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# EXPLORING SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING TEACHER COGNITION

by

NUR YIGITOGLU

Under the direction of Dr. Diane D. Belcher

## ABSTRACT

Second language (L2) teacher cognition has in recent years attracted the attention of an increasing number of researchers. While much L2 teacher cognition research focuses on the teaching of grammar (e.g. Phipps & Borg, 2009), L2 writing teacher cognition has received considerably less attention. It has, however, been suggested that L2 writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers (Casanave, 2004) and as language learners may play a crucial role in their decision making as teachers of L2 writing. In an attempt to address this gap in the L2 teacher cognition literature, this study investigates English as a second language (ESL) writing teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and as writers in their first and/or second language(s). The purpose is to discover how ESL writing teachers' beliefs about and practice of teaching L2 writing are influenced by their experiences in writing in their first and/or second languages. Three native (NES) and two non-native English-speaking (NNES) teachers teaching L2 writing took part in the study. During a 15-week semester, their ESL writing classes were periodically observed and audio-recorded. Additionally, each teacher was interviewed two times using stimulated recall regarding both their classroom instructional practices and instruction provided in the margins of student papers. Findings revealed that, language learning in general was an important contributor to both NNES and NES teachers' cognitions. Even NES teachers who were not advanced in their respective second and/or additional languages still referred to their language learning experiences. The NNES teacher participants also commented

that they sometimes had to step out of their own language experience in order to better help their students. Results also indicated that L2 writing teachers without advanced L2 literacy skills were influenced primarily by their L1 writing experiences. L2 writing teachers with advanced L2 literacy skills, however, were greatly influenced by their L2 writing experience. In all of the cases, being an advanced writer, whether in their L1 or L2s, was an important contributor to L2 writing teachers' cognitions.

**INDEX WORDS:** Teaching writing, Teacher cognition, Second language (L2) writing teachers, Teaching practices, Second language teachers' self-perceptions, Teachers' writing experiences, Qualitative research, Teacher education

EXPLORING SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING TEACHER COGNITION

by

NUR YIGITOGU

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

August 2011

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EXPLORING SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING TEACHER COGNITION

by

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August 2011

## DEDICATION

To the memory of my father, who was tremendously supportive of my pursuing a doctoral degree in the U.S., and who passed away just before I started my doctoral program

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Reflecting on my graduate education experiences in the U.S. over the last five years, I felt very grateful to many people who made my journey a rewarding one. In particular, this dissertation, the final product of my doctoral studies, would not have been possible without the support and encouragement I received from family, friends and colleagues.

First, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Diane D. Belcher, for her patience, support and encouragement throughout my doctoral program in general and my dissertation writing in particular. She was always available for me whenever I needed her and provided additional personal time to help me deal with some challenges in these three years at GSU. During the dissertation writing process, she sacrificed many hours reading my drafts, providing constructive feedback, and editing my writing. I know that without her dedication, I would not have completed this program and the dissertation.

I also would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my committee members Dr. Stephanie Lindemann, Dr. John M. Murphy and Dr. Tony Silva. Dr. Lindemann provided me with feedback throughout the various stages of this dissertation. Dr. Murphy introduced me to teacher cognition in his teacher education class, and since then, he has been providing me with constant guidance. I also would like to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Silva, who graciously agreed to serve as an external member of my committee. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to receive his insightful comments, guidance and support on earlier versions of this dissertation.

I extend special thanks to Chris Casanave, who sparked my interest in the influence of teachers' self-perceptions as writers on their teaching by writing her 2004 book. Additionally, I



also had the opportunity to work with her on several of my book reviews. Those experiences have contributed to my growth as an L2 writer.

Many thanks to the teacher-participants involved in dissertation. In all of these cases, I was able to not only discover answers to my question but also observe good examples of teaching writing. They were all passionate about teaching writing, and that inspired me throughout the data collection.

Many thanks also to my colleagues in the Applied Linguistics doctoral program, the faculty in Intensive English program as well as the faculty in the English as a Second Language program. I would like to mention some of them here: Amanda Lanier, Brittany Polat, Weiwei Yang, Man Li, Audrey Roberson, John Bunting, Sharon Cavusgil, Margareta Larrson, Luciana Junquiera, Kate Moran, and many others for their support. They supported me in different stages of this research, providing feedback, helping me make sense of things, and also enjoy my doctoral years. Many thanks also to my dear friend Flori Nicolás Conesa of University of Murcia, Spain, for supporting and encouraging me from afar.

My heartfelt gratitude also goes to Zeynep Altinsel of Michigan State University for her unfailing friendship, continuous support and encouragement since the beginning of my master's degree. I know she initially signed up for listening to my problems only during my MA program, but later, she did not have any choice. Words cannot express my gratitude to her, but I can at least try to thank her by taking her to a Bosphorus trip next time we are both in Istanbul.

Finally, my most heartfelt thanks go to my mother, Gulnaz Yigitoglu, who always provided me with emotional and financial support, and gave me the courage to follow my dreams. Even though she is hundreds of miles away, her love and thoughts are always here with me.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Aims of the study

This is a study on the impact of English writing teachers' cognitions as tied to the teaching of second language (L2) writing. Although teacher cognition related to the teaching of grammar is relatively well explored (e.g. Borg, 2001, Borg & Burns, 2008; Farrell & Lim, 2005; Phipps & Borg, 2009), L2 writing teacher cognition has received considerably less attention. In terms of research methodology, L2 writing teacher cognition research so far has included relatively little classroom observation data collection. At the same time, as the literature on written feedback informs us, teaching writing includes not only classroom instruction but also written instruction provided by teachers in the margins of student papers (e.g. Leki, 1990). Thus, for a more inclusive study on writing teachers' cognitions and practices, it is important to investigate both teachers' stated beliefs and also their instruction in L2 writing classrooms and in the margins of students' papers.

Casanave, when reviewing ongoing questions related to L2 writing teachers' decision-making processes, underlined the importance of researching and understanding the effect of teachers' experiences as writers in both their first language (L1) and/or L2s and called for increased attention to this aspect of teacher cognition (Casanave, 2004). Additionally, other authors have addressed the issues related to L2 writing teacher cognition, including writing teachers' self-reported beliefs and practices about teaching and learning writing (Lee, 1998); writing teachers' conceptualizing, planning and delivering writing courses (Cumming, 2003), teachers' use of written language in ESL classrooms (Burns, 1992), L2 writing teachers' beliefs



about and practices of error feedback (Diab, 2005; Lee, 2003) and writing teachers' perspectives about their own development as teachers of writing (Lee, 2010).

Despite the existing body of research on teacher cognition in writing instruction, to my knowledge, no studies have explored ESL writing teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and writers. Theories about teacher cognition and L2 writing teacher education need to draw on information about not only teachers' beliefs about certain aspects of teaching and learning of writing, but also L2 writing teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and writers in their L1 and/or L2s—beliefs that may influence how they see the teaching and learning of L2 writing. To address this gap in literature, the research study investigates ESL writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners and as writers and the extent to which their beliefs about and practice of teaching L2 writing are influenced by their experiences in writing in their L1 and/or L2s. Because the language learning and writing experiences of native speaking (NES) and nonnative speaking (NNES) L2 writing teachers may be quite different, the perceptions and practices of both NES and NNES teachers were explored in the study.

## 1.2. The organization of the dissertation

This dissertation has five chapters. The first chapter, the present one, provides the aims of the study along with information on overall organization of the dissertation.

The second chapter includes a review of the related literature on teacher cognition and nonnative teachers' perceptions. In the chapter, I first review previous research studies on teacher cognition as tied to the teaching of writing. In the chapter's second part, I present previous studies on the perceptions of nonnative English speaking (NNES) teachers. In light of

these two most related lines of literature, I conclude chapter 2 by highlighting some of the major gaps in the literature, grounding the present research in this literature as well as presenting the research questions that guided the rest of the study.

Chapter 3 provides readers with detailed information on research methodology. More specifically, in this section, I provide information on the context of the study, participants, data collection and procedures, and data analysis. The aim of the third chapter is to provide the details of data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter 4 presents the combined results and discussion of the cases investigated. The analysis of results of each case and an analysis across all five cases are presented.

Chapter 5 provides the summary of results of the cases along with further discussion. In addition, chapter 5 includes pedagogical implications for teacher education and research implications for future research studies on L2 writing teacher cognition.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Definitions of key terms

Before any review of literature on teacher cognition and perceptions, it is important to define key terms to which I will refer to frequently throughout the research: *beliefs*, *teachers' self-perception*, *writing experience*, and *teacher cognition*. Defining an abstract term as *belief* is a complex task. Although there is no consensus about what exactly distinguishes *belief* from any form of *knowledge*, some scholars attempted to identify its core characteristics. The structure of *beliefs*, according to Nespor (1987), can be differentiated from any other forms of *knowledge* by identifying four features: *existential presumption*, *alternativity*, *affective and evaluative aspects*, and *episodic storage*. *Existential presumption*, the first characteristic, refers to the inconvertible, personal truths everyone holds. *Alternativity* includes personal attempts to create an ideal situation that may differ from the reality. *Belief systems*, Nespor (1987) proposes, have stronger reliance on the third feature, *affective and evaluative aspect* than *knowledge systems*. That is, *knowledge* of a domain is different from feelings about a domain. Lastly, Nespor suggests that *beliefs* reside in *episodic storage* with information obtained from experience and cultural sources of knowledge transmission (e.g. folklore). In other words, *episodic* memory which stores beliefs includes information about personal experiences, events, and episodes. In that sense, *episodic memory* is different from *semantic memory*, in which *knowledge* is stored according to such structures as principles, propositional structures, etc. (Nespor, 1987).

While information on personal experiences influences *beliefs*, *beliefs* also affect a broader dimension, namely *teacher cognition*. The second term, *teacher cognition*, is defined as “the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching –what teachers know, believe and think” (Borg,

2003, p. 81). Thus, this complex dimension, cognition, is broader than *beliefs*, knowledge and thoughts and it functions as an umbrella term covering all these imperceptible domains.

While *teacher cognition* can be directly related to *beliefs*, *self-perception* can also be indirectly related to *beliefs*. For the research, *self-perception* is operationalized as an awareness of the characteristics that constitute one's self as a teacher. These characteristics can be based on teachers' prior experiences and beliefs about as well as memories related to their own L2 learning experiences and writing experiences in their first and/or second language.

As can be seen from the working definitions above, *beliefs*, *cognitions* and *self-perceptions* are all influenced by experiences. Finally, for the research, one of the main investigated constructs is ESL writing teachers' *writing experiences* in their first and/or second languages. By this term, I mainly refer to any writing experience that is extensive and/or significant in one's first and/or second languages. In terms of length, it refers to any writing that is more than one paragraph. It can include any kinds of writing including but not limited to academic papers, book reviews, journals, etc.

For a teacher cognition study such as this present research, *self-perceptions*, *cognitions*, and *beliefs* of both native English speaking and nonnative English speaking teachers are important for two main reasons: As Richards and Lockhart (1994) indicated, instructional teaching practices are often influenced by teachers' *beliefs* and *self-perceptions*. It is, therefore, important to explore these terms to fully understand the underlying reasons for their pedagogical decisions in English language classrooms. In addition, all of these terms are helpful to better understand the complexity of cognition.

These key terms, namely, *self-perceptions*, *beliefs*, *cognitions*, and *writing experiences*, have been used frequently in previous literature on nonnative speaking teachers and L2 teacher

cognition. In this section, I will review previous research studies that cover the literature most relevant for the research study on L2 writing cognition. As the present research compared the cognitions of nonnative speaking teachers and native speaking ESL writing teachers and their practices in ESL writing classrooms, relevant prior literature can be grouped into two main categories: As one of the main investigated constructs of the research is teacher cognition, this review will include a review of relevant literatures on L2 teacher cognition. The second line of relevant research studies will include literature on nonnative English speaking teachers.

## 2.2. Review of literature on L2 teacher cognition

A perusal of the literature on teacher cognition studies reveals a great diversity in terms of topics that have been investigated such as teachers' beliefs about literacy (e.g. Bausch, 2010; Norman & Spencer, 2005), teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning (e.g. Doyle, 1997), teachers' beliefs about their students (Correa, Perry, Sims, Miller, & Fang, 2008), and teachers' decision-making processes (e.g. Johnson, 1992; Woods, 1996). It seems, however, very clear that a large body of work in L2 teacher cognition studies tend to focus on various issues related to teachers' cognitions related to the teaching of grammar (Borg, 2003). For example, English teachers' cognitions as tied to the teaching of grammar have been investigated in a number of different contexts including Catalonia (Pahissa & Tragant, 2009), Georgia (Polat, 2009), Hong Kong (Andrews, 1997, 1999, 2003); Malta (Borg, 1998, 1999, 2001), New Zealand (Barnard & Scampton, 2008), Singapore (Farrell, 1999, Farrell & Lim, 2005), the U.K. (Burgess & Etherington, 2002), and Turkey (Phipps & Borg, 2009). Studies also compared L2 teachers' cognitions regarding grammar teaching in more than one context (Borg & Burns, 2008; Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Scweers, 1997; Schultz, 2001).

This extensive body of research on L2 grammar teaching cognition, however, contrasts with the scarcity of work on L2 writing teacher cognition. Some earlier studies in this area have reported teachers' beliefs about process approach to teaching of writing (Lipa & Harlin, 1990) L2 writing teachers' realizations regarding their integration of the process-oriented approach to their teaching of writing (Tsui, 1996), L2 writing instructors' conceptualizations of teaching of L2 writing (Cumming, 2003) and L2 writing teachers' conceptualizations regarding implementing changes in their teaching of writing (Shi & Cumming, 1995). These foundational studies have provided us with teachers' beliefs about different aspects of teaching writing.

In addition to teachers' beliefs, a number of studies have also reported L2 writing teachers teaching practices. Many of these studies have found a gap between teachers' beliefs and instructional practices as tied to the teaching of writing. For instance, Lee (1998, 2003) investigated the beliefs and practices of L2 writing teachers at a number of secondary schools in Hong Kong. Employing surveys and follow-up interviews with English teachers in both of these studies, Lee wanted to elicit writing teachers' views about different aspects of teaching writing. In her 1998 study, Lee only focused on teachers' beliefs about teaching writing and their instructional practices in ESL classrooms in the secondary schools. Based on her results, Lee concluded that there was a gap between teachers' stated beliefs and instructional practices. For instance, although most teachers stated the importance of textual coherence in writing, in their instruction they mainly favored grammar and vocabulary. Similarly, most teachers stated that their instruction is explicit in their responses to survey questions. However, the interview data suggested that they simply "*mention or remind* students of certain important features of writing before an assignment" (Lee, 1998, p. 68) [Emphasis in original] In her later study (2003), Lee again investigated this relationship between Hong Kong English teachers' perspectives and

practices, this time focusing on error feedback. The results indicated that teachers' stated error correction practices were not always in line with what they said they believed and/or what the previous literature had informed them regarding error treatment. For instance, most teachers thought selective marking may be more efficient, but, at the same time, they had some concerns about it. Similarly, as opposed to what previous literature suggested to them in regards to error feedback, the teachers who participated in this study did not seem to develop students' self-editing strategies. Like Lee (1998, 2003), Diab (2005) also looked at the feedback practices, but Diab used think-aloud protocols in an attempt to analyze the teacher's practice of giving written feedback and her beliefs about responding to ESL students' writing. Results from both think-aloud protocols and interviews seem to indicate similar discrepancies between the teacher's beliefs and practices regarding responding to ESL student writing. For instance, although in the interviews the instructor stated that she tried not to focus on grammar when responding to student writing, it was observed during the think-aloud protocol that she seemed to favor grammar correction.

Some studies have also looked at the possible reasons between L2 writing beliefs and practices. For instance, Lee (2011), in one of her most recent studies, has shifted her focus from the act of giving feedback to teachers' readiness to implement changes in their feedback instruction. Similar to most of her previous studies on written feedback, Lee's 2011 study also investigated written feedback practices of Hong Kong secondary teachers. Results revealed the participant-teachers' inner conflicts regarding the feedback revolution. In other words, while the teachers cognitively agreed on the importance of the feedback revolution, the teachers also noted some factors that hindered their readiness to implement changes in their written feedback

instruction. Some of these factors included (1) lack of teacher training, (2) lack of support from key stakeholders (e.g. department heads, principals, etc.) and (3) practical constraints.

As Lee (2011) reported, the mismatches between teachers' stated beliefs and practices regarding L2 writing may be as a result of lack of teacher training. Some studies have also focused on teachers' perspectives on their own development (Lee, 2010) and the developments of teachers' L2 academic literacy skills (Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011). Lee (2010), for instance, is the first published study that touches on both teacher education as well as teacher cognition by investigating teachers' perspectives on their development as writing teachers at the end of an in-service teacher education program in Hong Kong. Lee conducted interviews as the main data collection method. In addition, she used teachers' classroom research reports written for teacher training class to triangulate the interview data. It turned out that writing teacher training promoted the participants' learning as teachers as well as their identities as writing teachers. Among factors that promoted teacher learning during teacher education were problematization of conventional approaches, review of research literature, teachers' inquiry on various topics they had observed in their own classrooms, exposure to various writing experiences, exploration of writing teacher identity, and balancing the ideal good writing practices with realistic practices.

While several studies in second language writing teacher cognition shed light on the importance of investigating the relationship between teachers' beliefs about teaching of writing and their actual practices in L2 writing classrooms, these studies are limited in terms of the methods they included. Specifically, very few studies included classroom observations to gain some insight on their practices (Burns, 1992). Instead, authors conducted interviews (e.g. Cumming, 2003; Diab, 2005), administered surveys (e.g. Lipa & Harlin, 1990; Lee, 2011), reflected on their own development as L2 writing teachers (e.g. Blanton, L. L., Kroll, B.,



Cumming, A., Erickson, M., Johns, A. M., Leki, I., et al., 2002) or combined surveys and interviews to elicit teachers' thinking and practices (Lee, 1998; 2003). The results reported in the studies with no classroom observation component remained on the self-reported level. In contrast, most teacher cognition studies as tied to other aspects of teaching have employed a combination of observation and interview data (e.g. Basturkmen et al, 2004; Borg, 1999; Borg, 2001; Phipps and Borg, 2009). In particular, some studies included observational data to check if what teachers report as their beliefs is tied to their teaching contexts or practices (e.g. Polat, 2009). Some authors collected observational data first and then used that data as the basis for generating rich data in stimulated-recall sessions, and post-observation interviews (e.g. Borg, 1998, 1999, 2001; Farrell & Lim, 2005). Borg (2003) points out the crucial role of including observations in language teacher cognition studies in the following way:

Can language teacher cognition be usefully studied without reference to what happens in classrooms? Personally I am skeptical, though it is clear that where large numbers of teachers are being studied and/ or ideal typologies are being developed, analyses solely of teachers' reported cognitions can provide a useful basis for further inquiry. Ultimately, though, we are interested in understanding teachers' professional actions, not what or how they think in isolation of what they do. (Borg, 2003, p. 105)

Compared to the literature on teacher cognition focusing on the teaching of grammar, there are few classroom-observation-based studies on L2 writing teacher cognition studies. This shortage of studies points to a need for research using and integrating this method in research studies on L2 writing teacher cognition.

Similarly, analyses of teacher feedback on student writing have not been used as a data source in L2 writing teacher cognition studies. Considering that much instruction happens in the

margins of the papers in ESL writing classrooms (Ferris, 2006; Leki, 1990), observations and analyses of teacher feedback on student writing seems to be crucial for teacher cognition studies as tied to the teaching of L2 writing.

### 2.3. Review of literature on nonnative English speaking teachers

It is by now well-documented that NNES make up more than 80% of the English teaching profession globally (e.g. Canagarajah, 1990; Braine, 2010). Despite the growing number of NNES teachers in the profession, most of the scholarly work focuses on student perceptions of nonnative speaking English teachers (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Hertel & Sunderman, 2009; Kelch & Santana-Williamson, 2002; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002, 2005; Pacek, 2005). Some authors also investigated self-perceptions of NNES teachers, but most of these research studies have focused on perceptions of NNES teachers as tied to their pronunciation and accents (e.g. Jenkins, 2005, Sifakis & Sougari, 2005). Theories about NNES teachers need to draw on information about not only about NNES teachers' self-perceptions about their speaking, but also other self-perceptions that might affect their instructional practices (e.g. Braine, 1999). Thus, previous literature shows a major lack in the area of self-perceptions of NNES teachers that might affect their instructional practices, especially those that are used in the teaching of writing.

Previous studies on teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers include literacy autobiographies of NNES teachers. Connor (1999), for instance, documented her learning to write in English as a native speaker of Finnish. Li's 1999 study is a similar piece which details Li's own experience in learning to write in English. As a Chinese native speaker, Li had some challenges as she became a writer in English. She explained her own perception of her writing

after getting her work published as follows: “Despite my initial success, I was still embarrassed by my accent in speech and writing and was still unsure whether I could claim the title of an author” (p. 51). But later, her dissertation topic helped her utilize both her Chinese and American self and she became a very successful writer publishing books in the area of teaching writing. Looking back to the challenges she faced and rewards that she received on the way to become a good writer, she concludes in the following way:

Together they [challenges and rewards] gave a strong signal of affirmation not only to me but also to all non-native speakers dedicated to English language education. Coming from a different world, we bring with us a gift to our adoptive country and the country values our contribution. (Li, 1999, p. 54)

In addition to these autobiographical accounts of NNEST teachers as writers, there are also a few accounts, such as Liu (2005) and Tsui (1999), on NNEST teachers’ self-perceptions as tied to the teaching of writing. These studies reported that NNESTs can have advantages as teachers. Liu (2005), for instance, investigated Chinese graduate teaching assistants teaching freshman composition to native English speaking students. Focusing on four Chinese graduate teaching assistants, Liu explored the participants’ perceptions of themselves as well as student reactions to having a Chinese graduate teaching assistant in a freshman composition class. One of the main findings was that although Chinese teachers felt intimidated to teach native speakers a composition class, some of them actually utilized their English language learning experience and writing skills in Chinese. For instance, Bai, one of the Chinese graduate assistants in the study, explained writing in a first language and a second language in the following way:

I think that if we (as NNESTs) can share with our students the good things in our own culture, then we can bring our resources into full play. I also find that if you can write

well in your native language, you can also write well in your second language. So we do have things to offer to our students. (Liu, 2005, p. 164)

One surprising finding of this study is that although Chinese teaching assistants taught writing, their main concern related to their teaching was in their speaking-related mistakes they made during their lectures. Two of the participants, Hong and Bai, indicated this frustration in establishing credibility for their self-perceptions as teachers in the following way:

I wrote down the things that I would talk in class. Of course, it was impossible for me to write everything down before each class. Sometimes, when I tried to describe something, I chose not to use it because I was afraid of mispronouncing it. My accent and my mistakes in speaking made me frustrated. (Liu, 2005, p. 162)

[L]anguage barrier is just unconquerable. To compensate for that disadvantage, I wrote down every single sentence before my first class.... But, of course, I could still hear myself making mistakes in my speech ...which bothered me a lot. (Liu, 2005, p. 172)

Thus, it seems that, even when teaching writing, NNEST teachers might still be having “inferiority complex”, as Medgyes (1994) noted, regarding their accents and speaking-related mistakes.

In some cases, teachers’ negative experiences learning L2 writing leads to different choices teaching it. Tsui (1999) investigated a Chinese teacher teaching writing in an EFL context, Hong Kong. Tsui focused on primarily one teacher’s integration of process writing to her teaching writing to Chinese students. Julie, the Chinese teacher who participated in the study, shaped her teaching according to her own learning English writing experience. She herself was taught using the product-oriented approach, with special emphasis on grammatical accuracy and rhetorical organization. But Julie was not happy with her teaching of writing, because “she knew

that writing was a problem for her students because it had been a problem for her when she was young” (p. 99). Understanding her students’ frustrations as learners of English, she tried to integrate the process-oriented approach in her teaching. Although she faced some dilemmas on the way of exploring possible methods as a writing teacher, she explored the value of mixing process-oriented approach with the product-oriented approach.

The studies above have focused on nonnative speaking teachers as writers. They have tended to focus on the profile of nonnative English speaking teachers as writers in their second languages, although they sometime also discussed their language learning experience on the way to becoming a proficient writer. In contrast to these studies, however, another strand of research on nonnative speaking teachers has concerned NNS teachers’ language learning experience as a contributor to their self-perceptions and practices in English language classrooms.

