understand. Typically, these excerpts were problematic not because of grammatical or syntactic errors, but because of a lack of clarity. When we met to discuss these comments, three steps occurred: first, I (or Lu) would re-read aloud an excerpt; second, Lu would reflect on the excerpt and then reword it verbally; and third, Lu would revise her original text upon recognizing that her reworded (i.e. orally verbalized) explanation of her intended meaning was clearer than her initial writing. During this process, Lu seemed to internalize the problematic

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excerpts, which in turn heightened her awareness of the textual choices and subsequent decisions

she made for revision. In a sense, she became her own best interlocutor.

On a number of occasions, the questions I asked led Lu to completely revise or even cut

large swaths of texts (i.e. multiple sentences or full paragraphs). More often, Lu would revise

isolated instances of problematic sentences. These episodes rendered her writing and revision

interchangeable (Zamel, 1982), as her revisions went much below the surface-level revisions of

lexicon and grammar typically associated with inexperienced writers; instead, Lu's revision

process was one of discovery, in which she made substantial changes, or even wrote anew.

What follows are two interactions in which Lu and I discuss examples of problematic

sentences:

Interaction #1

Researcher: So your sentence was, "The picture character mapping task in Tong and Yip's study possibly biased the participants to pay more attention to the semantic radicals. The participants were required to choose a character to represent a concrete object or concept in the pictures." Um, what pictures?

Lu: In the picture.

Researcher: In a picture? So…

Lu: Yeah. In the picture.

Researcher: For example, what, what did they look at first? They looked at a picture?

Lu: So they look at like a picture of bridge, for example. And then they need to choose a character that they think can represent the concept of bridge.

Given my background in Japanese language, I assumed that the pictures were somehow

representative of Chinese characters, but I felt that contextual clarity would improve the sentence.

Lu's oral revision, I believe, provided this clarity. This oral revision of the sentence facilitated

Lu's revision in the final draft of the book chapter as she explained the role of the pictures: "Each

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item contained one picture representing a concrete object and five pseudo-character options that either semantically or phonetically related to the object."

Interaction #2

Researcher: In this sentence, "For East Asian learners, the reason might be the discrepancy between their exposure to and ability to write Chinese characters and the structural and functional rules about the Chinese writing system." I think "exposure to and ability to write" could be clearer…

Lu: Yeah actually I think neither of the expression is very, uh, very precise, because the only, the only thing I want to express is… between their knowledge of Chinese characters and the real rules, the real functional and structural, the knowledge that our Chinese native speakers have.

In Interaction #2, I asked Lu to explain "exposure to and ability to write." Lu quickly noted that neither expression was "very precise," and through oral revision, injected the sentence with clarity by contrasting L2 learners' knowledge with the "real rules" that native speakers possess. The clarity of her oral revision also transferred to her final draft: "For East Asian learners, even though they are already acquainted with the strokes, structures, and writing process of Chinese characters, their knowledge of Chinese orthography, such as the functions of semantic and phonetic radicals, is unsystematic and incomplete."

In both these exchanges, Lu's oral verbalization of her thoughts regarding the text excerpt in question helped her to clarify her thoughts, and subsequently her prose. In this regard, Lu's explanations, in which she clarified her intended meaning to me, were also explanations to herself. She first reflected on the discrepancy between the meaning of the words on the page and the true meaning that she wanted to convey. Lu then realized that her writing needed to achieve the same degree of clarity and simplicity that her vocalization had. This occurred on many other occasions, and invariably resulted in my telling Lu to write it (with a few tweaks) as she had just said it.

In a sense, what Lu and I engaged in was a form of peer review. Although Lu did not review any work of mine, our dialogic interactions during the moments I sought clarity placed us on equal footing, as did our already-established roles of doctoral students. As peers, Lu and I discussed and negotiated my feedback, which Lu ultimately chose to utilize (or not utilize) as she revised. This setting generated some of the benefits associated with peer review, namely meaningful interaction and exposure to different perspectives (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

Multiple studies have employed dialogic interactions in the revision process of L2 writing (see, for example, Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992) or collaborative revision. Mendonca and Johnson's (1994) study on peer revisions in ESL writing, for instance, involved participants who asked questions, offered explanations, gave suggestions, and restated what their peers had written. These interactions enabled participants to better understand what their reviewers found unclear, as well as to negotiate their ideas and to develop a sense of audience. However, many of the episodes in our study regarding revision fell short of this, as Lu's oral revision entailed, essentially, interactions within herself. Lu would simply hear her text aloud – read either by me or by her – and then take steps towards clarifying her intended meaning or making revisions based solely on her thoughts and the aural medium through which her text had just been delivered. While Lu's advanced linguistic skills undoubtedly aided her in making revisions, it was the interactions that seemed to raise her awareness to this possibility.