In teacher education literature, the role of language learning has been discussed widely. Researchers reported the importance of language-learning experiences to beliefs and knowledge about language learning. Ellis (2006), for instance, investigated the links between teachers’ language learning background and their professional knowledge and beliefs. Ellis conducted semi-structured interviews with 31 practicing teachers of ESL in Australia and their language autobiographies were collected to better understand their language experiences, beliefs and teaching approaches. The results indicated that different kinds of experiential language learning experiences, including formal, adult, and childhood, contributed to ESL teachers’ beliefs and professional knowledge about language teaching.

Given Ellis’ results, it would seem that NNS teachers would start with an advantage as previous learners of English and they might serve as role models for learners of English. The role of language learning experience on self-perceptions of NNS teachers has been reported in some

studies (Liu, 1999; Tang, 1997). Liu (1999), for instance, investigated the impact of NNES professionals on their students in an American university. Seven NNES English teachers were interviewed via email and asked about their self-perceptions as language learners and teachers. These participants were from different parts of the world, including Hong Kong, Denmark, Italy, Korea, Surinam, Philippines, and Zaire. The results suggested that, as most of these teachers had native-like proficiency, they served as role models for their students. Some of the teachers also indicated language learning background helped them to relate to the students' needs and experiences as ESL learners.

While Liu (1999) reported a study on NNES teachers who had native like proficiency and thus were confident, Tang (1997) described NNES teachers who saw their NES counterparts as superior in some aspects of English language teaching. In this study, Tang (1997) investigated NNES teachers' beliefs about the English proficiency of NNES and NES teachers of English. Forty- seven NNES teachers were surveyed in Hong Kong. Results indicated that NNES teachers reported some advantages that a NES teacher might have in teaching English. These included NES teachers' superiority in speaking, pronunciation, and listening. The participants also underlined some areas that they might be more advantageous than a NES teacher counterpart. One of Tang's findings was that most NNES teachers of English felt that their prior English language learning experience impacted positively on their instructional practices. In addition, NNES teachers' same first language background as their students in EFL settings was also seen as an advantage by NNES teachers themselves.

While Liu (1999) and Tang (1997) gave the participant teachers' accounts of language learning experience, some other authors reported their own language learning experience and its impact on their teaching in the form of personal narratives (e.g. Braine, 1999; Hansen, 2004).

These autobiographies suggested that NNES teachers' previous language learning experience in general, and English language learning experience in particular, may help them better relate to the needs of their students. Thus, they underlined advantages of being a NNES teacher. These studies have contributed to our understanding of self-perceptions of NNES teachers, but their results are limited in some respects. In terms of research methodology, for instance, the studies in this group included interviews (Liu, 2005), surveys (Tang, 1997) and autobiographies (e.g. Braine, 1999; Hansen, 2004). As a result, all of these studies provided us with NNES teachers' self-reported data.

While the studies above investigated the role of language learning and/or writing experience through their self-reported data (i.e. surveys, interviews and autobiographies), no studies to date have explored how NNES teachers draw on their language learning and writing experiences in their first and/or second languages when they teach ESL writing. It seems that self-perceptions of NNES teachers that might affect their writing have not been addressed fully in the literature. It has, however, been suggested that L2 writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers (Casanave, 2004) and as language learners may play a crucial role in their decision-making processes as teachers of L2 writing. Thus, this study expands upon the above studies by investigating the extent to which ESL writing teachers' beliefs about and practice of teaching L2 writing are influenced by not only their language learning experience but also their first and/or second language writing experiences.

Moussu and Llurda (2008), in their state-of-the-art article on the research and history of NNES teachers, called for more classroom observation based studies on NNES teachers' self perceptions. Most of the previous literature on NNES teachers, Moussu and Llurda (2008) write, greatly relied on teachers' self accounts of what they said they did in their classrooms. Thus, as

classroom based research seems to be neglected in research literature on NNES teachers, it is still unclear how these self-perceptions affect their instructional practices in ESL/EFL classrooms.

The current study expands upon the available research literature on nonnative speaking teachers by including a classroom observation component to investigate their actual practices in ESL writing classrooms. In order to investigate possible differences between native and nonnative speaking teachers' self-perceptions of themselves as language learners and as writers in their first and/or second languages, the present study included both native and nonnative speaking teachers.

#### 2.4. The present study

In order to increase awareness of the issues surrounding ESL writing teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and writers in their L1 and L2s, the specific purpose of the present study is to determine how ESL writing teachers' beliefs about and practice of teaching L2 writing are influenced by their experiences in language learning, teaching, and writing in their L1 and/or L2s

For the purposes of the present study, ESL writing teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and as writers in their L1 and L2s are important for various reasons. First, as far as the nature of teaching L2 writing is concerned, teachers of L2 writing teach the language as they teach the writing skills in their classrooms (e.g. Silva, 1993). L2 writing teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners, therefore, are important to investigate to fully describe any relationships between their language learning experience and their L2 writing instruction. In addition, one of the goals of the study is to discover the relationship between L2 writing teachers' teaching practices and their writing experiences in their L1 and/or L2s. As some researchers have pointed out, there is a need to further explore the relationship between ESL teachers' beliefs about themselves as writers in any language and their pedagogical decision-



making as teachers of L2 writing (Casanave, 2004). Therefore, for an L2 writing teacher cognition study such as the present research, it is important to investigate possible connection between L2 writing teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and as writers in their L1 and L2s and their actual teaching.

## 2.5. Research questions

Dörnyei, when comparing qualitative research questions to their quantitative counterparts, stated that questions in qualitative research studies are usually “broader than quantitative ones, often focusing on the big picture or the main processes that are thought to shape the target phenomenon” (2007, p. 74). In order to guide their studies, then, qualitative researchers usually formulate flexible research questions. The broad guiding research questions that guide the present study are as follows:

1. How do ESL writing teachers' own perceptions of themselves as language learners and writers in their L1 and L2s affect their beliefs about how students learn L2 writing and how L2 writing should be taught?
2. How do ESL writing teachers' own perceptions of themselves as writers in any language affect their instructional practices in L2 writing classrooms?
3. Does the relationship between perceptions of themselves as writers and their actual instructional practices as ESL writing teachers differ for those teachers who are proficient L2 writers and those who are not? If so, how?

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The research adopts a qualitative data collection method to investigate ESL writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners and as writers and the extent to which their beliefs about and practice of teaching L2 writing are influenced by their experiences in writing in their L1 and/ or L2s. Employing a multiple case study approach, the study aims to uncover ESL writing teachers' stated beliefs about themselves as writers and their instructional practices in ESL writing classrooms and on the margins of students' papers. More specifically, in an attempt to tap into the cognitions of the ESL writing teachers, three main techniques of data collection were used: interviews with teachers, classroom observations, and document analysis of written feedback provided to ESL students.

This chapter includes the details of the methodology employed in this study. First, I present information about the context of the study and the main data collection methods. Then I describe the study participants, including information about their backgrounds as well as the classes they taught during data collection. Finally, a brief discussion is presented about data analysis, triangulation as well as ethical issues concerning the research.

#### 3. 1. Context of the study

Participants for the study included two NNES and three NES teachers teaching L2 writing in (i) an intensive English program (IEP) and (ii) the English as a second language program (ESL) at a large university in the U.S. The researcher tried to include different types and levels of writing courses, both for pre-matriculated and matriculated college students, in an attempt to investigate different writing instructional practices involved.

The IEP aims to prepare students for academic language demands of U.S. universities. Thus, course content, activities and assignments are designed to help students become proficient in academic writing, listening, and speaking. The program offers classes at five levels of proficiency (e.g. high beginning, low intermediate, intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced). In different proficiency levels, classes focus on different areas, including composition, oral communication, reading and listening, academic writing and extensive reading.

The ESL program, however, offers credit-bearing courses for matriculated bilingual and non-native English speaking graduate and undergraduate students at the same university. The classes that are offered at the graduate level include academic listening and speaking for graduate students, academic writing for graduate students, and teaching at the university for international teaching assistants. Undergraduate courses focus on mainly on English composition skills at different levels.

### 3.2. Data Collection

The study employed qualitative methodology to investigate the extent to which ESL writing teachers' beliefs about and practice of teaching L2 writing are influenced by their experiences in writing in their L1 and/ or L2s. In particular, using classroom observation, interviews and document analyses of teachers' written feedback, this study adopts a case study approach. Cresswell (1998) defines case study as follows:

Case study is an exploration of a “bounded system” or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. (Cresswell, 1998, p. 61)

Following this definition, the study includes five cases with intensive and comparative analyses of each case. A range of different sources, including observational audio-recordings and transcriptions, audio-recorded and transcribed interviews and documents (i.e. student writing samples with teachers' written feedback, writing assignments, grading rubrics, or any writing-related instructional documents) supported triangulation of data for each case in the study.

Data was collected over a 15-week spring semester in 2011 at an IEP and an ESL program at a large urban university in the U.S. The researcher interviewed teachers (Please see Appendix A for interview questions), observed their classrooms at regular intervals, audio-recorded their lectures and took field notes from classroom observations. In addition, teachers were asked to provide some student writing samples they have marked up previously (e.g. within the two weeks before the follow-up interviews). Based on these samples, they were asked follow-up questions regarding their written feedback on ESL student writing. The following parts provide details of the research methods that were employed along with the rationale for why they are chosen.

### 3.2.1. Interviews

Ritchie (2003) reports two different main types of qualitative data: naturally-occurring data and generated data. The observation recordings (to be discussed in detail in the next section) and interviews in this study served as a naturally-occurring data because the researcher did not interfere with the natural flow of the class. Interviews, however, were gathered as a means to have some generated data to get more insight into teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and writers. Given that classroom observations did not directly reveal teachers' beliefs about themselves as language learners and writers, interviews provided more insight into their

beliefs and cognitions. In addition, interviews were used to clarify underlying reasons for observed writing teaching practices.

Dörnyei (2007) suggests that, for researchers investigating the area with which they are familiar, semi-structured interviews serve as a good qualitative research data collection option. Like researchers conducting structured interviews, scholars employing semi-structured interviews can start with a set of interview questions, but the questions are put in a flexible interview guide format. During the interview, however, with the help of various probes and wording, the interviewer can elicit individualized response from participants. For the interview component of the present research, each teacher participant was interviewed three times regarding their classroom instructional practices. Teacher participants were interviewed once before classroom observations and they were also interviewed periodically after two classroom observations using stimulated recalls.

Stimulated recall sessions allowed teachers to express their perspectives on instructional practices in which they were involved, as described in Dörnyei, 2007. In stimulated recall sessions, L2 education researchers typically provide the research participants with some stimulus in the form of an audio- or video-recordings or written transcript of such recordings (Gass & Mackey, 2010). The goal in using this introspective method is to investigate what went on inside the participants' heads during the activities they have previously participated. In the interviews with stimulated recalls in the present study, teacher participants received a stimulus (in the form of written transcript of classroom observation data involving teacher participants or their written feedback provided to ESL students). Each of initial and follow-up interview lasted between 45-60 minutes. These interview sessions were audio-recorded using an Olympus DM 520 digital

voice recorder. The semi-structured interview questions that were asked in the first initial interview can be found in Appendix A.

Although the initial interview questions were set before the research study started and were the same for every participant, the follow-up interview questions were determined by the participant teachers' instruction provided in the classroom and in the margins of students' papers and thus were slightly different for each participant. For the follow-up interviews, classroom data that has been recorded and selectively transcribed and teachers' written feedback on ESL student writing served as a source to elicit more information regarding teacher participants' cognitions. In regard to classroom data, I collected observational data first and then used that data as a departure point for eliciting rich data in follow-up interviews. Some researchers in teacher cognition as tied to grammar teaching have employed a similar research design (e.g. Borg, 1999, 2001; Farrell & Lim, 2005). As indicated in qualitative research literature, using stimulated recalls in conjunction with other research methods might serve as a way of triangulating the data (e.g. McKay, 2006). This study, therefore, hopes to make methodological contribution to the literature on L2 writing teacher cognition by including teachers' written feedback in addition to classroom observation as stimuli to elicit further information about teacher cognition.

Data analysis started immediately after the initial interviews. After the interviews were recorded, they were transcribed to identify some of the key areas to focus on during subsequent observations. Given that initial interviews, observations and follow-up interviews were connected to and led to each other, some initial coding was also conducted to obtain a general idea of the key issues in initial stages of data collection.

### 3.2.2. Observation

When explaining ways to triangulate data, Denzin (1989) suggested three ways: using various methods, using various sources, and using multiple investigators in the research. In an effort to triangulate the data using various methods, the research included a classroom observation component. Given the limitations of the stated beliefs, classroom observation was one of the main data sources for the research. As suggested by Borg, it is important to complement the stated beliefs of teachers with the actual practice of teaching in their classroom settings to get a fuller picture of teacher cognitions (Borg, 2003). The present study attempts to provide a fuller picture of teachers' beliefs as tied to the teaching of writing by employing both self-reports and instructional practice.

Most teacher cognition studies that have looked at stated beliefs and actions have compared them to see the matches and/or mismatches between teachers' stated beliefs and actions. One drawback of this approach is the tendency to see mismatches between stated beliefs and actions as contradictions in teachers' cognitions. Instructional practices, however, can be quite complicated. Especially in structured language programs, the possible differences between stated beliefs and instructional practices may be a result of the overall structure of the program and curriculum constraints that may not necessarily give teachers the opportunity to connect their beliefs to practices. With this in mind, self-reported beliefs (through interviews) and reflected-upon actions (through observations and stimulated recall) were collected and analyzed as complementary to each other. In other words, given that some teacher beliefs are revealed through actions, it was important to at least attempt to capture stated beliefs and actions that may reveal beliefs.

To obtain classroom practice data, during a 15 week-semester in 2011, the teacher participants' ESL writing classes were periodically observed and also audio-recorded using an Olympus digital voice recorder DM 520, which is specifically designed to record lecture sessions in large classrooms. The focal classes are detailed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. *Focal classes*

	Low level	High level
IEP	Structure and composition II	Writing for university exams III Structure and Composition V
ESL	N.A.	Academic writing for graduate students English Composition I

While I decided that it was important to include different level classes from different programs in order to ensure the representativeness of the data and to see the impact of teaching experience on writing practices, it was equally important to include teachers with a range of teaching experiences. Table 3.2 includes details regarding the classes observed arranged according to the teaching experience levels of participant teachers.



Table 3 2. *Information on classes and teachers*

	Classes taught by novice teachers	Classes taught by experienced teachers
High level writing classes	Academic writing for university exams English Composition I	Academic writing for graduate students Structure and Composition V
Low level writing classes	None	Structure and Composition II

Given that structure and composition classes were longer in nature than other writing classes observed, the observations conducted in such classes took longer in total minutes. Table 3.3 illustrates teacher, student level, class meeting days and time, number of observations conducted, and total minutes observed for each course.

Table 3.3. *Information on classroom observations*

Teacher	Course information	Class meeting days and times	Number of observations	Total minutes observed
Ellisha	Academic writing for graduate students	Monday and Wednesday, 1:30- 2:45 p.m.	5	375 mins. (75 mins./obs.)
Shawn	Structure and composition V (for upper-intermediate students)	Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10:00-11:45 a.m.	5	525 mins. (105 mins./obs)
Allyson	English composition 1 (for matriculated NNES college students)	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m.	5	375 mins. (75 mins./obs.)
Linnea	Structure and Composition II (for high-beginner students)	Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10:00-11:45 a.m.	5	525 mins. (105 mins./obs)
Xiao Yu	Writing for university exams III (for intermediate students )	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m.	5	375 mins. (75 mins./obs.)

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggest that there are two types of field notes: *descriptive* and *reflective*. According to this categorization suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2007), the main goal of *descriptive* field notes are “to capture a slice of life” (p. 120) in an effort to objectively record what happens in the context of the investigation while *reflective* field notes provide “a more personal account of the course of the inquiry” (p. 122). To supplement the audio-recording during the observation, field notes were as *descriptive* as possible. In each observation, the

researcher's field notes were mainly focused on five main categories. The list of categories for observation is provided in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. *Classroom observation categories*

Category	Focus
1.	Description of the writing classroom space
2.	Content and focus of writing instruction
3.	Type(s) and sequence of in-class writing activities
4.	Teacher-student interaction (not only as a part of the class, but also one-on-one conferences during the class)
5.	Classroom artifacts

### 3.2.3. Document analysis

As most L2 composition researchers acknowledge, teachers' individualized and written feedback plays an essential role in developing writing skills of ESL students (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Leki, 1990). For this reason, when designing a study on L2 writing teacher cognition, it is of great importance to include the analysis of L2 writing teachers' instruction provided in the margins of student papers.

Although documents can serve as valuable sources for qualitative research studies, as Silverman (2006) also notes, for a long time, they have been regarded as “‘background’ material for the ‘real’ analysis” (Silverman, 2006, p.154). Recently, however, researchers have started using documents as one of their primary data sources. In this way, the documents are interpreted by the people who created them rather than the outside researcher (Merriam, 2009). For the study's document analysis component of the research, teacher participants were asked to bring

some student writing samples which they had marked up in the last two weeks before the interview. Although the documents collected were essentially samples of L2 student writing, the focus of the interviews with stimulated recalls was on the written feedback provided by the teacher in the margins of these papers. The interviews took place in different times of the semester to ensure the use of teachers' written feedback on different drafts of the student papers and different assignments. In addition to teachers' stated explanations regarding the instruction they have (not) provided in the margins of student papers, document analysis of these student papers might reveal different types of feedback that are given in different drafts. In addition, as these interviews were linked with the previous observations, some teachers gave different types of feedback on the topics they have emphasized in classroom instruction.

As far as other research methods are concerned, conducting only interviews with ESL writing teachers as in Cumming (2003) may provide results that are limited to what the participants have reported what they do in classrooms. That is, such studies employing interviews as the main data source elicited only what writing teachers said that they did in their classrooms and did not include actual teaching practices in ESL writing classrooms. In order to further studies on L2 writing teacher cognition, researchers should also include observational data to elicit more information on what ESL writing teachers actually do in the classrooms (Borg, 2006).

One of the key contributions that the study hopes to make, therefore, concerns a better understanding of ESL writing teachers' practices and decisions in two main domains of ESL writing instruction: (1) ESL writing instruction in the classrooms, (2) instruction that is provided in the feedback on the margins of ESL students' writing. As in Borg (2001), the study collected classroom data first and then used procedures in follow-up interviews grounded by actual

teaching practices in classrooms as the basis for generating rich data on teachers' beliefs. Given that classroom instruction is complemented by written feedback provided in the ESL students' papers, the feedback that was provided in the margins of ESL students' papers was also utilized in a similar way to the data collected in classroom observations. That is, like classroom observation data, teachers' written feedback was used as a valuable source to elicit teachers' beliefs during interviews with stimulated recalls. In this way, the present study integrated naturally-occurring data (i.e. classroom observational data and ESL teachers' written feedback on the margins of ESL students' papers) with some data that is generated for research purposes (i.e. interview data).

The study hopes to contribute to L2 writing teacher cognition literature by including authentic documents that are not generated only for the purposes of the research. That is, it includes student writing samples that are already marked up by their teachers. Farrell and Lim (2005) analyzed sample marked-up papers to explore the ways teachers approached grammar errors. But their approach was limited because the papers were analyzed only by the researchers. More importantly, Farrell and Lim (2005) did not include teachers' perspectives. In a similar way, Leki (2006) also categorized the written feedback disciplinary faculty provided L2 graduate students; but she only included student interviews. In order to gain more insight into teachers' cognitions, it is also necessary to interview teachers about the instruction they provide in the margins of students' papers. To address this gap in teacher perspective in the literature, Diab (2005) included a think-aloud protocol with a teacher as she marked up an ESL students' paper. In Diab's research, however, the teacher's written feedback was not naturally-occurring; but, was generated for research purposes.

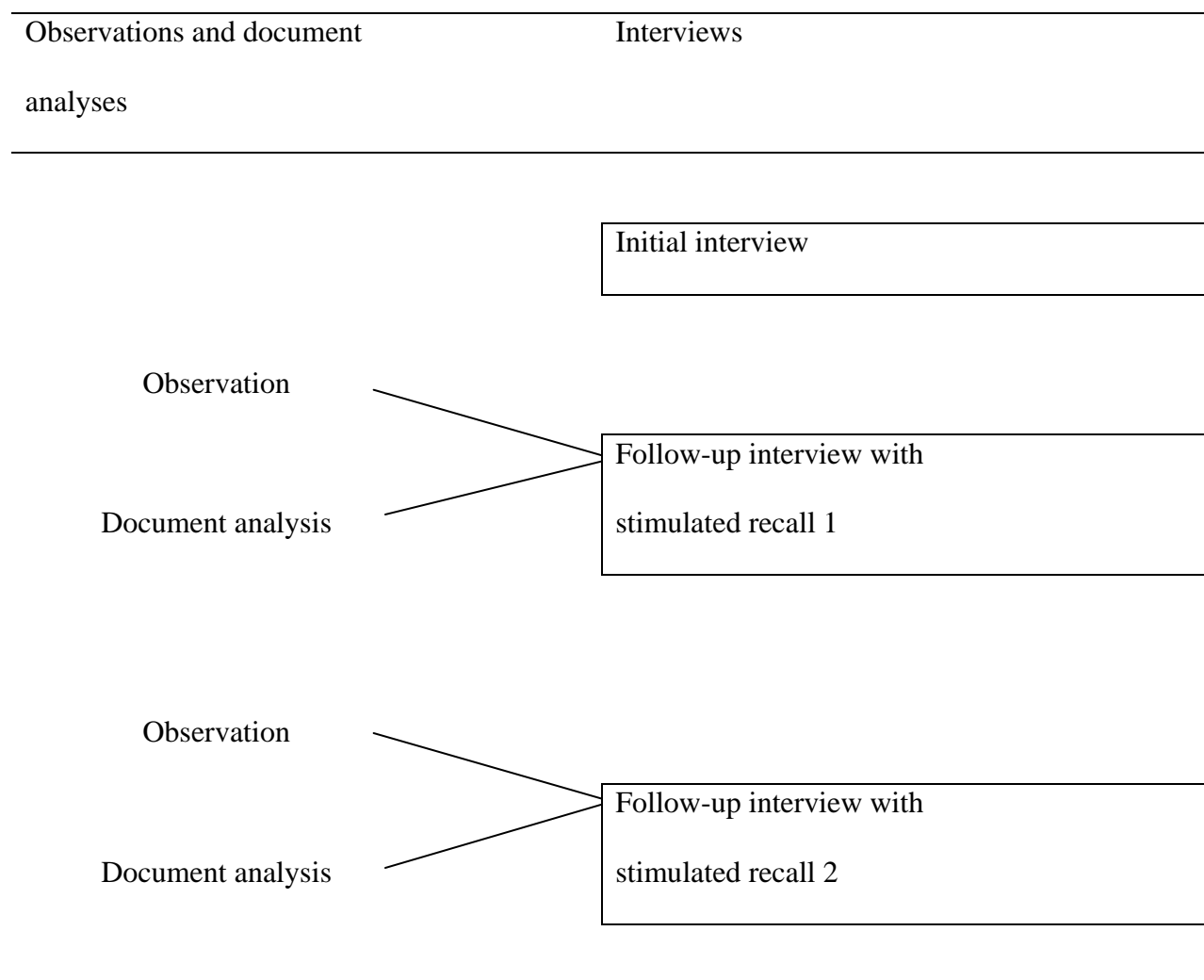
The present study addresses these limitations regarding document analyses with a more multifaceted methodology. The teacher participants in the study provided the researcher with some ESL students' papers that they had marked up in the two weeks immediately preceding each interview. The researcher analyzed teachers' written feedback data based on the following categories summarized in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5. *Written feedback analysis categories*

Category	Question
1.	What is the content and focus of instruction provided in the feedback?
2.	How do the instructors use and/or balance praise and criticism? (e.g. in terms of placement, distribution or proportion of praise and criticism?)
3.	In which form is the feedback given (e.g. statements, imperatives, questions, hedged comments, hedged questions)?
4.	How much emphasis on language use and content is given in this feedback?

After the researcher's analysis, during the interviews, the teachers were asked to talk about their rationale regarding their written feedback. Before the interviews, similar to the analysis of the observational data, another valuable source of instruction, ESL teachers' feedback on the margins of students' papers first were collected and then were used as the basis for generating rich data in interviews. This procedure revealed the emic (insider's) account, in other words, their perspectives.

In sum, three data collecting techniques, namely, interviews, observations and document analysis were employed in this study. The chart in Figure 3.1 shows a brief summary of the process of data collection in the present study.

Figure 3.1. *Brief summary of the process of data collection*

### 3.3. Participants

#### 3.3.1. Focal participants

As previously mentioned, five ESL writing teachers were asked to participate in the research. The selection for the participants was purposefully made based on various criteria, starting with the extent of ESL writing teachers' interest in participating in the study and whether or not they teach writing classes for NNES.

For investigative purposes, it is crucial to invite both NES and NNES teachers to better investigate the impact of teachers' experiences of writing in their L1 and/or L2s on their teaching of ESL writing. As NES teachers teach their L1s when they teach ESL writing to their students while NNES teachers teach their L2s during their teaching, it is important for the purposes of the research to investigate how it impacts ESL writing teachers if they teach writing in their L1 or in their L2. In addition, given that most NES teachers of writing may not have extensive or significant experience as writers in their respective L2s, NNES teachers who are proficient writers in their L2s were invited to participate in the study.

All teacher participants were either NES or NNES who are trained to teach English to the speakers of other languages. Their ages ranged from 27 to 50. All of them had a Master of Arts degree in teaching English to speakers of other languages by the time this study was conducted. Two NES participants and one NNES participant were completing their doctoral degrees in Applied Linguistics and ESL. In order to be able to investigate the impact of experience on their beliefs and practices, both experienced and less experienced teachers were asked to participate in this study. Pseudonyms the participants themselves chose were used to protect their anonymity. L1 and L2 backgrounds, years of English language teaching experience, and the number of times participants previously have taught the writing class observed are shown in Table 3.6 below.



Table 3.6. *Information on focal participants*

Participant	First language	Second or additional language Learning	Self-reported L1 writing experience	Self-reported L2 writing experience
Ellisha	English	Spanish Turkish	Textbooks, journal, poetry	Limited
Shawn	English	Spanish	Screenplays creative writing, writing for newspapers, short stories, textbooks, academic papers	Limited
Linnea	Swedish	English French Italian German Latin	Short answers, art reviews, and papers (up to 15 pages long)	Journal, creative writing, short articles for university in-house publication
Allyson	English	Spanish Italian	Academic papers, online postings, and reflective writing (journal, poems, and short stories)	Essay for classroom assignments in Spanish major (up to 10 pages long)
Xiao Yu	Chinese	English Japanese	Short answers to test questions	Academic papers for publication, online postings, discipline-related writings

#### 3.3.1.1. Ellisha

Ellisha is one of the NES in the present study. She is a writing teacher from Wisconsin, and, by the time this study was conducted, she had been teaching ESL for approximately twenty years. She has a Master of Arts degree in teaching English to speakers of other languages. Most of her recent English language teaching focused on academic writing. In addition, she has written an ESL college writing textbook. She has extensive L1 writing experience in different creative and scholarly writing. Her L2 language writing experience, however, is limited compared to her L1 writing experience. She did not become very advanced in either of her additional languages, Spanish and Turkish, and thus her L2 writing experience in both of these languages remained on the sentence or paragraph level.

The researcher observed Ellisha's "Academic writing for graduate students" class, a class which focuses on improving graduate-level, disciplinary writing skills of international students who want to pursue their graduate level education in U.S. universities. The class was offered through the ESL program for matriculated graduate students. Adopting a process-oriented approach, the course was designed to help NNES improve their academic writing skills. During the semester, students discuss and analyze writing genres (e.g., published research articles, e-mail, and book reviews) used in academic settings in U.S. universities. A variety of academic writing tasks, including extended definition, summaries, summary-responses, abstracts, problem/solution analysis, and data commentary, were designed to help graduate student writers develop their writing skills for discipline-specific writing. Some of the learning outcomes of this three-credit course included the following:

to gain a clearer understanding of writing conventions in your discipline (e.g., use of certain verbs, use of citations), develop skills to gather appropriate sources and cite those sources according to the style of your field (and be aware of online resources to assist you), increase your understanding of paraphrasing, summarizing, and synthesizing, along with how to avoid plagiarizing, and develop academic vocabulary and a greater understanding of the collocations within your field or discipline (e.g., Academic Word List, connecting words, definition structures, formal verbs vs. phrasal verbs, analysis of collocations). (Course syllabus)

Some writing assignments required students to work with mentors in their respective areas of specializations, and, consequently, incorporate both mentor and English writing instructor feedback as appropriate.

Ellisha had taught this class 10 times before she taught the class that was observed. The researcher observed a class of 11 students. The class met twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays, and each class meeting lasted for one hour and 15 minutes. The class met in a computer laboratory which allowed students to work on revising their essays or compose their first drafts during class time. In addition, students were asked and encouraged to use some online concordancing websites to aid their writing. During the time of the present study, five students were in their second semesters in their master's degrees and the remaining six class members were pursuing doctoral degrees. The students came from various L1 backgrounds, mostly, Korean, Chinese and Indian. The class was a multidisciplinary class including members from biology, computer science, chemistry, managerial sciences, biological science, social work, music, and political science. At the time of the study, most of them had been in the U.S. for approximately 5 months.

### 3.3.1.2. Shawn

Compared to Ellisha's proficiency level in both of her additional languages, Shawn, another NES teacher participant in this study, advanced in his L2, namely, Spanish. Although he advanced his language skills and comprehension in Spanish and lived in Venezuela for eight years, his writing in Spanish, in his own words, remained "very limited". However, similar to Ellisha's L1 writing experience, he wrote one ESL classroom textbook on vocabulary, he edited another ESL classroom textbook on vocabulary, and, during the time of data collection for this study, he was in the process of writing a book on advanced grammar needed for ESL writing. In addition, for his communication undergraduate major, he wrote some screen plays, as well as some pieces for newspapers in English. His writing experience continued not only in such area-specific writings, but also in creative writing while he was taking a master's level class in creative writing. His writing also included some scholarly writing that was required for the doctoral program he was completing at the time of this study. During the data collection of the research, he was writing his dissertation proposal for his upcoming proposal defense.

Like Ellisha, Shawn, also taught a higher level class titled "Structure and Composition 5". This class was the last level offered in the IEP, and designed to help advanced international students develop writing skills for different types of academic writing. All students were pre-matriculated international students who came to the United States either just to complete a language program or further their studies in an undergraduate or graduate degree in a U.S. institution after their language training. Some of the learning outcomes of the course included the following:

to demonstrate idea invention through freewriting or group discussion, demonstrate organization of ideas using graphic organizers or detailed outlines, produce organized paragraphs (minimum 10 sentences) with topic sentences, main ideas, supporting details, and concluding sentences through a process of drafting and revision, and express ideas in multi-paragraph academic essay assignments with an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph through a process of drafting and revision (Course syllabus).

Shawn's course was a six credit class and met three times a week, each class session lasting for one hour and 45 minutes.

Shawn had taught this class five times before the research was conducted. During the time of this study, Shawn taught a class of 14 students coming from various backgrounds including but not limited to Korea, China, Italy, Sweden, Turkey, and Vietnam. While, for most students, it was their first semester in the U.S., some of them had been in the U.S. for more than six months. Most of the students wanted to pursue an undergraduate or graduate degree in a U.S. university, except for one student who was currently enrolled for some classes in an undergraduate degree program and was required to take this class simultaneously with his first-year classes in his degree. The class was held in a technology room which allowed students to type their essays, meet online as a class in a chat room created by Shawn in the university's online system, and share their sentences using the chat room facilities during the class time.

#### 3.3.1.3. Allyson

The third NES participant, Allyson, was a doctoral student in Applied Linguistics and she majored in Spanish in her undergraduate degree. She studied Spanish and Italian as her L2s. She stated that she was fluent in Spanish and beginner in Italian. She started learning Spanish in her

childhood because her mother, a nonnative speaker of Spanish, spoke Spanish as a L2 at home. She studied abroad in several different Spanish-speaking countries and has worked in Latin America, where she has taught Spanish. At the time of the present study, she was a second year student in an Applied Linguistics doctoral program in a university in the U.S. While participating in the study, she was finishing her last semester of coursework in the doctoral program and getting ready for her comprehensive exams. Her language teaching experience included high school and adult Spanish, family literacy tutoring for a local refugee aid organization, and more recently, freshman composition classes in university level, one of which was observed for the present research.

Allyson taught a freshman composition class, specifically, English Composition I, for bilingual and NNES students. This class, according to the university catalogue, is “a composition course designed to increase the student's ability to construct written prose of various kinds.” The syllabus indicated that the main goal of the course was to help bilingual/ESL writers develop their academic writing abilities, including organization and development of ideas, paraphrasing and summarizing of reading selections, use of academic language structures. Adopting a process-oriented approach, students were asked to write, revise, and edit their writing according to the conventions that are expected in U.S. universities. The class met twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and each class session was one hour and 15 minutes.

Prior to the present study, Allyson had taught the freshman composition class twice. At the time of this study, Allyson had a class of 20 students. Most of the students were freshman generation 1.5 students. That is, most students in the class were born in other countries but moved here when they were still at school age. They came from various countries including Sweden, Italy, Korea, Japan, Colombia, Mexico, Cuba, China, and Papua New Guinea. Like

most generation 1.5 students, the students had continued their K-12 education in the U.S. and they were required to take this writing course as a part of their undergraduate degree. The class also included a few students who were international students. The class met in a technology classroom which helped students revise their essays in class while conferencing with the teacher.

#### 3.3.1. 4. Linnea

Linnea was one of the study's two NNES teacher participants. She was a native of Sweden, and, by the time the study was conducted, she had spent approximately 25 years in the U.S. She holds a Master of Arts in Anthropology and a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and ESL, each of which were earned at different U.S. universities. At the time of the study, she had been teaching ESL for more than 17 years.

Linnea taught a six hour non-credit writing course titled "Structure and Writing II". This course was similar to the writing class taught by Shawn in nature, but, in terms of level, the class Linnea taught was a high-beginning/ low intermediate writing course. It was designed to help students use and activate their English grammar knowledge in their writing. Learning outcomes of the course included

to demonstrate organization of ideas using clustering or graphic organizers, produce organized paragraphs (seven sentence minimum) with topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentences through a process of drafting and revision and use the language of narration, exemplification, process, comparison/contrast or description" (Course syllabus).

Like Shawn's advanced writing class, Linnea's writing class also met three times a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and each class session lasted for one hour and 45 minutes.

Linnea had taught the course six times before the semester the research was conducted. The class that was observed included 15 students coming from different countries, including, Korea, China, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Cameroon, Saudi Arabia. Students were required to complete various types of multi-draft writing assignments that the students wrote both in class (e.g. timed essay tests) and outside of the class (e.g. 1-2 pages long essays). While most of the students wanted to study an undergraduate degree in U.S. universities, some students took this course just to become an advanced writer or become fluent in English. The class met in a computer laboratory, which allowed students to work on revising their essays incorporating teacher's feedback that was provided on a draft that each of them had submitted previously.

### 3.3.1. 5. Xiao Yu

The second NNES teacher participant in the research was Xiao Yu. She was from Mainland China and her native language is Mandarin Chinese. While she had taught EFL extensively at the high school level in China, her ESL writing teaching experience in the U.S. university context was limited to approximately four years. She majored in English in a Chinese university, and graduated from a Master of Arts program in L2 studies in a large university in the U.S. At the time of the study, she was a third year Applied Linguistics PhD student in the U.S. Before participating in the research, she had recently completed her course work in her doctoral program, and, during the time of the research, she was preparing to take her comprehensive exams before her dissertation stage.

Xiao Yu taught a content-based class, titled: "Academic writing for university exams 3". Using academic content from a high-school level environmental science textbook, the course aims to help students help respond appropriately to exam questions that are commonly asked on



written in-class tests in different discipline-areas. Throughout the semester, students were asked to take in-class tests on which they demonstrated their writing skills and to answer test questions that include definition questions, short answers and essay questions. Some learning outcomes of the course included the following:

to locate examples of academic vocabulary in the assigned text; use conventional vocabulary for signaling attribution, causes, comparisons, classification, definitions, examples, and effects, and write answers to different types of questions such as definitions and identifications (1-2 sentences), short-answers (5-8 sentences; ½ page), and short essays (8-15 sentences, up to 1 page) for in-class university exams that respond to the level and content of the reading and use the appropriate language for signaling attribution, causes, comparisons, classification, definitions, examples, and effects.

(Course syllabus)

Unlike Linnea's and Shawn's writing classes that were offered in the same program, Xiao Yu's course was a three hour non-credit course and did not focus on process-oriented writing. That is, writing requirements for this class were not multi-draft papers that were written, rewritten or edited inside and outside of the classroom. Instead, the students were mostly required to write one draft in a timed in class test. The structure was somewhat "rigid", in Xiao Yu's own words, and the students were expected to write a concise short answer that is approximately eight sentences long and to use the language structures that were provided in the course pack. The class met twice a week, and each class session took one hour and 15 minutes. This content-based class also provided students with academic vocabulary and structures they need in order to cite,

compare and contrast different reading materials and incorporate extensive reading materials into their short answers.

Xiao Yu had taught the class once before the research was conducted. At the time of the study, Xiao had a class of 11 students. The students were coming from different L1 backgrounds, including but not limited to Arabic, Chinese, Korean. While most students wanted to pursue an undergraduate degree in U.S. universities, though not environmental science per se, there were also a few students who took the course just to advance their English language skills. Given the unique nature of the class which only required students to write short answers in-class tests, the class was not held in a computer laboratory. In other words, unlike other classes that were observed for the present research, the students were not asked to write multi-draft essays that required them to write in class and incorporate the feedback that was provided to them by their teachers, and, thus, the students were not given personal computer stations.

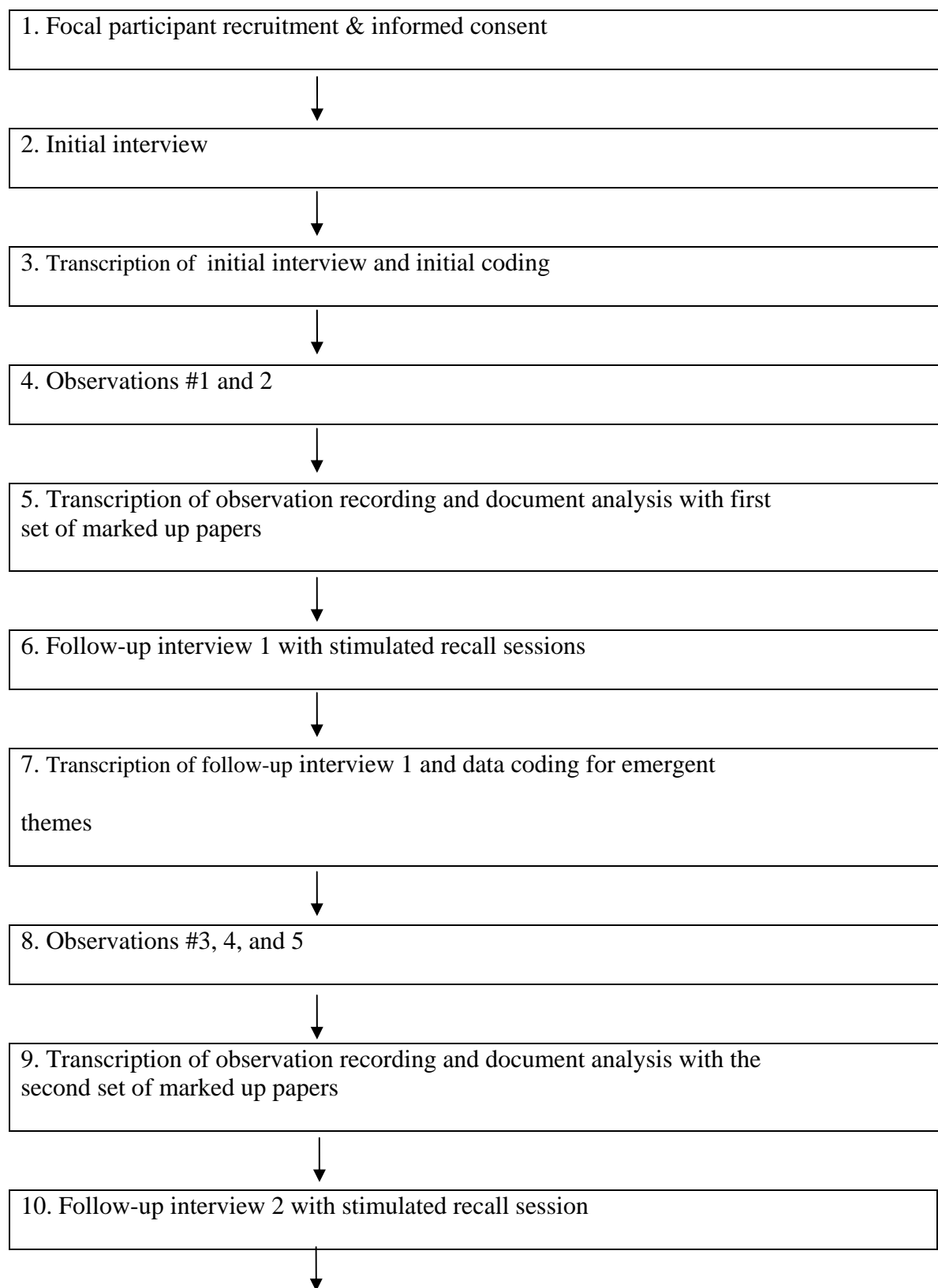
### 3.3.2. Student participation

In addition to these focal teacher participants, student participation was elicited from each writing class that was observed. In order to use student papers in the follow-up interviews with stimulated recalls, the consent of at least five student volunteers were also obtained. In some classes, however, every student volunteered to participate in the present research. In such cases, while all marked up papers were analyzed, a relatively small number of papers (i.e. approximately 5 papers per each interview) were used in the follow-up interviews.

### 3.4. Data analysis

As described above, data for the present study included interviews, classroom observations and document analyses of written feedback on ESL students' writing. The goal of qualitative data analysis, as Rubin and Rubin write, is "to discover variation, portray shades of meaning, and examine complexity" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 202). Data analysis for the present research began immediately after the first initial interview and continued after each interview and observation. In addition, field notes which were taken in each observation were selectively typed, read and summarized. Data analysis was also aided by a use of computer program called Atlas.ti. With the help of this qualitative analysis program, the textual data was organized and coded according to emergent categories. The flowchart in Figure 3.2 shows the details of data collection and analysis for each case.

Figure 3. 2. *Flow of data collection and analysis per case*



11. Transcription & data coding of follow-up interviews & identification of emergent themes

Goetz and LeCompte (1984) noted that researchers employing content analysis might come up with basic categories through “comparing, contrasting, aggregating, and ordering” (p.171). To employ this approach in content analysis, anticipated and unanticipated emerging categories from the coded data were summarized in a chart to see commonalities and differences between not only three different data types, namely, interviews, observation data and textual data, but also among the five different participants. As Cresswell (1998) suggested, both the within-case analysis and the across-case analysis were employed.

In addition to this content analysis for the anticipated and unanticipated emerging categories, more in-depth analysis was conducted to obtain themes within each category. Employing thematic analysis as indicated by Braun and Clarke (2006), the second step of data coding included several phases of reading of the qualitative data. According to Braun and Burke, researchers employing thematic analysis follow several steps: familiarizing themselves with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes and defining the themes (p. 79). Following their guideline, I first re-read the transcriptions as well as the categories that emerged from the data. Secondly, I defined and labeled the various themes and subthemes that were salient in each category. As with the codes, the themes were also labeled in a cyclical format both within and across cases.

Through these procedures, recurrent categories were identified with respect to four areas of concern as tied to the research questions. These included (1) ESL writing teachers’ perceptions of themselves as language learners, (2) ESL writing teachers’ perceptions of themselves as writers in their L1s; (3) ESL writing teachers’ perceptions of themselves as writers

in their L2s; (4) Other issues that indirectly may influence teachers' L2 writing instruction. The recurrent themes were then subsumed under these four main categories.

For data triangulation, Duffy (1987) proposes four options including theoretical triangulation, methodological triangulation, as well as investigator triangulation. Theoretical triangulation includes the use of multiple theoretical perspectives and hypotheses related to the data being investigated. There are two types of methodological triangulation: within-method and between-method triangulation. For between- methodological triangulation, researchers use two or more research methods from different research traditions (e.g. qualitative and qualitative research). To ensure within-method triangulation, however, the researchers use different research methods from the same research traditions. Additionally, for investigator triangulation, two or more researchers from different backgrounds are invited to examine the phenomenon that is under investigation.

In addition to including several sources of data (i.e. interviews, observations, and document analysis) to ensure within-method data triangulation, I invited two independent researchers to code the data as additional coders for investigator triangulation. One American Applied Linguistics doctoral student and one American L2 Studies doctoral student studying in two different American universities assisted me with coding. The applied linguistics student was a first year doctoral student in an urban university in southeastern part of the U.S. The second additional coder, however, was a second year doctoral L2 studies student in a large Midwest research university. They were both taking their doctoral coursework during the data coding of the research. In addition, they both had taken at least one doctoral level qualitative research methods class and one masters level issues in L2 writing class before assisting me with my data coding. Prior to data coding of the research, they also conducted at least one qualitative research

study in different areas of English language teaching and learning. Thus, both of them were familiar with qualitative research procedures in general, and content and thematic analysis in particular.

Before the investigator triangulation, we had an informal session in which I informed them about the study's research questions, relevant previous literature as well as the research methodology. In addition, they were given a detailed summary of the study along with the start list of codes which I created from my initial iterative reading of the data. This start list is provided in Appendix B. (For another example of a start list in other studies in teacher cognition literature, please see Borg, 1998). The additional coders were told that the codes included in the start list were identified from the whole data, so they could use the codes for the individual cases they were given and/or add new codes as necessary. One additional coder was given a set of interviews from a NNES teacher case, and the other additional coder was given a set of interviews from a NES teacher case. The L2 studies student coded the data using Atlas.ti, and the applied linguistics student coded the data manually on a word document. I agreed with each of them for over 90 per cent of the shared coding data. Whenever there were some disagreements, we reviewed the parts together and resolved our disagreements. In addition, both of them created a few codes not provided to them in the initial start list. For those codes, I revisited the data from other cases that they were not given to see if such codes were applicable in other cases as well. Whenever I noticed a similar categorization and/or theme in other cases, I consulted with them and used the categorizations as we agreed on. Both researchers were offered to be compensated for their coding work, but they both declined the offer.

### 3.5. Ethical issues

There are several ethical issues worth mentioning that I followed during the research. As I conducted the research, I followed Georgia State University's Institutional Review Board guidelines. Some of my main considerations included informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and researcher bias. When I asked the focal participants to participate in my research, I informed them about the research procedures, the purposes of the research, and the use and the security of the data I would collect from their cases. In addition, I also explained to them that they should participate on a voluntary basis and could withdraw from the research for any reason at any time. I also asked their consent to participate using a detailed consent form which listed the details of the research study. In an attempt to protect my participants' anonymity, I asked each participant to provide me with a pseudonym to be used in the study. In this way, all cases in the study are reported using the pseudonyms the participants chose. Moreover, I assured the participants of the privacy and confidentiality of their records. In an effort to best represent their cognitions as teachers, I conducted member checking throughout the study starting from the very first interview to the last follow-up interviews. That is, all the teacher participants received the transcriptions of the interviews and were asked to check the accuracy of their statements and my interpretation of the data from their cases. At the end of each case, I compensated the focal participants modestly for their participation in my study. In addition, I also provided them with initial findings from their cases and shared what I was learning about their beliefs as much as I could in the final stage of data analysis through member checking. Finally, as with any research, I considered researcher bias in this study. To address the issue of researcher bias, as explained above, I invited two researchers to code different parts of the data collected.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As stated in the review of literature section of this dissertation, what teachers know, believe and think may be affected by the interrelation of their previous experiences such as writing experiences (Casanave, 2004), teachers' language learning experiences (Ellis, 2006), and previous teaching experiences, and these cognitions, in turn, can influence classroom events (Borg, 2003; 2006). In an attempt to explore such interaction between previous experiences and current language teaching practices, the main goals of the study are (1) to discover the interrelation of ESL writing teachers' language learning, writing experiences in any language(s) and teaching experiences with respect to teachers' beliefs about the teaching of writing, and (2) to further explore the influence of such experiences on their teaching of ESL writing. This chapter explores several categories that emerged from the data collected for the present study on teachers' cognitions as tied to the teaching of writing.