One of the challenges in Lu's revision process seemed to be a transfer of text from mind to paper. From the two interactions listed above, it could be argued that Lu's thoughts were initially unclear, which resulted in a similar lack of clarity on paper. It was not until our dialogic interactions occurred that Lu was able to reconcile the discrepancies between the ideas in her head and the manner in which she would ultimately communicate them to a reader. Fitzgerald (1987),

a reading and education scholar, refers to text not only in the traditional paper-based sense, but also as "text of the mind," before it is transferred to a palpable medium. She also suggests that revision involves "identifying discrepancies between intended and instantiated text" (p. 484).

Lu's use of vocalization to revise her text helped her not only to identify discrepancies but to reconcile them. Lu alluded to this in our post-study interview, as she talked about some of the major changes she made during her revision process, including the deletion of large chunks of text: "I can delete a lot of things, but those things are still useful in a way that helps me to reach-- if you want to reach the level of brevity and clarity, I feel like you have to go through a phase of verbosity and unclearness." Though this revision process helped Lu to revise her writing, the challenge she faced may not have stemmed from a writing issue. Flower and Hayes (1977) suggest that writing should be treated as a thinking problem, not an organizational problem. In other words, the challenges that writers face have more to do with cognitive processes, such as the act of composing, than they do with an assessment of the proper placement or choice of words in a final product.

As Lu worked to reconcile the discrepancies between the initial thoughts in her mind and the instantiation of those thoughts as she transferred them to paper, it became clear that the oral verbalizations of her revision process were discursive and iterative in nature. Although writing is often taught in stages (e.g. pre-writing, writing, rewriting), these stages are rarely autonomous; instead, they overlap, and, as a hierarchical set of sub-problems, comprise a larger whole that the writer attempts to achieve (Flower & Hayes, 1977). It is from the merging of these sub-problems that the iterative nature of writing arises. The discursive nature of writing, in turn, arises – as was the case for Lu – as a writer comes to understand what they want to say. Through the writing and revision of multiple drafts, a writer nears the goal of "intention and expression becoming one" (Zamel, 1982, p. 205).

Sommers (2011) also suggests that as writers emphasize differences in meaning and work towards achieving clarity, it is the medium of writing – not speech – that allows for the possibility of revision. But while speech may not allow for revision, it is no bit player in the process of revision – indeed, the dialogic interactions of our study enabled Lu to revise her writing *through* speech, as she started with larger ideas in her mind, and through our interactions whittled them down to their essence.

It must be stated that the facilitative role of oral revision in writing is not new and has been investigated in several contexts. In a study examining advanced ESL students' process of writing, Zamel (1983) found that one of her participant's oral revisions enabled her to hear her writing from a different perspective. Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1992), in a study involving native-English speaking US undergraduate students enrolled in a low-level French course, noted that text verbalization may help writers "to perceive irregularities and ill-formedness in the writing, inducing the writer to pay attention to the text" (p. 264). More recently, Thompson and Mackiewicz (2014) found that questions in writing center conferences serve both instructional and conversational functions.

The recommendation to revise orally also appears in numerous writing tutoring books, commonly adopted by tutors in writing centers. The one-on-one meetings in this study mirrored the atmosphere of a writing conference, which provides teachers the opportunity to "hear writers talk about their writing, to listen to their intentions, and to help them lessen the disparity between what was attempted and what was achieved" (Harris, 1986, p. 106). According to *The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors*, tutors should encourage their students to clarify their texts by asking them questions such as, "What is your idea here?" or "What do you want to say?" (Ryan & Zimmerelli, 2016). Writing conference literature also suggests that oral revision can help students

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become aware of wordiness and an overreliance on short sentences (Harris, 1986); a lack of word-level variety and unsuitable sentence structure (Capossela, 1998); and improper usage of punctuation and transition markers (Meyer & Smith, 1987).