As Farrell and Lim (2005) have maintained, discussions and observations of teaching behavior are two sources of information that can tap into teachers' beliefs. In order to have a full picture of L2 writing teachers' teaching behavior in an L2 writing teacher cognition study like this, it is important to include data regarding L2 writing teachers' instruction provided in L2 writing classrooms as well as on the margins of ESL students' papers. Previous studies on teacher cognition including similar data (e.g. Diab, 2005; Lee, 2003) attempted to tap into teachers' beliefs by comparing teachers' self-reports on certain aspects of teaching writing (e.g. feedback practices) with their observed instructional practices. The present study, however, is on teachers' self-perceptions as writers and language learners. For this reason, such comparison of teachers' self-report with their observed instructional practices may not be the best indicators. In

the research, follow-up interviews with stimulated recalls were the primary research tools. Specific episodes of events observed during classroom sessions and in the practices in the accompanying instruction on the margins of papers were used to generate discussion topics during the follow-up interviews. In this way, the teacher participants were encouraged to comment on specific instruction and relate it to their self-perceptions as language learners and writers. Such approaches combined the researcher's etic perspective with the teacher participants' emic perspective. Table 4.1. below presents a synopsis of topics that came from (1) observation data, and (2) written feedback data for each teacher participant and that were utilized as stimuli in the interviews.

Table 4.1. *Classroom observation and written feedback topics used in post-observation interviews*

Teacher participant	Topics identified in observation data	Topics identified in written feedback data
Ellisha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answering students' questions with self-reflections (If I were a writer..., I would do this...)</li> <li>• Focus more on the organizational issues in academic writing than on language</li> <li>• Teacher fronted lecture to group activities/ emphasis on peer review in small groups/ grouping students from different disciplines</li> <li>• Asking other students before giving a definite answer to students' grammar questions</li> <li>• Emphasis on individual work at the end of the class</li> <li>• Use of visuals, OHP, and sample written models of writing</li> <li>• Classroom in a computer lab</li> <li>• Referring students to online writing sources for individual work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More emphasis on the content than language issues in the written feedback</li> <li>• Praise in the feedback (placed mostly towards the end of the rubric)</li> <li>• Written feedback mostly in imperative form (sometimes in the form of a question)</li> <li>• Reference to online sources and textbook in written feedback</li> </ul>
Shawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referring to writing experiences when answering students' questions</li> <li>• Interactional activities with the help of chatroom/ limited teacher fronted lecture</li> <li>• Oral feedback starting with praise</li> <li>• Questioning his intuitions as a native speaker, seeming not sure about some grammar issues in English</li> <li>• Emphasis on peer review throughout the class</li> <li>• Classroom in a computer lab</li> <li>• Use of internet, chatroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More praise in feedback on the final drafts ( placed at the end of the paper)</li> <li>• More criticism on the first drafts than the final drafts</li> <li>• More feedback in imperative form in the first drafts than the final drafts</li> <li>• Emphasis on content in the feedback</li> </ul>

Allyson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual work and peer review in most sessions</li> <li>• Classroom in a computer lab</li> <li>• Teacher-student conferences in class</li> <li>• Focus on individual work in class</li> <li>• Providing step-by-step instruction on finding sources, integrating sources</li> <li>• Use of computer by both the teacher and the students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback mostly in question form in the first drafts and final drafts</li> <li>• Detailed descriptive paragraph at the end of the grading rubric</li> <li>• Emphasis on the organizational issues</li> <li>• One sentence praise at the end of the written feedback along with one sentence of criticism</li> </ul>
Xiao Yu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the linguistic features of academic writing</li> <li>• Teacher fronted lecture, showing examples of good academic writing, then small group work</li> <li>• Reference to English writing experiences</li> <li>• Non-technology classroom</li> <li>• Use of reading organizers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback in the imperative form</li> <li>• More emphasis on grammar than the content in the feedback</li> <li>• Mostly praise is given when students get an A (full point)</li> </ul>
Linnea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference to her language learning experiences in Sweden</li> <li>• Tech classroom</li> <li>• Teacher-fronted lecture to small groups/ grouping students with different nationalities/ peer review in most activities in class</li> <li>• Use of pictures as a stimulus to writing (picture description writing tasks)</li> <li>• Praise in the oral feedback</li> <li>• Classroom in a computer lab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking questions in written feedback</li> <li>• More praise provided in the written feedback than criticism</li> <li>• Explicit instruction on grammar issues provided in the written feedback</li> <li>• Praise given throughout the paper whenever the student creates a correct structure</li> </ul>

Interviews with stimulated recall sessions provided the basis of the results in this section, and the observational and the feedback data is reported only in the context of what teacher participants said in the interviews. From the interview data, a number of recurrent themes are

identified. The recurrent themes are subsumed under four main categories, which are aligned with the study's research questions. Specifically, these categories include: (1) ESL writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners, (2) ESL writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers in their L1s; (3) ESL writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers in their L2s; (4) Other issues that indirectly may influence teachers' L2 writing instruction. Table 4.2 reports the recurrent themes emergent from the data subsumed under the four categories.

Table 4.2. *Categories and themes identified in the interview data*

Category	Theme
1. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Teachers' previous language learning experience increasing empathy with students as language learners</li> <li>b. Teachers' memories of their own language teachers influencing beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing</li> <li>c. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as different language learners influencing beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing</li> </ul>
2. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers in their first languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. (Not) being an L1 writer perceived as generally affecting (or not) ability to teach L2 writing</li> <li>b. L1 writing experiences in English influencing L2 writing teachers' cognitions</li> <li>c. Desire to improve as a writer heightening interest in teaching writing (as a means of further insights into writing)</li> <li>d. L1 writing experiences in a genre that influences teaching writing</li> </ul>
3. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers in their second languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. (Not) being an L2 writer perceived as generally affecting (or not) ability to teach L2 writing</li> <li>b. Lack of L2 writing training and/or practice in advanced L2 writing influencing L2 writing teachers' cognitions</li> <li>c. L2 writing experiences influencing instructional practices</li> <li>d. L2 writing experiences in a genre that influences teaching writing</li> </ul>
4. Other issues that indirectly may influence teachers' L2 writing Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Teachers' different definitions of being a writer generally perceived by the teachers as influencing their L2 writing instruction</li> <li>b. Teachers' L1-L2 literacy connections generally perceived as influencing their L2 writing instruction</li> </ul>

The following sections will include detailed explanation of the results organized by categories and themes across cases.

#### 4.1. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners

Teacher cognition requires an in-depth investigation of the complexity of what teacher “know, believe and think” (e.g. Borg, 2004). Especially in research studies focusing specifically on the development of NNES teachers' cognitions, one of the most common research steps is to determine whether NNES teachers' English language learning experience positively impacts their cognitions (Liu, 1999; Tang, 1997). The influence of prior language learning on NES writing teachers' beliefs and practices, however, remained relatively under-explored compared to that of NNES English teachers. The links between teachers' language learning background and their professional knowledge and beliefs, however, is important to explore for the development of NES and NNES teachers alike. The results of the present study indicated that while some writing teachers' language learning experiences served as a reference point, the NNES teacher participants commented that they had to step out of their own language experience in order to better help their students. All teachers, however, commented that, regardless of their proficiency level in their L2 and/or additional language(s), they empathized with students due to their experiences in language learning. The following sections will detail the themes that emerged from data collected on teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners, including, (1) teachers' previous language learning experience increasing empathy with students as language learners, (2) teachers' memories of their own language teachers influencing beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing, and (3) teachers' perceptions of themselves as different language learners influencing beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing.

#### 4.1.1. Teachers' previous language learning experience increasing empathy with students as language learners

Each of the five participants in the present study has learned at least one second and/or additional language as a part of their education. In the cases of NNES teacher participants, namely, Linnea and Xiao Yu, L2 language learning experience resulted in near-native like proficiency. Two NES teachers, Shawn and Allyson, also became advanced in Spanish, their L2. Ellisha, however, remained less proficient in either of her additional languages, Turkish and Spanish, compared to the proficiency levels of Shawn and Allyson in Spanish learning. Regardless of the second and/or additional language teachers studied, or even their proficiency level in their second or additional languages, each of the five participants commented that their language positively influenced their current cognitions as tied to the teaching of ESL writing. More specifically, in several instances, the teacher participants in the study, both when reflecting on their instructional practices and also expressing their own beliefs of themselves as language learners, underlined that, regardless of their proficiency level in their L2 and/or additional language(s), they empathized with their students as a result of their language learning experiences.

Allyson, for instance, stated that she thinks about her “students as language learners in general and myself as a language learner. I think I am very sympathetic to the stress and the cognitive load of what it takes to communicate in your second language” (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011). Similarly, later in the semester, while commenting on an issue that arose in one of the class sessions that was observed for the present study, she further explained the impact of her language learning experience on her understanding of one Swedish student who had difficulty in formatting the paper, and, who, thus, was frustrated. Allyson



indicated that in that classroom incident when the student was confrontational with her when Allyson asked her to double space her paper and indent paragraphs, she talked about her own language leaning and writing experiences in Spanish. She explained that “At first, I thought ‘Why is she getting attitude with me?’ but thinking about my previous experience in South America, I thought it does seem weird especially when you are asked to do something new for the first time and you don’t know why.” (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

Similarly, Shawn, another Spanish learner in the study, when commenting on a classroom incident when he was repeatedly correcting a student’s mistakes of third person –s in English, explained how he drew on his experiences of learning Spanish. He explained the complexity and the stress of communicating in an L2 in the following way:

There are many other things that are going on in students’ minds and they feel a lot of pressure when communicating in a second language. When you ask them to remember when to put an -s at the end of the verb, they are also feeling that whole pressure of being a L2learner and user, I think there is a lot of constant self-doubt going on. People become very insecure in a way, or at least I did when I was at their stage. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

Shawn also explained how his language learning experiences helped him to create a learning environment that would ease the stress and insecurity his students might have as L2users. He noted,

I think my Spanish learning is an important element for me in terms of my beliefs and that affects my teaching practices. I try to provide students with an environment in which they can celebrate the natural sides of the mistakes they are making rather than kicking

themselves for doing something wrong. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

Although Shawn's self-reported Spanish language proficiency exceeded Ellisha's self-reported proficiency of her additional languages, Spanish and Turkish, Ellisha also commented that her language learning experiences made her empathize with international graduate students taking her academic writing class. In fact, that she did not become more advanced in either of her languages made her more understanding of her graduate students who were "advanced"; but, "still beginners in the academic writing field" (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011). During the semester, in a classroom session on summary writing, several students in Ellisha's class repeatedly asked some clarification questions regarding the assignment as well as her expectations from them. When being interviewed after that classroom session, Ellisha wanted to comment specifically on her most recent language learning experience in Turkish, and she connected that particular classroom event to her understanding of her own Turkish learning. She said that she was not sure if the students understood the basic requirements of the writing assignment, and she explained the analogy between her own Turkish language learning and her students' academic writing learning as follows:

When I took beginner Turkish last semester, I realized how much was going on in my head when I was in class. It was a nice reminder to me that I need to slow down in my writing class... In many ways, these graduate students, like me learning Turkish, are beginning students. They are new to learning to write this genre [summary writing]... Sometimes, in fact, when I compared my language learning with theirs, I'm dealing with thinking "Am I doing the students a disservice because I really have to move at this fast pace?" (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011)

Although she was able to draw on her beginner Turkish language experience, Ellisha, later in the semester, also observed that language learning experience, while helpful, is not the only requirement to understand the students and/or teaching writing process in L2 writing classes. In another follow-up interview later in the semester, she wanted to talk specifically about a classroom session in which she explained the use of subordinating clauses in academic writing in English. In that class, she first compared the use of subordinating clauses in English and Turkish, and then asked students if they could compare such structures with similar structures in their native languages. She explained how languages differed in general and how she used her language learning experiences especially in classroom events like that one as follows:

Language learning does affect, and maybe it should affect, but, I don't think it necessarily has to affect writing teachers' thinking. I know, for instance, in other languages, you might have a subordinator and a transition word. So that might give you an insight.... But I think you can teach without having a lot of that. You can still be a good teacher, you just might be more efficient maybe if you can rely on language learning. (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 2, March 30, 2011)

For Linnea as well as Xiao Yu, like all NNES teachers teaching English around the globe, the English language itself is the content knowledge they mastered themselves first as language learners. For Linnea, who learned some other languages including Italian, French, German, and Latin, her most memorable and extensive L2 learning experiences has been in English, which is, in her own words, "a language I have lived in as much as I lived in my mother tongue" (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011). She came to the United States at the age of 25 as a graduate student in Anthropology and she had been living in the U.S. for 25 years at the

time she participated in my doctoral research study. As a result of this extensive encounter with the English language, which by then became, as she reported, “almost my mother language” (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011), she felt connected to English more than any other second languages she had started to learn in the past. Like Allyson, Shawn and Ellisha, who felt connected to their students as a result of their language learning experiences in other languages than English, Linnea also talked about her empathy towards her students’ mistakes. Unlike the NES teacher participants, however, Linnea’s understanding of their students originated from previous mistakes she made as an English language learner. Commenting on a class incident in which a student made a subject-verb agreement mistake three times despite her corrective feedback, she explained the similarity between some of the mistakes she did as an English language learner and those her students made in her classes. She stated,

Research shows that subject-verb agreement is the last thing that students will acquire...

That woman, [student’s name], understood it especially when I said “Is it she don’t or she doesn’t?” She did say “She doesn’t” But then the next minute she made the same mistake again. So her brain is not ready to compute that... I probably made some of those mistakes, too, when I was learning English...So I totally understand it. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 1, February 8, 2011)

As an L2 learner and a current L2 graduate student-writer, Xiao Yu also talked about the empathy she felt as a result of her English language learning experiences. Her explanation was even beyond empathy—she specifically talked about knowing strategies for language learning. In a classroom session, when talking about the importance of editing writing for errors, she referred to herself and her way of editing for her own errors in her writing in English. Later that

week, when being interviewed concerning that particular classroom event, she explained it in the following way:

I would refer to my own language learning experiences if there is anything I can relate to myself ...In this class, we were reviewing the results for the first test. I talked about the importance of editing their writing and then I mentioned my own habit: Almost every time, after I finish writing an email, I would read it out as a strategy to do editing...We are all language learners, you know. I talked about that and I talked about reading aloud your sentences as a way of doing editing. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 2, March 16, 2011)

To conclude, ESL writing teacher participants in this study commented on the positive impact of their language learning experience on their instruction in ESL writing classes. NNEST teachers might identify with and/or feel empathy towards their students possibly more than NES teachers. This may result from their English language learning background and their memories of making similar mistakes (e.g. in the case of Linnea) or practicing some strategies as continuing language learners/ writers (e.g. in the case of Xiao Yu) in the same language in which they currently teach their students. Similarly, despite the fact that NES teachers' language learning experiences included learning languages other than English, all NES teachers in the study seem to share similar understanding of students as a result of their own language learning experiences, as well. For instance, as we have seen in the cases of Shawn and Allyson, their own struggles as language learners in Spanish made them more appreciative of the pressure their students may feel as language learners. Even NES teachers who are not advanced in their respective L2 and/or additional languages, like Ellisha for example, may still refer to their language learning experiences. In such cases, L2 writing teachers' being able to make the connection between

one's own language learning experiences and the language learning challenges one's students are facing seem to be more important than teachers' being advanced in their additional languages.

#### 4.1.2. Teachers' memories of their own language teachers influencing beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing

Perception of a language teacher has been a major theme that has been explored in studies mostly looking at students' perceptions of NNES teachers (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Hertel & Sunderman, 2009; Kelch & Santana-Williamson, 2002; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002, 2005; Pacek, 2005). While teachers' perceptions of former language teachers in general (i.e. both NES and NNES teachers) is relatively under-explored compared to that of students' perceptions of NNES teachers, the influence of previous language teachers and/or their own previous teaching practices on current language teacher cognition has been reported in conjunction with related findings in various teacher cognition studies (e.g. Brown, 2009, Shin, 2002). Several instructors in the present study, when commenting on the influence of their language learning experience on their ESL writing instruction, also described their perceptions of language teachers and the influence that memories of their own language teachers had on their views of themselves as teachers. For instance, when reflecting on his Spanish language learning experience, Shawn commented on his perception of a language teacher in the following way:

I think people take this whole thing of teacher as an expert too seriously in our field.

Obviously, like in medicine, you want someone to be a real expert. In our field, you want someone who is gonna help you become your own expert, you want someone who knows enough to know when they don't know something and you want someone who is humble enough to realize that mistakes come to everybody. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

Later in the semester, Shawn pointed out that in his language learning experience, he had “dictator-like” language teachers who saw themselves as the only authority figure in the classroom (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011). Later in that interview, Shawn commented on a classroom session in which most students did not submit their first drafts which were due that day. He first reflected on what he had learned from his language learning experience and how such experiences affected his conceptualization of his role as an ESL writing teacher in situations like that particular classroom incident. He then explained the influence of his language learning experience on how he felt about that particular classroom event:

I don't want to be a teacher who has this illusion that what is going on in my class time is at the absolute top of every student's priority list for their life... If they do not submit their homework, like in today's class, it is not the end of the world. It is nothing I should be overly-concerned with... That is what I took away from my own language learning because I did not like, as a student and language learner, to have teachers who saw themselves as dictators in their classrooms. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

When further reflecting on these experiences and frustrations towards language teachers, Shawn explained that these memories affected his instruction. It was here, but also at other times during the interviews, that he explicitly stated he wanted to treat his students based on his expectations as a language learner. He explained this issue in the following way:

I like to be able to treat them [my students] the way I want to be treated in a language classroom. We are all there, and we all have our objectives. We are going to be collegial, we are going to have fun but we are going to try and get these things done and make it very clear. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

In conjunction with this reflection on his previous language teachers, Shawn also commented on a classroom session in which he paired students to share their interview questions that they would later use to conduct interviews with experts on the topics on which the students would write papers. During this class, a Swedish student, before doing the pair-work activity, asked why they were doing such an activity (i.e. reviewing interview questions in pairs). Shawn later explained in the follow-up interview that, especially in such classroom events in which a student questions his instructional practices, he was different than the authoritative language teachers he observed in the past as a language learner. Instead, he was flexible and open to students questions:

I love it when the students ask that because it gives me an opportunity to make it clear to everybody...And also it helps me to make it clear to myself “What exactly is the purpose of doing this with my students?” and if I realize that there is not a strong reason, I can cut these things shorter instead of taking it longer. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

Like Shawn, Ellisha also talked about her previous language instructors when talking about her current teaching practices. In her earlier attempts to learn Spanish in college, she explained language learning methods were “quite different in the 80’s. And what I remember is playing a lot of games.” (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011) Recently she took a class in Spanish, and, even more recently, another one in Turkish in a university setting, and she commented that she noticed the language teachers she had in the university language classes brought cultural materials in the classroom, which, in turn, impacted her way of teaching:

That Spanish teacher and [the Turkish teacher] in the university brought in the culture.

But it’s not like game-ish, which is what I remember from my language learning in high



school... Even though whatever you're talking about with the culture might not be directly related to the language piece, I think it makes it meaningful...So I try to do that in my writing classes. (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

Another native speaking participant, Allyson, talked about her language teachers influencing her current practices. Specifically, she preferred to talk about Spanish teachers whom she met when she was learning Spanish abroad rather than her high school Spanish teachers. When talking about these experiences, she described a very different kind of language learning experience than what Ellisha commented on. She noted that her Spanish teachers in high school in the U.S. were not able to contextualize the material as much as her Spanish teachers she had in Spanish-speaking countries where she received language instruction. In addition, given that her immediate needs to communicate in Spanish in her study abroad program were very similar to those needs that her own students have in English language learning and communicating in the target language in a university setting she taught, she mentioned her current teacher cognition is more affected by her perception of her Spanish teachers abroad rather than her high school Spanish teachers. In her own words, the Spanish teachers she had in her study abroad program “connected what they are teaching to something real outside of the classroom” (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011). Allyson also referred to her language teachers that used authentic materials and made the students “really use the language in immediate communication needs” (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011). For this reason, Allyson, as an English writing teacher, wanted to create the same environment for her students in her writing class. In all of our interviews throughout the semester, she underlined the importance of the issue of “connection” (e.g. connecting classroom instruction to real life outside of the classroom), which made her appreciate her previous language teachers abroad. She noted,

I think the way that [my language learning] translates into the class now is that I think it is important for my students to know that the tasks have meaning outside of the classroom... You need to be able to connect what you are doing to something that has importance for you outside of that event. Like my teachers in Spanish-speaking countries, I try as much as I can to get my students to think about how what we are doing and learning in this class is going to? help you or affect you as a person, as a citizen, or in your psychology class. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

Allyson described the characteristics she observed in the Spanish teachers she met in her study abroad experience. More specifically, Allyson appreciated how her teachers linked language to real life situations. Xiao Yu also mentioned her positive experience which was focused on teachers. In Xiao Yu's case, however, she specifically appreciated the style of the teacher whom she had positive experience with when learning English in China. Xiao Yu also talked about a teacher who influenced her perception of teaching writing. Xiao Yu, in her freshman year in her university in China, had a teacher who was not teaching writing per se, but teaching a general English class. This teacher, like Xiao Yu herself at the time of the data collection of the research, completed her graduate education in a U.S. university. What made her different than any other Chinese language teachers she had had till then was her being "friendly", "approachable" as well as "very good at English -like a [role] model for us" (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). Xiao Yu, after this description of the style she liked in her teacher, explained her own perception of herself as a teacher. She, as an L2 teacher, saw herself assuming different roles, including, but not limited to, being a "facilitator" and a "tutor" who addressed the students' individual learning needs as they arose. (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011).

Unlike Shawn, Allyson, Xiao Yu, and Ellisha, who all talked about their previous language instructors influencing their current cognitions, Linnea explained her own general perception of a language teacher she had in her mind after commenting on an activity she prepared for her writing class. In a classroom session during the semester she was observed for this study, she created a sentence review activity that required students to edit several sentences taken from their own writing assignments they had submitted previously. When she was asked to comment on that particular activity, she first explained her choice of including both good and bad sentences written by her students:

For that activity, I chose good and bad sentences and one student was happy and said “Oh, this good sentence is mine” ...So I think if I pick student sentences for an activity like that, it is very important to pick good and bad ones. I think they might learn more from the good ones. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Following this explanation of the sentence review activity, Linnea explained how this activity and choices translated into her general perception of a language teacher. She described this connection in the following way:

We, as teachers, should show the mistake and show how to correct it, right?...However, when you show the mistake, ...maybe they are just remembering the mistake and they are going to do it again because somehow it is imprinting things like the subject-verb agreement... Showing mistakes might be our biggest mistake as language teachers. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Linnea did not talk at all about her language teachers, but she did talk about a case that she recently experienced, which is very similar to being influenced by a teacher. In our last

interview, Linnea also talked about her perception, not specifically of her own teachers, but, of her native speaker colleagues who helped her edit one of her most recent writing. In this writing experience, her editors are (informally) teaching her in the margins of her paper. She mentioned that two native speaking teacher colleagues (one of whom is Ellisha, another teacher participant in this study) very recently edited an article she wrote for university in-house publication. Linnea commented that experience of seeing her colleagues' comments on her own writing and later editing her writing as a nonnative English speaker also impacted her perception of a writing teacher, especially her perception of the role of a writing teacher when giving feedback to student writing. She stated,

That editing stage that came after receiving their [my colleagues'] comments on my writing made me reflect on certain things. As a teacher, you have to stop yourself and think "Is the student asking me to look at what they are saying and ignore the grammar for now?" Because if you always focus on different things, it is really frustrating for the student or the writer. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

In conclusion, several teachers commented on perceptions of language teachers they had in the past who shaped their current cognitions as L2 writing teachers. Depending on their language learning and/or writing experiences, teachers may either react to certain practices they have observed in their previous language instructors by distancing themselves from them (as in the case of Shawn) or they may include some instructional practices that they observed in their previous teachers (as in the cases of Xiao Yu, Allyson and Ellisha). In some cases, it was not only a matter of imitating or reacting against previous teachers, but also some aspects of their teaching were affected. More specifically, Shawn and Xiao Yu seemed especially focused on how the

teacher interacted with students; Elisha and Allyson talked more about the kinds of materials/activities they themselves used in class and Linnea talked about feedback given to students.