Yet in the literature on oral revision of writing, the oral revision serves as a form of cognitive scaffolding on the part of the instructor; the assumption is made that the instructor can still identify errors (e.g. wordiness, sentence structure, punctuation) if the student does not engage in oral revision. For instance, in the Thompson and Mackiewicz (2014) study, in which the tutees were students from freshman comp or sophomore lit courses, 82% of tutors' questions sought common ground (e.g. questions regarding the assignment) or served as scaffolding. In less than 12% of the cases did the tutors' questions pertain to a knowledge deficit regarding a tutee's writing. Yet even these cases had more to do with a tutor lacking information than true knowledge; in one case, the student simply summarized two short stories that the tutor had not read.

At the graduate level, this scenario is more problematic: as students' linguistic and content-specific knowledge becomes more sophisticated, it is less reasonable to expect instructors to identify writing concerns, or distinguish syntactic issues from content-related issues, without the aid of the student. On the one hand, Lu's oral revisions of her writing helped her to consider her prose, as one of Zamel's (1983) participants noted in her experience, "in a new and more removed way" (p. 174). On the other, the oral revisions proved necessary for me to make sense of the true meaning Lu wanted to convey. Because of my reliance on Lu to make progress with revision, Lu utilized our dialogic interactions to clarify her meaning and flesh out the most important details for inclusion in subsequent drafts.

Acts of Appropriation

Throughout the study, as previously noted, Lu displayed many instances of increased audience awareness and was able to orally verbalize her thoughts to revise her writing. This was possible, in large part, because of Lu's advanced-level English language skills. These skills also played a significant role in the third and final theme of this study, namely acts of appropriation.

In one sub-section of Lu's book chapter, titled "Semantic Radical Awareness," Lu discusses the details of a published study whose purpose was to determine Chinese L2 learners' ability to process the meaning of Chinese characters. In the study, participants were presented with a semantic radical[1] followed by four characters with different relationships to the radical. In her draft, Lu explained the first relationship in the following manner: "a character with the radical and a semantic relation to it, e.g., 犭 (dog; animal) in 狼 (wolf)." In my comment, I informed Lu that I thought this explanation was wordy, and asked her if we could revise her text to "a radical and its semantic relation to a character." I display this below in one of our interactions:

> Researcher: "So do you think what I suggested is different in meaning from what you wrote?"
>
> Lu: "Yes, because these four conditions, it's kind of like they have two values. The first value is whether or not the character has the radical, so that's the first value. And the second value is whether or not this character is semantically related to the radical. So that's why I always started the sentence with, 'a character with the radical.' It means the character has the radical."

However, I was not aware of these two values; specifically, I did not realize that Lu had presented these four relationships with two overarching points in mind: first, the presence or absence of a particular radical in a character, and second, the presence or absence of a semantic

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[1] In Chinese, a radical is a graphical component of a character, often a semantic indicator. For example, in the character "狼" (wolf), the first portion of the character (犭) is the semantic radical meaning "dog" or "animal."

relation between a radical and a character. Although Lu did not explicitly state these values in her writing, she felt her intended audience would be able to infer these points.

In another of our meetings, Lu and I discussed a comment I had given on a section of her writing that centered on Chinese L2 learners' familiarity with Chinese characters. In her initial draft, Lu had written the following: "A comparison of learners' naming accuracy and speed among different priming conditions showed that there was a graphic facilitation effect for naming speed in the first experiment, that is, students name those characters with graphic primed characters" (underline added). In my comment I had written, "Do you mean students identify those characters? I think 'identify' sounds better here than 'name'. Thoughts?" Lu responded by informing me that in the field of L2 Chinese character acquisition, "name" means knowing the pronunciation of a character, whereas "recognize" means knowing both the pronunciation and meaning of the character; the study she cited focused only on the accuracy and speed of pronouncing a character (i.e. participants did not need to say or know the character's meaning) and therefore "name" was the more appropriate term.