Some of these differences may have related to the particular types of learning experiences they were talking about, which were all different. Sometimes, more recent writing experiences which would help them learn different aspects of writing may also impact the cognitions of teachers (as in the case of Linnea). Whether in the form of reactions to some practices they have observed and were critical of (e.g. Shawn's reactions towards an authoritative teacher) or their imitations of good instructional practices they have observed from previous language teachers (e.g. Elisha's bringing culture in the classroom), ESL writing teachers' perceptions of previous language teachers appear to influence their current instructional practices.

#### 4.1.3. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as different language learners influencing beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing

As far as the language teachers' cognitions are concerned, as indicated earlier, language learning experiences of language teachers have been one of the most frequently cited factor in the literature (e.g. Borg, 1999, Ellis, 2006). Previous research literature tied to the self-perception of specifically NNES teachers has tended to conclude that NNES teachers' previous language learning experience in general, and English language learning experience in particular, may help them better relate to students' needs (Braine, 1999; Hansen, 2004; Liu, 1999; Tang, 1997). Such a generalization, however, may lead us to assume that all NNES teachers in all contexts, both ESL and EFL, would feel close to students as previous learners of English themselves. However, in contrast to the results of some research studies reporting that NNES teachers' language learning experiences served as a reference point in ESL settings (as reported in Tang, 1997), the

NNES teacher participants in the study commented that they had to step out of their own language experience in order to better help their students. The NNES teacher participants in this study further stated, regardless of some similarities between themselves and their students in their effort to learn English language as a second language, that they perceived themselves as different from their own students. Xiao Yu, for example, when commenting on a comparison activity she developed and used in a class session that was observed for this study, explained such difference as follows:

My middle school [English] language learning experience was more like grammar translation [method]. So I don't think it has something to do with that experience I had in China; but, it has more my thinking about helping the students to do the tasks, to work on the content and to really be able to write something about the content using the language functions we teach them in class. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 2, March 16, 2011)

In addition, both Linnea and Xiao Yu commented that, given the difference between their students and themselves, they try not to use their language learning experiences as the only reference points when they were teaching their writing classes. They commented as follows:

Xiao Yu: The thing is for me, when I learned grammar, I didn't have difficulty learning the grammar. That's part of the problem. I don't think it has something to do with my own language learning, because I did not have to write short answers for university exams when I learned English in China. (Follow-up interview 2, March 16, 2011)

Linnea: I try to think about my own language learning experiences, but I also try to remember that I think people like you and me like languages, and it is fairly easy for us to learn languages because we are interested and we like it and most students in our class

don't fall into that category.... So I try to step out of my own experience and help them.

(Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

To recapitulate, it appears that, while in some cases Linnea and Xiao Yu, as NNES teachers, use their language learning experiences as reference points in their teaching of writing, they also saw themselves as different from their students. Given that there are many complex experiences related to language learning of nonnative speaking teachers, there may be several factors influencing NNES teachers' perceiving themselves as different from their students who are also learners of English. First of all, while Linnea and Xiao Yu are nonnative speakers like their students, both of them were motivated to learn English and find opportunities to become proficient in English in order to eventually become English language teachers. Thus, learning English for them, like millions of NNES teachers around the world, became the ultimate goal for their profession. While it is possible to argue that some of their students in this setting may also be interested in going to that direction (i.e. to become English language teachers), for most of the students in their classes, English served just as a tool, or merely a medium, to achieve their goals in different fields (e.g. Engineering, Mathematics, and Sciences). This difference in motivation on the part of NNES teachers and students may be one reason why NNES teachers wanted to step out of their language learning experiences. Another possible difference lies in the language learning experiences of these teachers and their students. Linnea's and Xiao Yu's English as a foreign language learning experiences mostly were in their home countries, Sweden and China, respectively. When they met with their students, who may also have started their language learning in their home countries, their students were enrolled in an intensive language program in an ESL setting. Thus, the differences between Linnea's and Xiao Yu's most memorable language learning experiences in their home countries and their perception of their students'

English learning in a U.S. university context may lead them to perceive themselves/ their language learning as quite different from that of their students. Finally, most studies on NNES teachers reported self-perceptions of NNES teachers teaching English to students who shared the same L1 backgrounds with their teachers in an EFL setting (e.g. Tang reported Chinese English teachers teaching in Hong Kong). In this study, however, while Xiao Yu had only one student coming from her L1 background (i.e. Chinese), Linnea had no student who came from her L1 background (i.e. Swedish). In that regard, not sharing the same L1 background with their NNES students may also lead these teachers to step out of their own language learning experiences to better help the students, whom they perceive as “different” from themselves.

#### 4.2. Teachers’ perceptions of themselves as writers in their first languages

One of the first steps in trying to determine the sources of ESL writing teachers’ cognitions involved looking at teachers’ writing experiences. While most studies on NNES teachers presented the profiles of nonnative English speaking teachers as writers in their second languages in the form of literacy auto-biographies (e.g. Connor, 1999; Li, 1999), there seems to be a gap in the previous literature especially in terms of the profiles of writing teachers, both NES and NNES alike, as writers in their respective first languages. It has, however, been suggested that L2 writing teachers’ perceptions of themselves as writers may influence their instructional practices (Casanave, 2004). Using ESL writing teachers’ self-reports provided in the follow-up interviews based on their instructional practices in class and/or on ESL students’ papers, this section presents four sub-themes that were explored related to teachers’ perceptions of themselves as writers in their first languages. These themes include (1) (not) being an L1 writer perceived as generally affecting (or not) ability to teach L2 writing, (2) L1 writing experiences in English influencing L2 writing teachers’ cognitions, (3) desire to improve as a



writer heightening interest in teaching writing (as a means of further insights into writing) and  
 (4) L1 writing experiences in a genre that influences teaching writing.

#### 4.2.1. (Not) being an L1 writer perceived as generally affecting (or not) ability to teach L2 writing

As Casanave indicated, teachers' writing experiences in any languages may influence their teaching practices (2004). This study attempted to discover whether or not teachers felt that their L1 writing experiences (or lack thereof) influenced their teaching of L2 writing. In this study, while the NES teacher participants considered themselves as being an L1 writer, one of the NNES participants was hesitant about calling herself an L1 writer. As for being an L1 writer, Shawn, throughout the data collection for the research, repeated several times that, "I am a writer in English, but not in Spanish" (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011, and Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011). He also indicated that he received training in English writing/ language arts classes in his college years. Moreover, as his major was in the field of Communication, his writing experiences also included communication-discipline-specific pieces (e.g. screen plays, writing articles for newspaper, creative pieces, etc.). In addition to these college-level encounters with writing in English, he later furthered his writing by taking a Masters' level class in creative writing. As a textbook writer as well as a doctoral student in an Applied Linguistics program, he also wrote academic papers and ESL classroom textbooks in English. His perception of being a writer in his L1, therefore, is "two-sided: being a creative writer and being an academic writer" as he repeated twice in different interviews throughout the semester (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011, and Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011). Commenting on both his own frustrations as

a writer and his empathy towards his students as a result of his own frustrations as an L1 writer, Shawn explained,

For anybody who is a writer, it hurts to see someone mark your paper... One of the first things I tell students when I turn their papers back at the beginning of the semester is to explain them that my job is to identify all the different things that are going on. It is not a criticism of them... And I give them the example from myself: You know, when I turn in a manuscript, people write all over it. They do all sort of things that make me very upset.

(Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

During the follow-up interviews, Shawn further reflected on his perception of being a creative and academic writer in English. He specifically wanted to talk about a classroom incident in which he was explaining the importance of the thesis statement and controlling ideas in academic writing. In that class session, he told his students the difference between creative writing and academic writing is the very existence of the writer. He contrasted creative writing in which writers want “to create ambiguity” and academic writing which writers want to “fill any gaps in the writing for the reader”. In a follow-up interview after that classroom session, he noted that it was important for him to draw his students’ attention to, because such information, in his own words, is “very important for anyone who wants to be a writer, whether they call themselves a writer or they are just writing to do something as a task, to know what is their goal there, what are they trying to do.” (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

Like Shawn, Ellisha also had extensive writing experiences in English. Similar to Shawn’s writing experiences, Ellisha also had some creative writing experiences as well as textbook writing experiences in the area of L2 writing. During our first interview, she commented on her experience of becoming a writer. She explained that she was invited to

participate in a book series in L2 writing. Reflecting on that experience on writing on L2 writing, she viewed that very experience as a way of learning to write. She noted “That experience of explaining how to write and writing the book, I felt improved my own writing because I was forced to really evaluate how a student approaches a writing task, how we develop and organize ideas in English.” (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

In some of the classroom observations I conducted for the purposes of the study, Ellisha referred to herself as a writer when answering most student questions regarding specifics of writing assignments. For instance, in one classroom session, when she was giving directions for first drafts that were due the following week, a student commented that she would not know when to give examples in a paragraph in an academic paper and she asked Ellisha for help. Ellisha said “I would answer this question as a writer myself. I would respond as a writer.” and she explained what she would do as a writer in English. This answer was typical of her dealing with most student questions in classroom. When she was asked about those instances she explicitly stated that she would refer to herself as a writer when answering some questions, she said “Yes, of course, [I refer to myself as a writer] for questions like that, ‘How do you know?’ The answer depends on the situation, it depends on the definition, and individual choices.” (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011)

As we have seen, Ellisha and Shawn had extensive writing experiences including academic writing and some creative writing pieces. Allyson also had extensive writing experiences in her English; but L1 writing experiences included different text types. Allyson said she stated writing in upper elementary school when she was trained to write five paragraph essays. She later received further L1 writing training, especially incorporating outside sources and writing argumentative pieces in upper high school. As an L1 writer who wanted to get more

training in writing, she was disappointed when she was placed out of the freshman writing course in the college. As she put it, in her college years, “I did not have any more training in my college years. I was just asked to write.” (Allyson, Initial interview, February 1, 2011) When commenting on her more recent writing experiences in English, she said she wrote a lot in English in her daily life. At the time of data collection for the research, her current writing experiences included a lot of creative pieces such as poems, journals, and stories. As an Applied Linguistics doctoral student, she also was asked to write academic writings for her discipline including reading responses, online postings and papers.

Allyson’s self-perception as an L1 writer was also visible in her comments on her feedback. During data collection for the research, one student referred to the writer of the book by using the first name of the writer only. As a response, Allyson wrote, “We refer to authors by their last names, not the first”. In a follow up interview, she explained her use of the pronoun in the following way: “*We* - I put myself in this category- here refers to *we* as academic writers, *we* as English-medium higher education academic writers. Because sometimes I don’t know if it is a cultural issue.” (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011) Later in the semester, when commenting on her self-perceptions as both creative and academic writer, Allyson also noted that she thought about her perception as an L1 writer when she taught her writing classes:

When I teach, I do think a lot about my academic and reflective writing experiences in English. Because I identify myself as a writer, just because I enjoy writing personally and I write so much for school...So I think that definitely comes through. I try to convey to my students that we are all writers and learning how to write, struggling through this so sometimes I reference like “When I am writing, I do this.” Or “When I have written papers in the past...” (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

Linnea stated that she did indeed have extensive writing experiences in her L1, Swedish. Linnea wrote essay exams in class when she was a student in high school and she wrote term papers (up to 15 pages long) in the university. Additionally, she wrote art reviews in Swedish because she studied Art history. As a result of her extensive writing experience in Swedish, she stated she considered herself as a writer in Swedish. As a bilingual writer, then, she noted some similarities and differences in Swedish and English:

Swedish and English are related. They are both European languages so there are connections in vocabulary, grammar, and style. However, the American academic style is so specialized both in terms of the structure of the writing, and also how it is done.

Americans write a lot more in universities and they write things like essays in graduate school and short answers and essays in undergraduate degrees. So there are things that are different and similarities because of the traditions. I mean, the American academic tradition comes out of European tradition, of course, and the language also comes from Europe. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Despite her L1 writing experiences, Linnea also noted the lack of her training in writing in Swedish. Later in the interview, she mentioned that she became an L1 writer “with not much training” (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011). Even the Swedish language course she took as a requirement did not provide her with explicit writing instruction which is, in her own words, “an American phenomenon” (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011). After receiving some extensive training in English writing, however, she stated that she transferred some writing skills and strategies she learned in English to her Swedish writing. Thus, as a writer in both in Swedish and English, she, in a way, compensated for her lack of writing instruction in

her L1 with her L2 writing instruction. She explained her transfer of skills from her English to Swedish in the following way:

Linnea: [After I received some L2 writing training], what I learned [in English], I found out I was kind of better, in some ways, in Swedish also. My Swedish writing was more organized. So I learned how to put things together better.

Nur: So did your newly-learned writing strategies in your second language, in a way, influence your L1 writing?

Linnea: Yeah, I think my Swedish is better now. Because, like I said before, I never really had strategies for learning Swedish or for writing in Swedish. Then I learned a lot more in English and that transferred back to Swedish. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Allyson, Elisha and Shawn reported that they perceived themselves as writers in their L1. Linnea's case was similar to these NES cases in terms of being an L1 writer. Unlike all of these teacher participants, however, Xiao Yu commented about the lack of writing experiences, especially in certain areas, in her L1s. Xiao Yu, for instance, talked about her "limited" writing experiences in Chinese (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). When talking about her experiences in Chinese, while they were hard to remember, she said "In Chinese I believe we wrote essays, responses, you know, responses to what you read. All my writing was in elementary school and maybe high school." (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). Later, she reflected on her self-perception as an L1 writer as well as some frustrations she had not knowing the expectations of her readers: "I think my Chinese writing wasn't very good. That is what I remembered. Sometimes I didn't know what criteria the teachers use to grade our essays. I just remember that my Chinese writing hasn't been very good." (Xiao Yu, Initial interview,

January 19, 2011). In terms of L1 writing instruction, Xiao Yu said she received “probably bits and pieces” in Chinese writing mainly focusing on reading responses and essays she was asked to write until her university years (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). Later in the semester, when I asked her again whether she considered herself as a writer in Chinese, she commented,

Because I am not practicing writing in Chinese, I would not call myself a writer in Chinese. I am not doing it now. Going back, yeah, pretty soon, when I go back, I have to do some writing in Chinese. But I am living in this [U.S.] context, you know, where I don’t need to use writing in Chinese. I speak in Chinese sometimes but I don’t write so I am not a writer in Chinese. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 2, March 16, 2011)

As far as her experiences in writing source-based academic pieces in Chinese are concerned, she stated she did not have much extensive writing experience. When I asked her about her perception of possible differences between Chinese and English academic writing, she said,

In English, it [academic writing] is very, very straightforward. So you even have rules for, you know, copious academic writing. But for Chinese, for academic writing, I’m not very sure because I’ve never done so much of academic writing. Maybe it depends on what kind of writing it is. Maybe you don’t have to be as explicit as in English. I think. But I don’t know. (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011)

In conclusion, it seems that while the NES participants in this study indicated that they received training and had extensive writing experiences in their first languages (as in the cases of Allyson, Ellisha, and Shawn), the NNES teachers indicated that they did not receive any training

in their respective first languages. The impact of their self-perceptions as L1 writers on their instruction will be discussed in the following sections. However, it is worth noting here that, as we have seen in the case of Linnea, even when teachers have done a substantial amount of writing in their first languages, the lack of writing instruction may impact their perceptions of themselves or confidence as writers in their first languages. As a writer in Swedish and English, Linnea was able to remedy her lack of writing training in Swedish by transferring some skills and strategies from her L2 writing to her L1 writing. In Xiao Yu's case, however, she indicated her own lack of advanced literacy experiences or instruction in Chinese. It is not uncommon, though, for international scholars with U.S. education to have mixed feelings towards academic writing in their home countries. Casanave (1998), for instance, documented the transitional writing experiences of Japanese scholars who returned to Japan after their U.S. graduate education. Shi (2003), in a more recent study, has reported Chinese professors' reactions to academic writing in Chinese after their return from their Western graduate education contexts. The participants in these studies have difficulty adjusting to advanced literacy expectations in their L1 when they returned. Thus, one way of explaining this discrepancy between her L1 advanced literacy and L2 literacy practices in the self-perception of Xiao Yu as an L1 writer can be that the contrast between her L1 and L2 literacy practices is even more evident, at least in Xiao Yu's eyes, due to her very advanced literacy practices in English. In other words, as she had very advanced literacy practice experiences in her second language, she might have seen her L1 writing skills as not developed compared to her L2 writing skills.



#### 4.2.2. L1 writing experiences in English influencing L2 writing teachers' cognitions

As indicated earlier, one of the sources of L2 teachers' cognitions related to the teaching of writing can be their L1 writing experiences. While some teachers regarded themselves as L1 writers, some others reported that they did not have much writing experiences in their first languages. This section will detail the teacher participants' L1 writing experiences (or lack thereof) influencing their instructional practices. For some teachers, L1 writing experiences seem to function as a source of motivation to be writing teachers. Ellisha, for instance, in our initial interview, explained her earlier L1 writing experiences and how such experiences led her to choose to be a writing teacher:

For my first language, I've always been a writer. I've always kept a journal. When I was younger, I would write poetry and things like that. So I enjoyed writing. I discovered when I went to college that I was good at writing things like research papers...I realized that was interesting to be looking at writing from a different perspective, not as the writer, but to offer advice to the writer. And that kind of brought me into teaching writing. (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

Ellisha, as a textbook writer, referenced herself as a writer quite a lot during the semester. In our first interview, I asked her if believed teachers needed to write in order to teach writing. She answered,

Ellisha: I do, I do. I think in order to teach writing we need to see ourselves as writers.

Nur: In your first or second languages?

Ellisha: I think either. And I could be biased because I'm not fluent, or a writer, in a second language. But I think that if I were fluent, that experience, the struggles, the successes I've had learning an L2 would be a nice addition to the way I teach, but I also

feel that I can be a good teacher of L2 learners by being a good writer in my first language. (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

As she indicated herself, she did not become an advanced writer in either of her additional languages, but, still, she was able to compensate for that lack with her writing experiences in her first language and referred to those L1 writing experiences when teaching her writing classes. In the next interview, when we revisited her writing experiences as an L1 textbook writer, she said, she referred to her writing experiences as a textbook writer especially “with editing, I often will give tips or suggestions that I personally use when editing the textbooks”. As a former graduate student, Ellisha had some writing experiences in her graduate classes that she took in the past. But she noted that her previous writing experiences in certain genres as graduate student had less influence on her current teaching (compared to textbook writing experiences she had in English):

I graduated from my MA in ‘93...I don’t even remember any of the papers I wrote, I know, we did but it was so long ago. And I only took one doctoral level class. So I am not thinking about those writing experiences I had in my grad courses when I think about my teaching. (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011)

In contrast to these past experiences, which, interestingly, may be more similar to those of her graduate students, she was able to draw more to her current textbook writing experiences because, while writing textbooks, she was able to make her teaching experiences relevant to the writing process. In her own words, she was able to “think about the writing process from the students’ side as a teacher” (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011). When I asked her whether she referred to her language learning, writing or teaching identity when creating activities for her academic writing for graduate students classes, she explained the interaction

between her writer, language learner and teacher identities, while still underlining that her writing experiences dominated her thinking when she was teaching her writing classes:

I definitely draw on my writing experiences as I teach my writing classes. But I think over the years, those three things [my language learner, writer and teacher identities] have all meshed. So even when I am writing my annual report, I am often analyzing the language. I always think “How could I write it differently?”...So I do know when the students ask me questions, in my mind, I am thinking “How would I do it when I write in English?” (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011)

Indeed, during one of the classroom sessions, when conferencing with a student while they were revising their drafts that were due that day, Ellisha shared her writing experiences with a student who had difficulty in differentiating topic sentences from controlling ideas. Ellisha explained that first drafts of any writing, whether scholarly or not, did not need to be perfect, but he needed to write down his ideas first. In a follow-up interview, I asked her to comment on that specific classroom incident. She explained how her perception as a writer influenced her teaching as follows:

I think my self-perception as a writer in English does affect my beliefs about how L2 writing should be taught...So, for example, as I told him in this recording, I, as a writer myself, strongly believe that you need to carefully think about your topic before you sit down to write... So I hope that the way I teach reflects that, that I often give steps of the process...I got that from my writing experiences.(Ellisha, Follow-up interview 2, March 30, 2011)

It seems, as Ellisha herself indicated, her writing experiences in English influenced her instructional practices. However, Ellisha also noted that there were some stages, especially in the

course revision process that she tried not to refer to her own writing experiences. For instance, when I observed her during the semester, Ellisha noticed that some students had difficulty in determining topic sentences and controlling ideas in their first drafts in the semester. Ellisha decided to alter the course syllabus and some activities based on her students' needs. When I asked her about her cognitions about those challenges, she explained,

As a writer [in English], I think about my writing experiences a lot when I teach. But I do not refer to my own writing experiences in the material or activity revision stage. I will make revisions based on the questions students ask and based on the challenges they have with the task and how I will explain something and the examples I use. So, at that stage of teaching, I don't think I do rely on myself and my writing experiences. (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011)

Furthermore, Ellisha commented on her textbook writing experience and how the feedback she received from her editor influenced her perception as a writer as follows:

I remember it was through the process on writing my first book on writing-academic writing, my editor ... had a great impact on me... She would write a lot of feedback but she would always be positive in the end... I feel like her feedback made me become a better writer. So those experiences definitely impact my feedback right now (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

Like Ellisha, Shawn also talked about his perception as a writer and how it impacted his self-perception as a teacher. He underlined how his writing experiences influence his confidence in teaching abilities:

I think writing, in many ways, is very language specific. So I feel very comfortable being an English writing teacher because I am a very good writer in English. I think I

understand the process of writing in English, how things work in English, what are the most effective ways to communicate ideas in English. Maybe if I were a stronger writer in a second language, then I might have had some ways to approach to the ordering of things but I feel like it in a sense is a gap -I wish I were a better writer in Spanish but I am grateful that I am good at one language. (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011)

Shawn also indicated that, in order to connect with students at some level, writing teachers needed to be writers themselves. For him, teachers needed to write, not necessarily the genres they do not ask their students to write, but at least they should write pieces they require the students to write. For instance, if they teach students writing an essay, they needed to write an essay and “not just be able to identify those elements that are important, but be able to do that, as well.” (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011). Shawn also stated that if teachers experimented writing themselves first, they connected with their students on the same level while still having different goals. He explained this issue as follows:

I think it [teachers’ writing] also connects us on another level... You know it is hard to always realize that you are being judged as a writer, which, I think, every L2writer feels that way... So, when writing those essays, for them, the goal is to be a better writer, and for me, the goal is to be a better teacher (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

In addition to his confidence of his teaching abilities and his attempts to become a better teacher, Shawn also commented on some areas that he felt fragile as a writer and how that feeling translated to his instructional practices. When explaining how he balanced the amount of praise and criticism in students’ papers, we talked specifically about a draft of student who received a relatively higher amount of praise than other students in class. Shawn explained,

based on his previous interactions with him throughout the semester, the student was not able to complete the full drafts as a result of being repeatedly negative on himself as a L2 writer. The student, Shawn reported, was very fragile and possibly needed more encouragement to further his writing abilities, like Shawn himself, as a creative writer in his L1 and as an L2 academic writer:

Students who, for whatever reason, have already got a very negative sense of self in terms of being a writer need a lot of praise. And maybe that is something that connects to myself as a writer. Because I know how fragile you can feel as a writer. And I don't feel that way particularly in academic writing in English, but I do feel that way in creative writing. And I certainly feel that way when I have to write academically in Spanish. I felt very very fragile and very uncertain with good reason: I was not very good. But I think somebody like this guy, [the name of the student], could really benefit from praise. That's why I gave him a lot of praise here on this draft. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

Shawn, later in the interview, explained that his self-perception as an L1 creative writer influenced the amount of praise given to that particular student. In one of the classroom sessions I observed for this study, Shawn used a chatroom where students entered their topic sentences for their papers using the structures he covered previously in class. He entered the chatroom from the teacher's computer and projected his screen on the board to let everyone clearly see the sentences. When commenting on the praise and criticism in his oral feedback on students' sentences they wrote in the chatroom, he stated,

Because writers - I put myself in this category- have this fear that people are going to judge what you write. And you can be paralyzed if you think everything is a judgment.