In the first instance, because I was less familiar with the content of Lu's writing, my suggestion would have changed the overall structure that Lu employed to present these categories; more importantly, it would have removed the emphasis from the content that Lu wanted to highlight. In the second instance, my suggestion would have introduced incorrect terminology. Had Lu not displayed advanced-level English writing or speaking skills, this may have increased the chance of her implementing my suggestions, which, in turn, would have been an act of appropriation on my part. Traditionally, appropriation has been defined as the ownership of a student's text being "stolen" by a teacher (Hyland & Hyland, 2006); the student implements a teacher's suggested revisions, despite the student disagreeing with those revisions or the teacher

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not fully understanding the intended purpose in the student's writing. Multiple studies have discussed this type of appropriation (e.g. Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Ferris, 2007; Ferris, 2014; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Goldstein, 2004) and its ramifications on L2 writers. Writing center scholarship also examines the potential liabilities of a tutor lacking the specialized knowledge of a student's subject matter (see, for instance, Mackiewicz, 2004; Thompson et al., 2009).

On the other hand, some research considers appropriation within dialogic interactions a two-way street, in which both teachers and L2 writers appropriate one another's words (see Tardy, 2006). Specifically, while teachers may still recommend changes that a writer finds wrong or inappropriate, the writer is likewise able to communicate such sentiments to the teacher. These studies often employ sociocultural theories of appropriation; here, appropriation is not monologic (or a one-way street), but serves instead to emphasize the learner's agency. As Tardy (2006) notes, "Appropriation not only acts on writers but also serves as a tool *for* writers, who may even influence those with more power, including their teachers and mentors" (p. 73) (italics in original). Steve Sherwood, a writing center scholar, notes the unpredictability that often entails writing tutorials:

> Writers may interject, ask unanticipated questions for which the tutor has no definite answer, and express misunderstandings the tutor must attempt to address on the spot. And students are right to put tutors on the spot, to ask questions, to lead the conversation astray, to misunderstand points, and to resist advice, especially when doing so leads them to deeper understanding of their own ideas and writing processes. (2007, p. 57)

In short, writers should push back, and writing tutorials can provide them the means to accomplish it.

In this study, dialogic interactions served as the vehicle through which both Lu and I engaged in acts of appropriation – or, more specifically, to *avoid* acts of appropriation. When instances of appropriation did occur, they typically involved Lu defending her textual choices, or better educating me about the content of her writing and how that influenced her textual choices.

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What resulted was either no change at all to Lu's text, or a change that stemmed from an additional suggestion I made only after Lu helped me understand why my first suggestion for revision was off the mark. Our discursive interactions embodied a dialogic process characterized by exploration and interrogation, as well as cooperative and reciprocal inquiry (Gravett & Petersen, 2002). In short, our dialogic interactions, coupled with Lu's advanced-level English skills, aided Lu in using appropriation as a tool not only to teach me about her content but to justify the choices she made in her writing.

Conclusion

Typically, studies utilizing dialogic interactions in writing tutoring dyads have adopted teacher-led forms of scaffolding as their framework to examine how these interactions enable teachers to communicate writing issues to students. Examples include the use of cognitive and motivational scaffolding through both verbal and non-verbal language (e.g. hand gestures) to collaborate and build rapport with students (Thompson, 2009); the analysis of cognitive and motivational scaffolding strategies to examine the attributes of successful writing conferences (Mackiewicz & Thompson, 2014); and the roles of negotiation and scaffolding in teacher talk about revision (Ewert, 2009).

In contrast, the purpose of this study was to investigate the potential of dialogic interactions in a graduate student tutoring dyad in which adopting traditional forms of scaffolding was often not possible. Specifically, because of my limited knowledge of Lu's content, I needed first to rely on Lu's explanations of her expertise before I could offer suggestions for revision. Despite these differences, several of this study's findings still mirror those of other studies. For instance, my lack of specific content knowledge resulted in my providing Lu with inappropriate advice, which reflects Mackiewicz's (2004) findings, in which tutors without subject-area expertise made

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incorrect recommendations and decreased the effectiveness of the tutor-tutee interactions. My off-target advice also led to the possibility of my appropriating Lu's work, a concern raised in several studies.

Given the nature of the unique tutor-tutee relationship in this study, several themes emerged. First, Lu recognized through our dialogic interactions that a heightened awareness of audience would help her in producing more palatable and reader-friendly prose. As a tutor, I gained a better understanding of Lu's content through dialogic interactions, which aided me in distinguishing content- from linguistic-related issues. Second, my dependence on Lu's subject-specific expertise encouraged Lu to orally verbalize text excerpts that I had struggled to understand in writing; this oral verbalization acted as a form of revision, which Lu transferred to her writing to clarify her prose. Third, because of Lu's advanced-level English-language skills and subject-area expertise, coupled with our peer status as doctoral colleagues, Lu was able to push back against my unintended acts of appropriation and take ownership of her texts.