And it is a delicate balance because you are also putting people in a public forum like this where everyone can see what they do. And it is a dance that you have to be very careful with... I also try to keep my tone non-judgmental about mistakes, because mistakes happen and we learn from those mistakes. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

Later in the class, when a student made comma splices mistake in his sentence, he first thanked him for bringing that to his attention and explained that to everyone. In a follow-up interview, he explained his way of dealing with mistakes as follows:

When he made that mistake, I actually gave praise because he brought it up. Even though he was not able to do it, he took the risk. A part of writing is risk taking ...What I think is a very negative approach is to criticize and belittle students...The students need to be able to forgive themselves for such comma splices. Comma splices are not easy because that's the way people speak... However, you know, making a transition from oral communication to written and then to academic written is a tough thing. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

Shawn, as a teacher as well as a doctoral student, not only tried to write essays similar to those he wanted his students to complete. As an L1 graduate student, he also wrote some research papers for his doctoral program. When commenting on his research paper writing experiences, he explained that he benefited from knowing the expectations of certain language requirements in academic genres as a result of his research paper writing experiences in his PhD program.

For teaching this class, definitely being an academic writer side is more dominant [compared to my creative writer side]. I write papers for my PhD and I know at some point there in class I refer to my academic writing as well... I think students appreciate that because a lot of students think of writing as creative writing and they think of it as something where they show themselves. But academic writing is a lot more about displaying knowledge. You are proving yourself to your reader and your reader is teacher. (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011)

Shawn also explained that, when writing papers on academic writing and vocabulary, his self-perceptions as a writer, a researcher, and a teacher are all activated. While researching several topics on academic writing and/or vocabulary for those papers, he investigated the “what good writing in English is for the different genres I want them to work with” (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011), which, in turn, influenced his instructional practices in teaching writing. He also noted that his teaching, his students’ struggles with certain aspects of writing, and especially the patterns he observed when grading his students’ papers influenced his research. He explained this interplay between his self-perceptions as a researcher, a writer and a teacher in the following way:

As a writer, researcher, and teacher myself, I look a lot more at the patterns. In my research, I try to figure out what are the patterns of good academic writing they [students] can use; and, in my teaching, [I look at] what are the patterns that are emerging from the things that they are doing that are probably better to avoid or to replace with something else. And all of these things influence me when I write. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)



During the semester, one assignment Shawn created required students to contact and interview experts on the topic the students would write their papers. For that particular project, Shawn provided his students with a detailed, step-by-step guideline on email writing etiquette. After that classroom session, in a follow-up interview, Shawn commented on the genres students write in his class, and he explained that, he created that particular guideline; because even as a writer in English, he would need such guidelines to write some genres. Additionally, based on his previous teaching experiences, he knew that email was “a genre some students have trouble with” and he used a guideline to help them. He commented,

I used this guideline; because, I do think, as a writer, this kind of information is useful especially if it is in a genre that you don't really comfortable with. For instance, if I have to write a letter to a tax authority... if I have somebody telling me “Here is what you need to say in order”, that would help greatly...For those kinds of situations and genres you don't have much experience, these kinds of guidelines are very useful. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

While his L1 writing experiences influenced his instructional practices, Shawn also noted the differences between himself and his students. When I asked him about his perceived role as a teacher of writing in his classes, he explained the difference between himself and his students due to his extensive writing experiences in different genres. He explained his role as a teacher of writing in the following way:

I think, as a textbook writer and a doctoral student, I don't know if I necessarily need to be a role model, because, with the kind of writing that I do and the knowledge that I have, it is not fair to ask my students to take all the shortcuts that I take. But I do think I should

be a facilitator, I should be a source of ways to get knowledge when they don't have the knowledge. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

It seems that, Shawn's writing experiences as an L1 doctoral student were influential in his cognition as tied to the teaching of writing. The other L1 doctoral student in the present study, Allyson also commented on similar issues especially when explaining how she decided what to teach in her writing classes. As a result of her extensive encounter with various similar genres in her L1 writing experiences, she was able to draw on particular challenges she herself experienced in writing those genres in her L1 when deciding the content of some of her writing classes. For instance, during one of the observations I conducted for the research, her classroom instruction was primarily on the use of reporting verbs in paper writing. When I asked her about her choice of reporting verbs as content of that particular class, she explained,

There are so many things I teach specifically I find challenging in my own writing in certain genres in English. Reporting verbs are one of them so I addressed it in the last class... When we come to their research writing, locating different sources, reading them and thinking about how they relate to each other and how they relate to the point you want to make is something that I myself think as a doctoral student because we have to do so much of it. So I try to address those issues when I teach this class. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

In addition, when talking about her feedback she provided in ESL students' papers, she commented that her experiences in writing papers in both of her languages and receiving feedback on those influenced especially the amount of feedback she gave to students. Allyson, when grading papers, used different rubrics for different genres that she asked students to write in her class. For instance, for a full paper assignment, the rubric included parts on format (e.g.

such requirements as (1) paper is within the page limit, with 12 pt font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins. heading and title. and (2) it is well-balanced, i.e., ideas are developed in the same way/degree as the source) and (3) language (e.g. good use of vocabulary, English grammar, reminder phrases, and incorporating sources). In the second paper which was a summary paper, she used a different rubric focusing on the content of the different parts of the paragraphs, (e.g. Paragraph 1: whether it begins with source information, Paragraph 2&3: whether it moves from general to specific ideas). In addition to grades for each item listed on the rubric, Allyson also provided a little paragraph at the end of the paper, including, one good aspect of the writing and also one aspect to work on. During the follow-up interviews, she explained her cognitions regarding her feedback to student writings as follows:

The amount of feedback I give is driven by the models that I have seen from other teachers in the department. As far as the way I approach the process [of giving written feedback] is concerned, I definitely think about my writing experiences in my first and second language, and my not getting any feedback on it. Even if it is good feedback, I did not receive much when I wrote papers in school. I just do not think I received much feedback on my papers. As a writer, I want to see what I am doing well and what I should keep doing. So I make sure I give enough guidance when I write a little paragraph at the end of the rubric. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

In addition to the approach Allyson took in her written feedback, later in the interview, she also talked about her cognitions regarding the mode of the feedback she gave to her students. In one summary paper, for instance, she tended to give her feedback in conditional statements. Some of her feedback included “if you think it is important to mention this book, you might want to briefly summarize it.”, and “if it is important for you to talk about this point, you can state it

briefly”. When I asked her how she decided the mode of her feedback to her students, she explained it in the following way:

As a writer myself, I try to encourage their writer identity. It is funny; because, as someone who is making these comments, I value and I like asking questions and being more open; but, I know I have read feedback on my papers where people commented like that, and I got frustrated because I want an answer, too. But just because I want that, it doesn’t mean that it will make me a better writer. You can want it in an instant, you can look at the feedback and say “Oh, it is frustrating, just tell me what to do”; but, that doesn’t mean that if you go through the process of figuring it out yourself, in the end, you won’t be better. So I think it is possible to have those beliefs at the same time. So I can see the whole process from both sides, both as a writer and a reader. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

Being both a reader and a writer in the genre of a research paper helped Allyson better understand the writing process. However, she, like Shawn, also was aware of the fact that the danger of identifying too much with her students as writer. While being a doctoral student as well as having had previous writing experiences in the genres she asked students in her writing class was helpful for her to shape her writing instruction, she also noted the difference between students and herself in terms of overall goals as writers as students. Keeping both similarities and differences she might have with her students in mind, she decided to prepare students for a broader category other than being students and/or writers:

From my writing experiences as a graduate student, I know, overall, knowing these parts we do in this class [e.g. summary writing, papers, etc.] will serve a bigger picture. I know

some of them [my students] may not finish their undergraduate degree, I hope they do...

But I do try to think about connections, even to the world, to their lives... You know, how do they find information, how do they consume it, how do they talk about their ideas with people, how do they formulate their ideas. That will make them better people and better citizens -not only better students who write better. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

In short, all native speakers of English in this study commented that their writing experiences in English influenced their teaching. Ellisha commented how much her L1 writing experiences influenced her cognitions when teaching writing. Her textbook writing experiences served as a reference point in her thinking process in her writing classes. Similarly, as both creative writers as well as academic writers, Allyson and Shawn referenced themselves in their classes. Additionally, Shawn and Allyson as doctoral students were able to draw on their research paper writing experiences, and, thus, were able to see the writing process both as writers as well as readers. Finally, they also tried not to identify with their students too much, which was similar to Linnea's and Xiao Yu's comments on how they are different from their students in terms of language learning experiences.

#### 4.2.3. Desire to improve as a writer heightening interest in teaching writing (as a means of further insights into writing)

As we have seen, self-perceptions of teachers as writers may impact their self-perceptions as teachers. In some cases, if a teacher is not currently practicing writing extensively in his/her L1, as we have seen in the case of Linnea and Xiao Yu for instance, their L2 writing experiences seem to play a big role and they may also draw on their previous L1 writing experiences.

However, if a writing teacher is a current writer in his/her L1, their self-perceptions as L1 writers may also be influenced by their teaching practices. In this study, especially English native speaking instructors commented that their teaching writing influenced their writing experiences in their first language. Allyson, for instance, in spite of being an L1 graduate student, commented that there were some points that she had not known before teaching the writing class. She indicated that “I have learned things from this class and I have learned ways to approach writing assignments that I didn’t have before.” (Allyson, Initial interview, February 1, 2011). Allyson also commented on her lack of advanced writing training in her L1 and how teaching this course, in a way, compensated for that lack and impacted her advanced literacy practices:

I don’t feel like I ever learned how to write the kinds of papers that I was asked to write when I went to college, MA program and PhD program, I never had the instruction on how to write that way. I just sort of tried to figure it out. When I started teaching writing, I learned so much about how to approach the process, even down to vocabulary, and organization. People have this idea that as a native speaker, you don’t need to learn that stuff. But I simply did not know those things. (Allyson, Initial interview, February 1, 2011)

As a doctoral student who was currently producing quite a lot of discipline-related papers, she benefited practicing what she was preaching in her classes. She described the influence of her teaching on her L1 writing practices as follows:

There are things that seem so simple, for example, basic strategies and skills; but, often times in my L1 writing experience as a doctoral student, there is so much pressure that I think sometimes I dive in a too complicated level and this class has taught me to step back. There are basic strategies and skills that any writer can use no matter if you are

working on a PhD in your first language. Yes, that is complicated; but, you still need the simple building blocks is what I have learned from this class. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

Similarly, in our last interview, Allyson mentioned how, as a result of teaching a composition class for nonnative speaking students, she benefited from teaching, and learning, at the same time, some ESL writing skills she herself was not aware of:

Teaching this class is making me a better writer. My teaching practices are influencing my writing in English. It is important to recognize that these are not ESL writing strategies I am teaching, they are good writing strategies. They are strategies that any writer should use. Even though my native language is English, I am trying to get a PhD in English medium, it does not mean that I am too advanced to do all the things I am teaching my students to do. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

In addition to practicing some of the strategies she taught in her ESL classes, Allyson also became aware of the value of some of the techniques she had not appreciated as much before teaching her writing class. One of such practices was peer review. She explained her realization of her use of peer review and how she changed as follows:

Since I started teaching this class, I am more open to ask other people read my writing now than I was before because I do peer review in this class and I give them this whole speech about writing as a communicative process... Then I realized that I was not practicing what I preached. I was telling them “we are in a community”, but then I thought “Do I feel like I am in a community? Not really...” (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

Like Allyson, Ellisha also commented on her lack of writing training experiences and her attempts to compensate for that lack in their education. According to Ellisha, one reason of such lack in native English speaking students' writing training in general was that process of teaching L1 English writing was different than the process she herself was teaching writing to L2 students. She explained this difference in the following way:

I think native speaking students are taught English in a slightly different way. I don't remember being taught how to write. We would just write. But it wasn't until after I started teaching writing, then I said "I don't know what kind of feedback to give". This kind of feedback sounds good; but, I don't know why. So I was frantically trying to figure out why. I think that is when I could articulate it and I think that improved my writing a lot. (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011)

Ellisha's own improvement as a writer as a result of teaching this class, as she indicated, was visible in certain parts of her writing. She explained that, this class, in addition to changing her perception of a writer, it impacted her writing process in certain stages of writing:

I think it [teaching this class] changed my perception of being a writer. Before I started teaching writing, I would just write...When I started to teach, when I had to explain certain things. Of course, that now influences when I write because as I am processing ideas, or as I am editing when I am writing, I think I become a teacher looking at students' paper. I see this impact not only in editing stage, but also in development...I had to educate myself so that I could explain it to someone else. (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 2, March 30, 2011)

Moreover, Ellisha also commented that some of the activities she did in her academic writing for graduate students class also made her aware of some discipline-related approaches to



academic writing. For instance, during the semester, she asked the students to work with a mentor in their disciplines on their data commentary assignment. The students asked a mentor to give them feedback on their writing. Mentor feedback was supplementary to Ellisha's feedback on their data commentary assignment. After students receive feedback both from their mentors and Ellisha, they would revise their first drafts and submit the revised draft along with both the types of feedback they had received on that data commentary assignment:

Teaching this course has changed my perception of writing. It just made it more obvious and very very clear that writing does differ in some degrees based on the discipline...

When we get into the problem solution and they work with a mentor on a data commentary, to me, that was very helpful because it changed the way I look at how they are approaching the writing. (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 2, March 30, 2011)

Similarly, Shawn also commented on the fact that teaching writing classes was impacting his writing. He indicated that it was not the content he was teaching that was influential in his writing because sometimes he taught basic simple structures he already internalized as an L1 writer. However, teaching writing classes made him more aware of the process of writing he himself went through. He explained this in the following way:

A lot of the sentence structure elements were easy because it was my L1 so I would just write and follow the models I observed as a reader. But the teaching and the learning about the process, what other people do things, what other teachers do, the way that teach things... That had a big effect on my writing because I can see the process that I do.

Certainly being a teacher and learning about the teaching of writing has taught me a lot about the process of writing. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 1, February 23, 2011)

For Shawn, teaching writing contributed to his realization of the process of writing. Additionally, when he was explaining certain structures to students, Shawn realized that he tended to use certain structures on his writing. Shawn explained his exploration of his own writing as a result of his teaching in the following way:

I realized I became more aware of certain things particularly about organization of ideas and I started noticing some patterns that I use a lot in my own writing because as I was showing it to the students, I realized there were things that were easy for me to come up with examples for and there were some things that were more difficult. So I know, for example, I use a lot of gerunds as nouns. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

In addition to Shawn's explorations of the process of writing as well as his tendency to use some structures in his academic writing, Shawn also benefited from teaching writing classes in his development as a creative writer. He noted the impact of his interactions with students on his creative writing practices in English as follows:

But also when you ask me about myself as a writer, my initial thought is not about academic writing, it is about creative writing. So in that sense, there are things about language that I think I take from my class and my students, especially the ideas that they come up with, in my creative writing. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

To sum up, for these NES teacher participants who were also active L1 writers in English, inasmuch as their L1 writing experiences influenced their instructional practices, their teaching experiences also served as a reference point when they had writing experiences in English. This interaction between teachers' self-perceptions as teachers and teachers' self-

perceptions as writers, especially in the cases of Elisha and Allyson, resulted from their self-perceived lack of writing training in their first language, especially in the genres for which they provided their ESL students with strategies and explicit instruction. In the case of Shawn, however, teaching writing experiences served as a way of self-exploration of his writing.

#### 4.2.4. L1 writing experiences in a genre that influences teaching writing

In research literature on genre, very little attention has been paid to the influence of metacognitive genre awareness on writing teachers' instructional practices. While limited available literature on the interface of teachers' cognitions about genre has contributed to our understanding especially of teachers' beliefs and concerns about genre-based approaches (Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998) and teachers' metacognitive genre awareness related to their academic literacy skills (Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011), there seems to be a major gap in the research on teachers' metacognitive genre awareness impacting their self-perceptions as writers which, in turn, may impact their cognitions as teachers of writing. When investigating the impact of writing teachers' self-perceptions as writers on their instructional practices, teachers' metacognitive genre awareness and their previous writing experiences in particular genres, therefore, can be an important aspect to investigate. Such genre writing experiences may as well interact with teachers' self-perceptions both as writers as well as teachers.

Genre, as an “abstract, socially recognized ways of using language” (Hyland, 2007, p. 149), is often defined as “a distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken or written” (Swales 1990, p. 33). As noted by Tardy in her editorial introduction to a special issue of *Journal of Second Language Writing*, genre is “a central and remarkably productive concept in second language writing studies as well as in writing studies more broadly” (Tardy, 2010, p. 2). Indeed, a brief review of published North American genre studies in the last decade reveals the key

importance of genre both in L1 and L2 writing (e.g. Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Belcher, 2006; 2010; Hyland, 2007; Hyon, 2002; Johns, 2002; Paltridge, 2002; Samraj, 2005; Tardy, 2009). In fact, in some of the most recent genre investigations focusing mainly on the writing of multilingual students, several genre researchers have called for L1-L2 writing specialists' collaboration on genre studies (Costino & Hyon, 2011) and L1-L2 transfer in the development of genre knowledge of multilingual writers (Gentil, 2011). Gentil (2011), when discussing a biliteracy perspective on genre research related to the teaching of writing to multilingual students, underlines the importance of crosslinguistical transfer of genre knowledge. He writes that "[t]he key is to identify what kinds of prior knowledge they [students] bring to the writing situation at hand so as to help them draw upon it as they develop the knowledge domain that they lack to accomplish that genre" (Gentil, 2011, p. 19).

As indicated earlier in this section, teachers' metacognitive genre awareness may influence their self-perceptions as writers which, in turn, may impact their cognitions as teachers of writing. Two NES teachers in the present study had extensive writing experiences in a particular genre, the genre of a textbook, and they also commented on the influence of their writing experiences in the textbook genre on their current cognitions regarding their current practices. While most NES teachers possibly do not have similar experiences as textbook writers, it is worth noting here that L1 writing experiences in genres other than textbooks may influence their self-perceptions as writers, which, in turn, may impact their cognitions related to the teaching of writing.

Ellisha, for instance, explained how writing a textbook on L2 writing influenced self-perceptions as a writer. In her words, the "experience of explaining how to write and writing the book, I felt improved my own writing because I was forced to really evaluate how a student

approaches a writing task, how we develop and organize ideas in English.” (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011). This self-perception as a writer, in turn, together with her self-perception as a writing teacher, impacted her instructional practices, because, as she herself noted, “[w]hen you write a textbook, of course, you always think about how students will complete those tasks, etc.” (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 2, March 30, 2011). Ellisha also commented on how her book writing, though it is different from scholarly writing her students may be asked to do, was similar to research articles in some aspects. Her awareness of readership of a textbook made her aware of some of the difficulties her students may have writing in certain genres at the beginning of the semester. Thus, she tried to control the process of her students’ encounter with various genres in her writing classes. She commented on the difference between genres of textbooks and published papers while explaining how her metacognitive genre awareness impacted her teaching:

The book writing, to me, is different from the scholarly journal publications. With the book writing, I really had to think about my audience. So when I talk to students about writing for an audience,... for instance, if I say “This extended definition is to write for undergraduates”, that’s clear for them. If we had started with other kinds of advanced writing, like a journal article, their audience places so many demands on the students. So, knowing those details as a result of my textbook writing experiences, I try to place restrictions in the beginning of the semester to help them focus and develop. (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

Like Ellisha, Shawn also talked about the influence of textbook writing experience in his teaching. Very similar to Ellisha’s comments, Shawn also commented on the impact of his

thinking process as he developed the writing tasks when writing a textbook. He explained the interaction between his self-perception as a writer and a teacher in the following way:

Certainly the work on textbooks and also material design for textbook affects my beliefs. [It] has helped me to develop an understanding of the background knowledge students bring to the task, and the level of complexity of the tasks that I ask them to do... So going through that process, having editors review things and ask questions like “Do the students have all the knowledge in order to do this?” ...All this kind of thing which is part of the writing process had an effect on how I present written materials to students like activities or readings in my classroom. (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011)

In another interview, when Shawn further reflected on his writing experiences in the genre of a textbook, he made an analogy between his textbook writing and research paper writing experiences he had in his doctoral program. While the goal and the audience of these writing experiences may be different in some aspects, textbooks and research papers as different genres, for him, can show some similarities, especially in terms of the ‘parts’ they included:

When you are writing a textbook, you have parts that are sort of closed. You have a beginning, middle and an end. And then it is done... You do this, you come here and you are done [at the end of the writing process]. It is like very set formulaic thing in a way, like research papers. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

In short, Ellisha and Shawn’s metacognitive genre awareness played a role in their self-perceptions as writers and teachers. As a result of their experience with certain genres in English, these two teachers drew on that knowledge when teaching their classes. It turns out that, amongst many other things that may influence teachers’ cognitions related to the teaching of writing, teachers’ metacognitive genre awareness may play an important role in their self-perceptions as

writers. Such L1 writing experiences, as in the cases of advanced writers of particular genres like Ellisha and Shawn, may subsequently influence teaching experiences that may be closely related to the writing process. As previous research literature in this area has looked at this issue from the perspective of pre-service teachers who did not have extensive encounters with specific genres (Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011), such research reported the impact of genre awareness on pre-service teachers' academic literacies as novice writers. However, Ellisha and Shawn in the present study were quite advanced writers in the genre of textbook in English. Thus, these teachers' metacognitive genre awareness may not only contribute to their self-perceptions as writers, but also their cognitions as teachers of L2 writing. In other words, Ellisha and Shawn, as textbook writers, were able to draw on the experiences of writing textbook genres the content of which made them activate their cognitions as tied to teaching as well as writing. Thus, it was not only L2 writing teachers' L1 writing experience that influenced their cognitions as tied to the teaching of L2 writing, but it was also their L1 writing experiences in certain genres contributed to their instructional practices.

As indicated earlier, the scope of these two cases is quite limited and writing the textbook as a genre is a unique experience. However, like textbooks, there may be some other genres that may influence teachers' teaching L2 writing. For instance, many writing teachers write their own materials; that writing experience may give them relevant insights. Therefore, in similar cases of other teachers with L1 writing experiences in such genres as textbooks, two genre-related questions may be necessary to ponder when researching teachers' cognitions related to the teaching of writing: (1) if there are any English L1 writing experience in a genre that influence teacher's self-perceptions as writers; (2) if such self-perceptions as writers, in turn, influence their teaching practices in L2 writing classrooms.

### 4.3. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers in their second languages

Another factor that is rarely discussed in the literature as having an influence on teachers' cognitions and practices is their self-perceptions as writers in their respective second languages. Most studies in this group consist of autobiographical accounts of NNES teachers as writers (e.g. Connor, 1999; Li, 1999), but there are also few accounts, such as Liu (2005) and Tsui (1999), on NNES teachers' self-perceptions related to the teaching of writing. Despite the increasing interest in the area of NNES teachers' self-perceptions as writers in their L2s, there have not been many case studies investigating NES teachers' perception of themselves as writers in their L2s as well as comparing NES and NNES teachers as writers and teachers. The cases presented in this section are one attempt to add to the literature on this very important topic.