These findings have rich implications for writing tutoring, particularly for dyads in which L2 graduate students possess both subject-area expertise and advanced-level English skills. While some studies have pointed out the liability of a tutor not possessing subject-area expertise (e.g. Mackiewicz, 2004; Thompson et al., 2009), these scenarios become increasingly unavoidable, especially at the graduate level. As doctoral and post-doc students continue to specialize, it is highly unlikely that a tutor will have enough knowledge of their field to completely bypass off-the-mark comments. Therefore, finding strategies to help these students express their technical knowledge differently becomes increasingly vital. In addition, in the event that L2 learners' speaking skills are superior to their writing skills, dialogic interactions can potentially perform the duty of bridging the gap between speaking and writing. Tutors and L2 learners – particularly those

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whose subject matter is beyond the grasp of their tutor – must work together to recognize that the key to successful revision may lie in L2 learners' ability to clarify their ideas through oral verbalization. In these situations, the tutor may temporarily not be a tutor at all but an audience member whose role is simply to ask questions. Third, as tutees come to recognize how the weight of their knowledge can impact the tutor-tutee dynamic, dialogic interactions may help tutees to push back against acts of tutor-led appropriation. Thonus (2001) remarks that the role of the tutor must be "redefined and renegotiated in each interaction" (p. 77). It is important to note that the role of the tutee must also be redefined and renegotiated.

What ultimately ensues – as tutors engage with L2 learners with specialized content knowledge and advanced writing and speaking skills – is the opportunity to instill in the L2 learner the notion that the writing tutor's role should gradually wane and eventually cease. Because L2 learners must educate their tutors on content – however casually – to make progress on their writing, they in essence become tutors themselves. As this process unfolds, tutors' concerns over appropriation may subside not because of their efforts to avoid it, but because of the L2 learner's increased agency and self-efficacy that stem from the need for the L2 learner to take charge of what the tutor cannot.

Given the nature of this study, several limitations must be discussed. First, the relationship that Lu and I had established prior to the study likely had a positive outcome on the results. Because our doctoral programs (Foreign Language/ESL Education, Second Language Acquisition) cross paths, we had gotten to know each other through two courses we took together. Further, Lu was motivated to take part in the study not only to work on her writing but to receive assistance on the book chapter she was writing with her advisor. These factors likely helped to alleviate common pitfalls of tutoring sessions (e.g. appropriation) and may thus have compromised some of the

"naturalness" typically associated with interactions of less established tutor-tutee relationships. Second, because of the single-participant case study format, this study's findings must be taken with caution. While the adoption of dialogic interactions does shed light on the potential benefits of a more egalitarian tutor-tutee relationship (particularly at the graduate level) and a more peripheral role for the tutor, implications are restricted by variables such as gender, age, and native languages(s).

Because of the relatively short timeframe of this study, examining my participant's writing over time was impossible. To this end, one area of future research could involve a longitudinal study that examines how a participant's increased understanding of and participation in dialogic interactions potentially affects the participant's writing and revision strategies. Another potential research avenue would be to further extend the role of the tutor in the dialogic interactions to the periphery. As previously noted, my participant's oral verbalization served as a form of revision that stemmed from my bringing an issue to her attention. It would be interesting to examine if L2 learners can successfully revise through oral verbalization without the prompt of a tutor.

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Appendix

Dialogue Sample of Selective Coding #1 (my understanding or assumption was correct)

Lu: The reason that I want to split up recognition and production [of characters is because] for the recognition the result is inconsistent, like some of [the participants] did observe the character density effect and some did not, but for production it was kind of consistent, like all of them kind of detected…
Researcher: The denser [the character] is, the more difficult it is to reproduce it, right?
Lu: Right.

Dialogue Sample of Selective Coding #2 (my understanding or assumption was incorrect)

Researcher: Lu, can you say, "Production entails recalling a complete graphic form from memory, and then transforming that knowledge…" like…
Lu: Yes, I already did it.
Researcher: Oh okay, okay. "…and then transforming that knowledge…"
Lu: It's the second part that's weird to you?
Researcher: "Transforming that knowledge into motor skills"?
Lu: Uh-huh.
Researcher: The motor skills…
Lu: I mean the head action, like you…
Researcher: But what if it's verbal?
Lu: Verbal. Verbal, we don't call it production.
Researcher: Oh, so the production is only in written form?
Lu: Yeah. Written production.

Dialogue Sample of Selective Coding #2 (I had little to no understanding)

Researcher: I had a question about this, in paragraph 4. It says, "On the contrary, partial or less accurate information of the character, along with contextual clues, can lead to successful character recognition."
Lu: Okay.
Researcher: I just want to make sure I understand this, because typically when, I understand partial information can still help, but when I think about information that is less accurate, it still helps? It still can lead to success?
Lu: It's more like, so, I guess this partial or less accurate is kind of a parallel form to the complete knowledge of the character.
Researcher: Right.
Lu: Like you know, for example, this is my surname. So if you want to reproduce the character, you need to, you know, remember every strokes and their compositions, their places. But for like a recognition, maybe you just have a sense, so, because, even characters look very differently in terms of their shape, or contour.
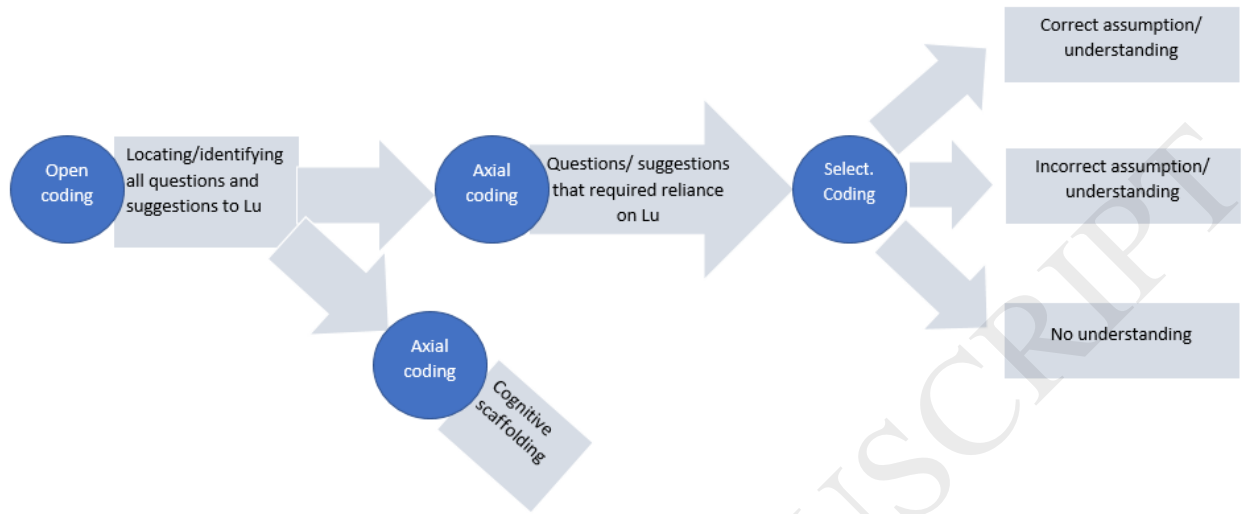
Figure 1: Data analysis

Table 1: Book chapter sections

Section	Title	Word count
1	Introduction	100
2	Historical Perspectives	700
3	Core Issues	
3.1	Cognitive and Psychological Processes of Chinese Character Learning	5,300
3.2	Learners' Perspectives in Learning Chinese Characters	2,600
3.3	Pedagogical Issues	1,300
4	Research Approaches	1,500
5	Pedagogical Implications	1,100
6	Future Directions	650

Table 2: Meeting schedule

Date	Length of time (in minutes, seconds)	Discussion
February 25, 2016	35:16	Early draft
March 3, 2016	81:14	Early draft
March 11, 2016	54:57	Early draft
March 17, 2016	64:54	Early draft
March 25, 2016	67:26	Early draft
April 1, 2016	59:55	Early draft
April 7, 2016	64:28	Early draft
April 14, 2016	76:55	Early draft
April 19, 2016	65:28	Early draft
April 20, 2016	66:59	Early draft
April 27, 2016	38:52	Early draft
April 28, 2016	83:17	Early draft
August 19, 2016	65:16	Revisions
August 22, 2016	53:20	Revisions
August 26, 2016	69:47	Revisions
September 6, 2016	63:04	Revisions
October 19, 2016	51:47	Final interview