#### 4.3.1. (Not) being an L2 writer perceived as generally affecting (or not) ability to teach L2 writing

Both NNES teachers in this study, Xiao Yu and Linnea, not surprisingly, when I asked about their writing experiences in their L2s, wanted to talk about their writing experiences in English. This was particularly interesting in the case of Linnea, who previously had learned other L2s than English, including French, Latin, Italian, and German, and had some "limited" and "basic" writing experiences in each of those (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011). While learning French, for instance, she kept a journal during her study in Paris:

I remember that when I started French, it was when I lived in France and I'd kept a journal. That was something I did, just to develop fluency and this family I stayed with, the mother, she would read it and correct it for me. So that was really basic French. I



probably have it somewhere, so that developed my fluency in French. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

After talking briefly about her journal writing experiences in French, Linnea pointed out that “[c]ompared to English, I did not have much writing experiences in the other languages I learned” (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011). Linnea also explained that, at the time I interviewed her for the purposes of the research study, she was “currently a writer in English for short daily communications like emails as well as for longer pieces I wrote for Center for Teaching and Learning at [the name of the university she worked for]” (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011). Linnea has been living in the United States for 25 years. During this time, she noted, her self-perception as a writer in English had changed. During her initial years in the U.S., as she explained, due to her lack of training in writing, she did not consider herself as a writer in English. After taking some writing classes and working in ESL context, she was able to develop her writing skills to the extent to which she considered herself as a writer.

The writing teacher participants’ recollections of their expectations as an L2 writer and their reactions to L2 literacy practices seemed to influence their current cognitions as tied to the teaching of L2 writing. For instance, Linnea, as a second language writer who did not initially receive much writing instruction, developed her writing in English by taking classes in ESL settings as well as practicing writing in English. She noted that when she took those writing classes in the past, she expected to receive some encouragement as well as criticism to develop as a writer in her second language. Reflecting on her previous expectations, she explained how those expectations influenced her instructional practices as a second language writing teacher. She explained how her expectations impacted her level of praise in her feedback to ESL students writing in the following way:

The way I learned was from encouragement...So I think I always try to encourage the students when I see that they write a unique sentence or phrase or new vocabulary... because I was always thrilled when somebody noticed, read it, and noticed the concept of what I was trying to do [as a second language writer]. So, I mean, not just saying 'you should put a period there', but saying, 'wow, that's a really interesting idea'. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

Later in the interview, as a developing second language writer, in addition to praise on her writing, Linnea also expected to receive explicit feedback on her mistakes. She commented that she did not receive much criticism in her writing training:

I think it is important to point out what's wrong, what needs to be fixed because I don't think I was ever helped by somebody who showed me what was right or what was wrong [in my writing in English]. Because, as a second language writer, you want to know [that]...So that's also probably from my own experience of learning to write in English. I try to be careful with their [my students'] egos and try to encourage; but, at the same time, be helpful, and show them what they need to do in order to become better writers in English. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

Based on her own L2 writing, Linnea was also aware of some of the challenges her students may also face in their L2 writing. She thus felt empathetic towards her students when thinking about some of the challenges she herself faced during her writing.

I think of myself as a second language writer so therefore I think that it is a challenge to write in a second language. You need vocabulary, you need help with grammar. So I probably help my students in the way that I need or needed help. A second language

writer always needs help with grammar. Always. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Linnea's self-perception as a writer was impacted by living in an English speaking country. Similarly, Xiao Yu, as an L2 doctoral student, went through a similar process. In terms of writing in other languages, although she learned Japanese as an L3 and wrote basic sentences in Japanese, at the time she participated in my research, she said she had completely forgotten her Japanese language knowledge. As a result, whenever she referred to herself as an L2 writer, she only wanted to talk about her writing experiences in English. In her "limited" L2 writing experiences in China, her home country, Xiao Yu said, she could not develop her L2 academic writing skills (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). When talking about her writing experiences in China, she explained that "For writing, I think I did some journals. You know, like, you know, personal journal. I don't think I did much." (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). When she later came to the United States for her graduate-level education, after working on her writing skills in different classes, she, as she herself noted, "then became an L2 writer" (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). As a result of being an L2 graduate student, however, she explained that she developed her academic writing skills in her L2 more than any other domains that may also require writing. Thus, she explained, as far as being an L2 writer, "it really depends on what situations I need to use the language in writing. [You can think about this issue] like English for Specific Purposes... So right now, I've been developing academic language competency. Maybe I'm not able to function in the other domains of writing" (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). Thus, she noted, she was, in her own words, "an L2 writer with mostly academic writing experiences" (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011). Later in the interview, Xiao Yu further explained the academic skills she developed as

an L2 writer. As a part of her coursework in her doctoral program, she was required to write research papers, reflections, and online discussions. As she herself said, her L2 writing skills were “very very academic” (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011).

As an L2 graduate student, Xiao Yu perceived herself as an academic L2 writer. Another doctoral student in this study, Allyson, also considered herself as a writer in her second language, Spanish. When Allyson declared her major in Spanish in college, she considered herself as “competent” (Allyson, Initial interview, February 1, 2011) in Spanish, but when she was first asked to write in Spanish during her major, she assumed that her advanced speaking skills would transfer into her writing in Spanish. After her initial encounters with Spanish writing and getting some feedback on her writing, she had some realizations as tied to her L2 writing abilities. She explained her realizations as an L2 writer in the following way:

I never really started writing in Spanish until college where we did literary analysis and research papers in Spanish. And I remember that being really really hard because I didn't realize that there was a different kind of vocabulary [required for writing]. I considered myself a fluent non-native speaker [of Spanish] and I remember getting my first research paper back and it was like red all over it...I did not know that speaking skill would not translate to writing. I was fluent in speaking, but I did not know how to write in Spanish. So I was not an L2 writer then. (Allyson, Initial interview, February 1, 2011)

As Allyson developed her Spanish writing skills, her perception of being an L2 writer also changed. The level of improvement in her L2 writing abilities remained “limited” compared to her L1 writing abilities, and thus, she noted her lack of confidence in her L2 writing abilities: “I

think I improved a little bit as an L2 writer. It probably wasn't just enough time for me to get really confident in it." (Allyson, Initial interview, February 1, 2011)

Allyson became proficient in her L2 and had some writing experiences in her Spanish major. Another Spanish learner, Shawn, also furthered his language skills in Spanish; but he did not consider himself as a writer in Spanish. As he noted many times throughout the research study, comparing his L1 and L2 literacy skills, he was "a writer in English but not in Spanish". He also commented that compared to his other language skills in Spanish, his writing was not as strong although he felt that he had the skills to communicate in some ways. He explained his self-perception of being an L2 writer in Spanish in the following way:

Writing... I don't think I am very good at Spanish writing even now, because I never had any real need to do writing. I took one college course when I was in Venezuela on geopolitics, and wrote a couple of papers... So I think listening and speaking is definitely my strength, reading I am okay, and writing I am very weak. I mean, I can write to get my point across, but I mean, [I am not very strong at] writing effectively... (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011)

Later in the study, when reflecting on how he balanced praise and criticism in his feedback, Shawn further explained he felt fragile as a writer in Spanish when he wrote academic pieces. In that sense, when he gave praise on his students' writing, one of the sources he drew on from his writing experiences was his L2 writing experiences in Spanish. He explained that, in a way, there were some similarities between his self-perception as an L2 writer in Spanish and his perceptions of his students' self-perceptions as L2 writers in English: "Maybe that is something that connects to myself as a writer. Because I know how fragile you can feel as a writer...And I

certainly feel that way when I have to write academically in Spanish.” (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

In spite of being proficient in his second language, Shawn felt “fragile” as an L2 academic writer. Ellisha, however, did not become very proficient in her additional languages, Spanish and Turkish. When I asked her about her writing abilities, she explained that, due to her limited language learning experiences, she was not required to write more than limited classroom assignments in Spanish and Turkish. She noted,

Compared to my L1 writing experiences, my L2 writing is short and sweet. When I took the Spanish class and Turkish at [the name of the university], we did do a lot of writing even though they were beginning level classes, we were writing sentences, and maybe a paragraph, and I really enjoyed that because I realized I did know more than what I thought. That I could write about something and not just have sentences. So, for example, we would write about what we did over the weekend or what we planned to do over the week, things like that. (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

I also asked her if she was practicing writing in either of her additional languages at the time I interviewed her. She explained that for both of these languages, the last time she wrote a paragraph-long piece was when she took the classes. As she had some friends and in-laws in Turkey, she would write some sentences in her daily communications. She said “I’ll do an email in Turkish to my niece or my brother-in-law in Turkey” (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011).

To sum up, in the cases of NNES teachers, their self-perceptions have evolved over time and their confidence level seems to be increasing as they practice writing more and more in their

daily lives. As we have seen in the cases of Linnea and Xiao Yu, their initial L2 writing experiences in their home countries were not substantial compared to their L2 writing experiences in an English-speaking context where they perceived their L2 writing skills to have become more developed. In the cases of NES teachers, however, the interaction between their self-perceptions as L2 writers and their cognitions seems to be more complex. Allyson and Shawn were fluent in Spanish, and, compared to Ellisha, who has limited L2 writing capacities, both of them were capable of producing plenty of text in Spanish if they wanted to. It was interesting, however, to discover that what teachers meant when they talked about writing proficiency in L1 or L2 varied tremendously. If anything, both Shawn and Allyson seem to downplay or be too modest about their own L2 writing skills. This may be as a result of their not practicing their L2 writing skills as much as they feel they should. In addition, NES teachers' immediate needs to communicate in writing in their L2 were not the same as the NNES teachers' needs. In other words, both Linnea and Xiao Yu needed to communicate in writing in English because they were living and working in an English-speaking context. None of the NES teachers, however, had that kind of immediate need to write in their L2s. This might also be another reason why their self-perceptions of themselves as writers differed greatly.

#### 4.3.2. Lack of L2 writing training and/or practice in advanced L2 writing influencing L2 writing teachers' cognitions

When reflecting on their perceptions of themselves as L2 writers and the possible influence of their L2 writing experiences on their instructional practices, several teachers commented on certain aspects that are lacking in their L2 literacies. While most of them

indicated that they did not receive L2 writing training in their L2 education, some teachers also commented that they did not have extensive advanced L2 writing experiences.

Linnea, as a writer in different L2s, she noted that she only received writing training in English. Interestingly, in Linnea's English language learning experience overall, her learning to write in English was delayed. When she was initially learning English in her home country, Sweden, she learned mostly English conversation skills. She explained that she "mastered oral skills long before writing or reading because speaking was the focus of our classes... Also when we traveled with our family to England, we were exposed to conversation" (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011). She later further commented on the lack of emphasis on English writing in her schooling. When I asked her if she was trained to write in English, she answered,

No. I don't ever remember writing an essay or something. We didn't do much writing - we must have written sentences, maybe answers to questions- but there was no writing instruction, like [the way of teaching] how to write in English. And if there had been, what would they have taught? The Swedish way of writing in English or American or British style of writing in English? I don't know. Yeah, so there was no writing instruction in my schooling. I'm trying to think, have I ever? No. No. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

Linnea later received some writing instruction. Her first formal writing instruction was in Australia, where she spent a year as an exchange student in a high school in Melbourne. She explained how she compensated for her lack of L2 writing training until then in a class which was, actually, for English speakers:



The first time I received writing instruction was when I was an exchange student in Melbourne. Interestingly, it wasn't an ESL class; it was a regular Australian English class. And I wrote some essays in English there. But, as a language learner, I didn't have any writing instruction until then. Then I became fluent as a L2writer there. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

After this initial writing training in Australia, Linnea later in her career furthered her writing training in the U.S. by taking a university level creative writing class which helped her develop "mainly my free writing skills and fluency in English writing" (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011). In her own words, she felt that she "then became a L2writer...I mean, [I became] a competent L2writer." (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011).

Like Linnea, Xiao Yu also commented on the lack of L2 writing training. Unlike Linnea's lack of writing training in her home country, however, Xiao Yu did indeed take a writing class in her home country, China; but as she explained "In my English language learning, writing wasn't a strong focus... We had writing classes but it wasn't really a strong focus." (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011) Despite her lack of initial writing training, when she came to the States for her graduate study, she learned writing by practice and also reading sources on how to teach writing. However, her advanced literacy practices were also "limited" to source-based argumentative writing required in graduate level classes. At the time of this study, she was teaching a class on writing for university exams that ESL students may be asked to take in different content areas, and she faced some difficulties due to her lack of training in that aspect of academic writing she was first asked to teach her students.

Similarly, Allyson also commented on some aspects that she felt as a lack in her literacy skills that she did not receive an extensive L2 writing training in Spanish before being asked to write papers in Spanish; but, she also tried to draw on her L2 writing experiences as she taught her writing classes. Allyson, although she had extensive Spanish writing experiences due to her Spanish major, many times throughout the research indicated that she did not receive explicit writing instruction in Spanish. As a result, she had some frustrations as she wrote in Spanish. She explained,

I had no explicit instruction so I know how it feels like and that's why I am very explicit about it [the instruction I provide in my writing classes]. In my first year of college, we had a Spanish language focus, like we were still learning the language, but after that the classes were so advanced. I took classes like research writing in Spanish and literary analysis in Spanish, so we did not talk about the language anymore. We did not talk about writing or reading skills at all. We just kind of did it. So that is something I am more explicit now. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

Later in the interview, she gave an example from one of her classes that I had previously observed for the research. In the classroom session, the main topic was integrating sources in academic writing. Allyson explained how to integrate sources in academic writing language students can use, and then she modeled finding some sources by showing students how to find related sources on the university's library webpage. It was a step-by-step instruction on how to navigate the library to find sources that pertain to their papers. In the follow-up interview, when she was explaining the impact of lack of writing instruction on her instructional practices, she explained that that was something she would have benefitted from if she had received such

instruction. Based on her experiences with lack of instruction on such aspects of writing, she tried to make it clear and explicit for students. She explained this issue in the following way:

I go through the process with my students, we look at the library website together and we look at other websites. Then we talk about things like how do you determine these are credible or not, how do you skim an article to find out if it is good or not...I make sure that I do those things every semester because those are all the things that I wished I had when I was writing in Spanish...But I didn't and I know how frustrating that is. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

It seems, for some teachers, lack of L2 writing training influenced their current cognitions. For some teachers, however, their perceived lack in their L2 writing was not in the training aspect, but in the practice of advanced L2 writing. For instance, Ellisha, who did not become advanced in her additional languages, Spanish and Turkish, did not have extensive advanced writing experience in either of those languages. This lack in her advanced L2 writing literacy practices, however, did not make her feel disadvantaged especially when teaching her academic writing for graduate students class. When talking about the specifics of the class, Ellisha underlined the importance of language within discourse communities. Especially for that class, it was important for her to prepare students to enter the discourse community the students are expected to write within. In that sense, she felt her lack of advanced L2 writing experience did not impact negatively on her teaching. Rather, she commented on the importance of the teachers' awareness of such discourse communities in the following way:

I did not get proficient in these languages [Spanish and Turkish] but when you say as a language learner or L2writer, with this audience [of international graduate students], I interpret that as learning the language of the disciplines and disciplinary writing because

this is a multi-disciplinary class. The more I have taught that class, the more I have realized that there are things that are just different in different disciplines based on the expectations of that discipline. (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 2, March 30, 2011)

Although Shawn's Spanish language proficiency was higher than Ellisha's, he also had similar experiences when he learned Spanish. He said he "never did a lot of writing as I learned Spanish. It was a lot of reading, a lot of grammar, targeted and isolated grammar, and speaking and listening. There was very little writing beyond the sentence level." (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011). He reflected more on this lack when he was commenting on his confidence as a writer. He felt the lack in his L2 writing abilities especially when he was thinking about his self-perception as a teacher. As an experienced L1 writer, he was able to compensate for this lack with his extensive L1 writing experiences but the gap in his L2 writing abilities, he explained, "was still there". (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011) He explained this gap and its influence on his L2 writing instruction as follows:

When I think about myself as a teacher, it is not about how I learn to write [in Spanish] because I never really did learn how to write well in another language. I think, writing in many ways is very language specific... I still feel confident as a teacher because I am a good writer in English... Maybe if I were a stronger writer in a second language, then I might have had some ways to approach to the ordering of things but I feel like it is in a sense is a big gap. I wish I were a better writer in Spanish but I am grateful that I am good at one language. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

The writing teacher participants' recollections of their expectations as L2 writers and their reactions to L2 literacy practices seemed to influence their current cognitions as tied to the teaching of L2 writing. For instance, Linnea, as an L2 writer who did not initially receive much

writing instruction, developed her writing in English by taking classes in ESL settings as well as practicing writing in English. She noted that when she took those writing classes in the past, she expected to receive some encouragement as well as criticism to develop as a writer in her L2. Reflecting on her previous expectations, she explained how those expectations influenced her instructional practices as an L2 writing teacher. She explained how her expectations impacted her level of praise in her feedback to ESL students writing in the following way:

The way I learned was from encouragement...So I think I always try to encourage the students when I see that they write a unique sentence or phrase or new vocabulary... because I was always thrilled when somebody noticed, read it, and noticed the concept of what I was trying to do [as an L2 writer]. So, I mean, not just saying 'you should put a period there', but saying, 'wow, that's a really interesting idea'. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

Later in the interview, as a developing L2 writer, in addition to praise on her writing, Linnea also expected to receive explicit feedback on her mistakes. She commented that she did not receive much criticism in her writing training:

I think it is important to point out what's wrong, what needs to be fixed because I don't think I was ever helped by somebody who showed me what was right or what was wrong [in my writing in English]. Because, as a L2writer, you want to know [that]...So that's also probably from my own experience of learning to write in English. I try to be careful with their [students'] egos and try to encourage; but, at the same time, be helpful, and show them what they need to do in order to become better writers in English. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

Based on her own L2 writing, Linnea was also aware of some of the challenges her students may also face in their L2 writing. She thus felt empathetic towards students when thinking about some of the challenges she faced during her writing.

I think of myself as an L2 writer so therefore I think that it is a challenge to write in a second language. You need vocabulary, you need help with grammar. So I probably help my students in the way that I need or needed help. A L2writer always needs help with grammar. Always. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Xiao Yu talked about her reactions to her L2 literacy instruction as having considerable influence on her teaching writing. During the semester, she developed a comparison activity which let her students compare two texts by using a graphic organizer. When we were talking about that particular comparison activity, she expressed her reactions to her L2 literacy instruction. She described her own frustrations about an activity which asked students to analyze texts sentence by sentence when she was a student in China. As a teacher who was teaching a similar class with some reading analysis before writing, she created a comparison table which helps students look at the text as a whole and compare the texts. She expressed her frustrations as well as the influence of such frustrations on her current teaching practices as follows:

I think there was a course in my university where we read newspapers and then the teacher was basically like talking through...and explain it sentence by sentence. I don't think I learned much from that... For newspaper reading, I think probably one of the best ways to use it is ... you read a lot about a certain topic from different newspaper sources and then you can think compare the information ... That is why I wanted to create this activity. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 1, February 18, 2011)

Xiao Yu's reaction to her L2 literacy instruction was visible in her writing instruction in the classroom. In Allyson's case, her reaction translated into the writing instruction she provided in the feedback on students' papers. In a follow-up interview, I asked her how she determined how much feedback to give on students' writing. Commenting on a student draft for which she not only used a detailed rubric but also provided some explanations in prose, Allyson explained the link between the lack of constructive feedback she received as a L2writer and the feedback she provided on her students' paper:

When I first started teaching in this program, I just had no idea how much [feedback] to give. Honestly, I feel like I have to constrain myself [when giving feedback]. I want to give more than this but I know that it is probably not useful for the student to get that much. In Spanish I think I received only all red marks...So I can say my past writing experiences and the lack of feedback I received as a L2writer pushed me to be thoughtful about the feedback that I give. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

In addition, Allyson, an L2 Spanish writer, commented on her lack of advanced L2 literacy instruction and how that influenced her teaching as follows: "I did not have any writing training in my L2and I got to that advanced level where I was writing papers in Spanish. In that sense, everything I do in this class, I think 'I wish I could have something like this in my Spanish writing'". (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

To recapitulate, it turns out that some writing teachers' lack of L2 writing training may influence their instructional practices for the better. Sometimes, lack of training in a L2 may influence their perceptions as writers (as in the case of Linnea) and teachers (as in the case of Allyson). Ellisha and Shawn, however, commented that their lack of advanced L2 literacy

practices may also impact their cognitions. Sometimes, lack of training in a second language may influence their perceptions as writers, as in the case of Linnea, whose lack of training influenced her self-perception as a writer. In other times, however, as in the case of Xiao Yu, having advanced L2 writing practices may not necessarily mean NNES teachers start with an advantage. If their L2 writing experiences were too discipline specific or if they teach something with which they do not have much L2 writing experience, they may have to re-train themselves for the specifics of writing they are asked to teach.

These results also indicate teachers' expectations as L2 writers and reactions to L2 literacy instruction may impact their writing instruction. The teachers reflected on their previous experiences during their L2 literacy instruction when providing writing instruction in class or giving feedback. In the case of Linnea, her expectations from her L2 literacy instruction influenced her understanding of the writing process students went through. Xiao Yu made choices based on what she felt would have benefited her when she was learning to write in her L2 and created some writing activities which would have benefited her as an L2 writer if she had had such instruction. In Allyson's case, although she wanted to provide as much feedback as possible based on the amount of feedback she expected as a writer in Spanish, she realized that it was possible to give students too much of what they wanted. Allyson's feedback practices were similar to Linnea's in that what they wanted in feedback influenced the feedback they provided to students—though they have mentioned some differences in what this feedback was.

#### 4.3.3. L2 writing experiences influencing instructional practices

As mentioned earlier, teachers' cognitions may be influenced by their self-perceptions as writers in their respective L2s. The influence of L2 writing experiences on NNES teachers'



cognitions and practices has been an issue of interest in other previous studies (e.g. Connor, 1999; Li, 1999). Each of the five participants in the present study has experience writing at least in one L2. Of the five participants, only Ellisha had limited L2 writing experience (i.e. no more than one-paragraph long pieces). Allyson and Shawn had L2 writing experiences in Spanish while Linnea and Xiao Yu had extensive writing experiences in English. I sometimes asked them explicitly whether or not such L2 writing experiences influenced instructional practices, and sometimes we discussed some classroom events and/or their feedback practices to tap into the link between their L2 writing experiences and their current cognitions as tied to the teaching of writing.

When I interviewed Linnea about her feedback practices, one of the issues we discussed was the mode of some of her written feedback provided to her students. In her feedback, it was clear that she was engaged and she gave a lot of exclamations such as “How nice!” as well as asked several questions about the content (e.g. “Where is he?”) even when the students submitted their final drafts. I asked her how she decided the mode of her feedback especially when we discussed the question (“Where is he?”) she asked on one students’ final draft. She answered,

In my feedback, I always ask such questions and they never answer. But, to me, if I write something in English, if somebody has a response, you feel like it is worthwhile. So I, as an L2 writer myself, just think that might inspire them to do more, and basically, to write more. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 1, February 8, 2011)

Later in the study, Linnea and I also talked about the amount of praise she provided in her feedback. Based on the student sample I collected from her class, it was clear that she gave a lot of encouraging comments throughout her feedback, and usually, the amount of praise exceeded the amount of criticism. When we talked about such issues in her feedback, she also mentioned

that she usually received some feedback from her husband who is a NES writer. In his feedback, Linnea received mostly criticism which was useful for her development as an L2 writer, but her husband did not provide much praise. While acknowledging the difference between the feedback provided to Linnea by her husband and the feedback Linnea gave students, she explained how such experience as a recipient of feedback made her aware of some of the issues in her feedback giving practices:

I learned writing a lot from my husband. He would read something I write and he would not even comment on the content, or say anything positive; but, he is a writer, he is not a teacher. However, I think as a teacher you have to overlook the mistakes, and just find something positive and build on that. That is why I want to focus on the praise in my feedback such as this one. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

At the time of the study, Linnea also wrote a short communication for her university's Center for Teaching and Learning. It was a booklet she wrote to assist content-area professors on how to deal with NNES students in their classes. Although it was a short booklet, Linnea spent a lot of time writing, editing and revising the booklet. When we were talking about her feedback practices, she explained how her writing of that booklet also impacted her cognitions as tied to her feedback practices in the following way:

That writing experience made me more forgiving because, of course, I, as a L2 writer myself, know they [students] are going to have many mistakes. I think also it is really important to remind yourself that you are trying to say something important and then people comment on your grammar...As a teacher you have to stop yourself and think "Is the student asking me to look at what they are saying and ignore the grammar for now. Or do they want help with the grammar?" (Linnea, Follow-up interview 1, February 8, 2011)

Linnea also talked about her own mistakes as an L2 writer. When commenting on a Spanish-speaking student's draft, she noted how some of her student's L1-related mistakes were very similar to those she made when she was learning English. She explained this situation by giving an example from one of the student drafts I collected for the purposes of the research. She commented that one of the most common errors she noticed in her Spanish-speaking students was comma splices. She wanted to comment on a student draft that she gave feedback on regarding comma splices. We picked a random paper among the Spanish-speaker students' drafts, and her feedback to the student was as follows:

[The name of the student], I suggest you only focus on RO[run-on]s for grammar correction. List all RO mistakes and make corrections - Please come and see me (or see a tutor). Note: In Spanish, using a comma (,) between two sentences is correct. However, in English, you need "more" punctuation. In other words, where you put a comma in Spanish, in English, you need to put a period (.) or, and or, but or, or semi-colon. I'd like, no, *I'd love for you to help me* understand how I can explain this more clearly to students like you. Once you understand, you can help me understand so that I can teach it to future students like you. [Emphasis in original]

Linnea commented that this has been a continuous problem in Spanish-speaking students' writing in the program. Despite her long teaching career, she did not feel she could effectively address it. In her attempts to find a solution to address these kinds of run-on sentences, as a teaching strategy, she decided to ask one of her Spanish-speaking students to "help" her. She stated,

You know, it is an ongoing thing and it is very hard to teach. I do not know how to address this issue. When we explain this, they basically don't understand what we are saying...I don't know how she will do but I am sort of trying everything with her. This is a different approach "Can you help me teach other students?"(Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Linnea also mentioned that, like that Spanish-speaking student, she herself made such L1-related mistakes in her initial writing experiences in English and that she became more understanding of such L1-related mistakes as a result of her experiences/ frustrations with a previous NES teacher:

One mistake I made when I was learning English was comma splice; because, in Swedish, it is fine. So I am empathetic to Spanish speakers like this woman. It is perfectly fine to me to write a sentence, comma like this, and then another sentence. Some teachers here, especially English professors, think that is a cardinal sin, you should go to prison for the rest of your life and they think it is like the law of God that there needs to be a period at the end of the sentence. And no, that is just an American convention. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Linnea later explained how her own understanding of the process of acquiring certain conventions helped her to be more understanding of such student mistakes. Talking about her own overuse of comma splices in English due to her writing experiences in her first language, she explained how such awareness of mistakes that are related to students' respective first languages may influence the teaching of writing. She emphasized that such experiences did not

guarantee being a good teacher, but raised her awareness of such errors. Linnea also talked about how her comma-splices were handled by a NES teacher she had as an English language learner:

I think because that you have similar experiences doesn't necessarily mean you have insights even. I think it does not necessarily make you a better teacher- but, you can use that [L2 writing experience] in different ways. Like we talked before, the issue with comma splices: When I made such errors, a native speaking teacher looked at me like I was an idiot. I always remember that. So his lack of insight made him think like "why can't she understand?" But from where I was coming from, it was perfectly correct. I think my experience with a teacher who didn't understand it made me more understanding of the mistakes students are making." (Linnea, Follow-up interview 1, February 8, 2011)

In addition to her writing experiences influencing her written feedback practices, Linnea also commented that her L2 writing experiences made her more aware of actual process the students go through and appreciate it even more. To exemplify this, she gave an example from a classroom event that I observed. In one of her classes, the students had a writing assignment due for that day and most of them had done it. During the class session, they looked at a sample paper paragraph. As a class, they analyzed the use of verbs, the topic sentence, concluding sentence, etc. As a follow up to this activity, the students did a peer review and they had to exchange paragraphs that they had written for that particular class as homework. When they were doing the peer review, as they had previously done in class, they checked the format, and then the content. At the end of the class, Linnea gave them an option of revising it and submitting it the following class. As a response, most of the students preferred to revise it. Linnea explained how happy she felt about that classroom procedure because she felt that her

students were developing an awareness of the process of writing rather than seeing the assignments as only class requirements:

When I gave them [students] that option [of revising it and bringing it back], you saw it, most of them took it home. That made me really happy. They were eager to improve... So they notice things and that's when they realized that is a process... So I encouraged them to work on it; because, I know, as an L2 writer myself, it is a process and they need to understand it as well. That was a very good sign, wasn't it? (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Linnea's L2 writing experiences influenced her instructional practices especially her instruction she provided in her feedback. Allyson, as an L2 writer in Spanish, also commented that her previous L2 writing experiences influenced her feedback practices. As she repeated throughout the data collection of the research, especially when deciding on the amount of feedback to provided to students, one of her sources is her writing experiences and her expectations as L2 writer in Spanish. When commenting on a student draft in which she gave one sentence of praise, and another sentence of criticism, she noted,

I definitely think about my writing experiences in my second language, and my not getting any feedback on it. Even if it is good feedback, I did not receive much. As a writer, I want to see what I am doing well and what I should keep doing. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

In addition to teachers' L2 writing experiences influencing feedback practices, in some cases, teachers' L2 writing experiences may also influence their classroom instruction. Shawn, for instance, first noted that he had "limited" Spanish writing experiences. For him, his L2

writing experience, even if it was reportedly limited, still gave him some insights into how to approach the teaching of L2 writing. During the semester, for instance, Shawn required students to interview an expert in different areas on the topics the students would write their papers. Before the interview, the students were asked to contact the experts via email. In one classroom session, he went through a step-by-step guide for email etiquette handout he created in an attempt to help his students in that process. When I interviewed him about that classroom session, Shawn explained how his L2 writing experiences pushed him to be more aware of the process of writing an email:

I think these are the things I would do when I write an email in another language. I don't necessarily do all of these things in English, but definitely these are the things that I would do if I am writing an email in another language. I think I have internalized almost all of this as a writer in English already. But I think being able to break it out like that would help me as a L2writer. That is why I used this handout. (Shawn, Follow-up interview 2, March 21, 2011)

To sum up, teachers' L2 writing experiences appear to be influencing their cognitions related to their L2 writing instruction. As we have seen in the case of Linnea and Allyson, NNES teachers may be able to refer to their L2 writing experiences when providing written feedback on their students' writing. As in the case of Shawn, even when teachers do not have extensive L2 writing experiences, they still may be able to refer to their writing experiences in an attempt to gain some insight into their students' learning to write in English.

#### 4.3.4. L2 writing experiences in a genre that influences teaching writing

All teachers who perceived themselves as L2 writers in this study commented that their L2 writing experiences in the genre of a research paper influenced their instructional practices more than any other genre-specific writing experiences. For instance, Xiao Yu, although she sometimes referred to herself as a language learner and L2 writer during the class, explained that her L2 writing experiences could be relevant only in some classes when she can refer to herself as an academic L2 writer:

I think it all depends on what I'm teaching. I might talk about my experiences in one class and that might be more directly applicable to teaching academic writing. Yeah, I can think of joining my experiences, what the process was like for me as a L2 writer and what experiences I went through, you know, from a total novice to somebody who is totally able to write, you know, academic papers. (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011)

When I interviewed her again later, Xiao Yu also talked about the nature of the writing class she was teaching at the time of data collection. As she was teaching a class called "Writing for university exams" with the content material from environmental science, she noted that it was relatively harder for her to refer to her own L2 writing experiences compared to other academic writing classes. She explained her situation as follows:

If the class is about writing a research paper, you definitely would talk a lot about your L2 writing experiences... You can probably relate to yourself more in that kind of situation. And actually I did not do this kind of undergraduate study here, and I did not



know these sorts of answers to university exams... I don't know how to write these, so I have to train myself first. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 2, March 16, 2011)

At the same time, Xiao Yu, while acknowledging the differences in the genres she wrote and she taught, also commented that, although her L2 writing experiences might seem different at first glance, she still was able to see similarities, especially between the conventions she needed to follow in her academic writing experiences and the conventions she taught students to follow in their short answers for university exams. She explained this similarity and how her L2 writing experiences of the genre of a research paper influenced her teaching as follows:

I mean you learn about the format for writing a paragraph in English. In a lot of situations in this class, they write paragraphs, short answer. It is like a composition class where you have this kind of structure for a paragraph. I mean that is what I do as well when I write research papers for my doctoral program. Of course, it may not be that rigid depending on the situations. But in this class, the short answers have to follow a certain format. And I do follow certain formats in my L2 writing as well. So that experience itself also impacts my teaching. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 1, February 18, 2011)

Xiao Yu benefited from her L2 writing experiences in some situations that were similar to students' experiences in writing in English. The only NES teacher who claimed to have extensive L2 writing experiences in Spanish, Allyson, also indicated that her L2 writing experiences in the genre of a research paper influenced her cognitions as tied to the teaching of L2 writing (Although Shawn's writing experiences in Spanish were almost as extensive as Allyson's, as he did not have sustained writing experiences in Spanish over a period of time, he did not perceive his Spanish writing experiences as extensive). For instance, Allyson talked

about her Spanish paper writing experiences when she explained her feedback practices. When I asked her how she decided how much feedback to provide to students, she talked about her own L2 writing experiences and how such experiences influenced her cognitions. She explained,

My paper writing experiences in Spanish pushed me to be thoughtful about the feedback that I give. Even if I want to rush through the papers, I can't because I just feel like "What if you were writing in your L2 and you spent like all weekend writing this paper and you got nothing back on it?" I know how that feels from my past experiences in Spanish writing. So I want to make sure that I say enough and that what I say hopefully is helpful and makes sense. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 1, February 15, 2011)

It seems that Allyson's L2 writing experiences influenced her feedback giving practices. Later in the semester, Allyson also further reflected on how her Spanish writing experiences influenced her L2 writing instruction practices. She specifically talked about her first Spanish paper writing experience which required her to integrate sources. She stated,

I think about my Spanish paper writing experiences when I teach my writing classes. I remember feeling just totally and completely lost when we had to write a research paper in Spanish. This was back in the day when you had to find physical books in the library, ... I remember even just to find sources was itself so overwhelming and daunting because it was an entire academic book in my second language. (Allyson, Follow-up interview 2, March 9, 2011)

Overall, the results indicated that, for some teachers, the lack of writing training and/or practice in advanced L2 writing practices may influence their instructions. As we have seen in the cases of Linnea and Allyson, for example, based on such recollections, teachers may address

some issues in class or in their feedback. For some teachers, their previous expectations as L2 writers or reactions to their L2 literacy instruction may also influence their instruction. As in the case of Xiao Yu, teachers may create some activities based on their own either positive or negative reactions to some L2 literacy instructions they received in the past. For NNEST teachers, like Linnea for instance, their L2 writing experiences in English made them more understanding of some errors they themselves may have made when learning L2 writing. For two NES teacher participants (Allyson and Shawn), the influence of L2 writing experiences was also transparent in spite of the fact that their L2 writing experiences were in a language that is different than English (i.e. Spanish). As far as their feedback practices are concerned, as we have seen in the cases of Linnea, Shawn and Allyson, the influence of teachers' L2 writing experiences was probably most transparent in their decisions about balancing the praise and criticism. For teachers such as Allyson and Xiao Yu, it was not only their L2 writing experiences that influenced their instruction; it was also their L2 writing experiences in certain genres that also influenced certain aspects of their L2 writing instruction.

#### 4.4. Other issues that indirectly may influence teachers' L2 writing instruction

Teachers' cognitions as tied to the teaching of writing may be influenced by various issues, including but not limited to their language learning experiences, their L1 writing experiences and their L2 writing experiences. The lines between these different categories, of course, are fuzzy, especially given that some writing experiences also include language learning experiences. Teacher cognition is a very complex construct to investigate and requires a multi-faceted overview of the issues related to teachers' instructional practices. The analysis of the data indicated that there were some other issues that did not directly fall under any of these categories. This section will give an overview of such issues including teachers' different

definitions of being a writer generally perceived by teachers as influencing their L2 writing instruction and teachers' L1-L2 literacy connections generally perceived as influencing their L2 writing instruction.

#### 4.4.1. Teachers' different definitions of being a writer generally perceived by the teachers as influencing their L2 writing instruction

Most of the teachers whom I worked with stated that writing or being a writer referred to writing primarily to create a literary work or creative writing. This observation held true for teachers with extensive L1 writing experiences. Ellisha, for example, commented on the change in her definition of being a writer in time as follows:

Nur: Do you consider yourself as a writer in English?

Ellisha: I remember when I published my first book, [one of my colleagues] said "You published your book, are you a writer now?" And I remember [I was confused] because I didn't see myself as a writer. But after she said that, I thought "maybe I am." I think I gradually moved into that direction. First and foremost I am a writing teacher...then I am a writer. I would like to be more of a writer; maybe it is moving away from my previous interpretation of what a writer is.

Nur: What is your interpretation of a writer?

Ellisha: I mean my previous interpretation. I always thought a writer was a writer of fiction or a journalist... But my concept of writer has evolved since then. But I think that was a starting point when she asked me, because without hesitation I said "No" but then, she said "What do you have to do?" and I thought, yeah "What do I have to do?" (Ellisha, Follow-up interview 1, February 20, 2011)

Similarly, Shawn, while explaining his perception of himself as a writer, explained that his sense of himself is two sided, one being an academic writer and the other being a creative writer. He commented on both sides of himself as a writer in the following way:

My sense of myself as a writer has two categories because there is being an academic writer and there is being a creative writer. For teaching this class, definitely being an academic writer side is more dominant. But also when you ask me about myself as a writer, my initial thought is not about academic writing, it is about creative writing. So in that sense, there are things about language that I think I take from my class and my students, especially the ideas that they come up with, in my creative writing. (Shawn, Initial interview, February 15, 2011)

Likewise, Allyson also talked about some of her creative writing experiences in English when I asked her about her self-perception of being a writer. Like Shawn, Allyson's self-perception as a writer was also two-sided: creative and academic. She explained the kinds of writing she did in her daily life as follows:

I am a writer... creative and academic...Personally, I journal a lot. I write poems... and I write short stories...So I do a lot of reflective writing for my own personal self. And then clearly I do a lot of academic writing for my PhD classes. In this class, I refer to mostly my academic writing experiences. (Allyson, Initial interview, February 1, 2011)

Both NNES teachers, on the other hand, referred to themselves as "writers" mostly when they referred to their L2 writing experiences in academic domain. This may be as a result of their not doing (much) creative writing in English. Xiao Yu, for instance, talked about her advanced L2 writing abilities as a result of her graduate education in the U.S. As mentioned earlier, Xiao

Yu considered herself an L2 academic writer. She noted, her being an L2 writer, “really depends on what situations I need to use the language in writing... So right now, I’ve been developing academic language competency.” (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011).

Likewise, Linnea, although she had some creative writing training and experiences in English, only referred to her writing experiences that are related to academic issues. When I asked her about her writing experiences, she explained as follows:

I write in English and in Swedish. So I consider myself a writer. I mean, [I write] emails and stuff like that, on a daily basis and sometimes I write longer things. I mean I wrote an article for the Center of Teaching and Learning that they published. It’s just little things like that. (Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

In sum, it seems that teachers’ definitions of being a writer may differ tremendously. As we have seen in the case of Ellisha, their own definition of being a writer may even evolve over time. One of the most surprising findings, was to discover how differently different teachers can perceive themselves as writers. While these NES teachers’ definitions included creative writing in their L1, NNES teachers tended to talk about their academic writing experiences in their L2s. However, even in the case of the NES teachers whose definition of a writer included a literary side, like Ellisha, Allyson and Shawn, they perceived that their academic writer self-perceptions influenced their instructional practices more than the creative side.

#### 4.4.2. Teachers' L1-L2 literacy connections generally perceived as influencing their L2 writing instruction

In addition to their different L1 and L2 writing experiences, some teachers also commented on the influence of the literacy connections between their L1 and L2s on their

current cognitions as tied to the teaching of L2 writing. For instance, Ellisha, as an experienced L1 writer with limited writing experiences in her additional languages, talked about the transfer between her L1 and L2 literacies. When she was learning Spanish, she was asked to complete some writing assignments for her classes. She explained that, she would transfer her L1 writing knowledge, especially in presenting ideas, to her L2 writing experience:

When I was practicing writing in Spanish regularly for my assignments, I felt as if I were a good writer, however, and the teacher always said I did well and I always would get high scores, but I was transferring so I would think how would I present my ideas in English and then I would do it that way in Spanish. (Ellisha, Initial interview, January 18, 2011)

Ellisha's extensive writing experiences in her L1 appeared to help her to make a smooth transition to her L2 literacy skills. Similarly, one NNES teacher participant in this study, Linnea, commented that she had some L1 literacy practices in Swedish for her major before coming to the U.S. Her writing training in her L2, however, as mentioned earlier, was delayed till later in her career. As a result, she first was able to draw on her L1 writing experiences when she was asked to write in English without receiving much L2 writing training. Later, when she received some writing instruction in English, she then transferred some skills she acquired in her L2 writing training to her L1 writing. Throughout the interviews, she explained the interaction between her L1 and L2 literacy skills as follows:

In Sweden I did some writing in Swedish first and then in English. For my major I wrote papers in Swedish. And then we studied English as a L2 in school. I did write some English before I came here. But I didn't really learn how to write in English until I came here [the U.S.]. I was mainly drawing on my L1 writing experiences when I wrote in

English then. But I would say my transition from Swedish to English was fairly smooth.  
(Linnea, Initial interview, January 20, 2011)

I think my Swedish is better now. Because, like I said, I never really had learned explicit strategies...for writing in Swedish so then I learned a lot more in English so then that sort of transferred back to Swedish. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 1, February 8, 2011)

Unlike Ellisha and Linnea, Xiao Yu's lack of advanced L1 literacy practices influenced her-self perception as an L2 writer as well as her self-perception as a teacher indirectly. More specifically, Xiao Yu stated that her advanced L1 literacy skills were almost lacking when she was developing her advanced L2 literacy skills in English. As a result, she felt the connection between her L1 and L2 literacies was lacking. When explaining this lack of connection between her advanced L1 and L2 literacy skills, she first explained that she did not receive training in her L1, especially on the topics for which she received L2 writing training:

I think I got some training in Chinese writing in general, but not in academic writing.

You are drawing from different sources, you know, and be able to construct your point of view and then you use different sources either to support your view or provide different perspectives when you are giving your position on something. I guess that is not something we did a lot. (Xiao Yu, Initial interview, January 19, 2011)

As a result, Xiao Yu started with not much previous writing training in advanced writing in her L1. She further reflected some of the challenges she faced as she developed her advanced L2 literacy skills as follows:

If I had a stronger L1 academic writing experience, I might have benefited that from my own academic writing and development of my own academic writing skills in the L2. If in my first language I had done a lot of tasks I am asked to do right now... I would have



had much faster transition into my L2. Because you have developed that kind of skills, you know how to do that. Then you just need to transfer this skill to a different language. Because I didn't develop some part of the skills that are required, that takes more time. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 1, February 18, 2011)

When I asked her how this difference between her advanced literacies in her L1 and L2 influenced her teaching practices, she explained that the lack of her advanced literacy practices became even more significant when she was asked to teach an academic writing class. She commented that due to the gaps in her advanced literacy practices in her L1, she might need to develop the same skills simultaneously both in her L1 and L2. This, in turn, could cause a certain level of lack of confidence in her teaching abilities as an L2 writing teacher:

If you ask me to teach an academic writing course at the same time with my transition of developing the writing skills in the L2, that can be a challenge and I could be less confident. Because you are sort of novice academic writer, and then you are teaching academic writing. But when you become a more experienced writer and then you teach, you become more comfortable, you have a lot to draw on probably when you are teaching academic writing. (Xiao Yu, Follow-up interview 2, March 16, 2011)

To sum up, in addition to teachers' L1 and L2 writing experiences, their L1-L2 literacy connections may also indirectly influence their self-perceptions writers. Ellisha and Linnea were able to draw at least some connections between their L1 and L2 during their initial L2 writing experiences, and, thus, they felt they were able to compensate for the lack of explicit writing instruction in their respective L2s. Xiao Yu, however, when she was developing her advanced L2 literacy skills, felt the lack in her advanced L1 literacy skills. As a result, she developed certain skills in her L2 with not many resources to draw on from her L1. While this situation did not

necessarily influence her as a teacher in the long run, in some cases, as she herself explained, teachers' self-confidence may be weakened, at least temporarily, due to the challenges they face as they develop literacy skills they need to teach writing. It is clearly possible that her self-confidence might increase later in knowing the challenge has been met.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

#### 5. 1. Summary of results and further discussion

In the study I investigated ESL writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners and as writers. I also examined the extent to which their beliefs about and practice of teaching L2 writing are influenced by their experiences in writing in their L1 and/ or L2s. The study attempted to explore not only teachers' L2 writing instruction practices but also the feedback they provided to ESL students' writing. Overall, the research sought to gain more insight into the relationships between teachers' self-perceptions and their instructional practices. Below, I provide a brief summary of the major findings.

**Research question #1:** How do ESL writing teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners and writers in their L1 and L2s affect their beliefs about how students learn L2 writing and how L2 writing should be taught?

Teachers' self-perceptions as language learners influencing their beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing

One part of the first research question concerned teachers' self-perceptions as language learners. Both NES and NNES teachers' self-perceptions as language learners appear to influence their beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing. As far as the their language learning experiences were concerned, the writing teachers' language learning experiences served as a reference point, especially in developing a greater understanding and empathy towards the challenges students may also face as language learners and as L2 writers. Additionally, the teachers' memories of their own language teachers also appear to play a role when they decide

what materials to include (as in the case of Xiao Yu, Ellisha and Allyson) and how to present materials (as in the cases of Shawn and Allyson) during L2 writing instruction. In previous studies, NNES teachers' English language learning background has frequently been reported as an important positive contributor to their self-perceptions as well as confidence as English language teachers in general (Liu, 1999; Tang, 1997). This finding in prior research was also echoed by the results regarding the NES teachers in the study. That is, even though the NES teacher participants had language learning experiences in languages other than English, their L2 writing instruction appeared to be impacted by such experiences. More specifically, as in the cases of Allyson and Shawn, their Spanish language learning experiences provided them with insights into students' learning processes. Of course, not all teachers in the study had extensive L2 learning experiences. In the case of NES teacher Ellisha, who had relatively limited language learning experience, this experience was perceived as enhancing understanding of the challenges students face as English language learners.

The two NNES teacher participants in the study also indicated that they benefitted from their own language learning experiences, which echoed the findings from previous studies on NNES teachers (e.g. Braine, 1999; Tang, 1997). NNES teachers' memories of making similar mistakes as English language learners themselves, as in the case of Linnea, or practicing some strategies as language learners/ writers, as in the case of Xiao Yu, appeared to help them empathize with students. However, one of the findings of the present study that contrasted with the previous research literature on NNES teachers was that both NNES teachers in the study commented that they also at times had to step out of their own language experience in order to better assist students. This need to "step out" was due to the NNES teachers' perceived

differences, between themselves and their students, in motivations for language learning as well as differences between language learning contexts.

Teachers' self-perceptions as writers in their L1 and L2s influencing their beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing

The second part of the first research question dealt with teachers' self-perceptions as writers in their L1 and L2s and influence on their beliefs regarding the learning and teaching of L2 writing. The primary finding addressing this section of the first research question was that while in two out of the three NES teacher cases, Ellisha and Shawn, teachers' self-perceptions as L1 writers appear to influence their beliefs about the learning and teaching of L2 writing, the NNES teachers' beliefs about the teaching of L2 writing seem to be mainly influenced by their self-perceptions of themselves as L2 writers. This may have to do more with NES teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers of the language they are teaching that is relevant, more than the fact that that language is their L1. The findings regarding NNES teachers' self-perceptions as L2 writers echoed the results of many studies on NNES teachers (e.g., Connor, 1999; Li, 1999). In the case of Allyson, however, in contrast with other NES participants, her beliefs were also influenced by her advanced L2 literacy skills. Therefore, NES teachers without advanced L2 literacy skills, such as Ellisha and Shawn, appear, not surprisingly, to be influenced primarily by their L1 writing experiences. L2 writing teachers with advanced L2 literacy skills, however, may also be greatly influenced by their L2 writing experience. In all of these cases, however, it seems that being an advanced writer, whether in their L1 or L2s, is an important contributor to L2 writing teachers' cognitions.

While some research to date has focused on NNEST teachers' self-perceptions as L2 writers, very little attention has been paid to the issue of NES L2 writing teachers' self-perceptions as L1 writers. The results of the present study indicated that all three of the NES teachers' self-perceptions as L1 writers may also influence their beliefs about the teaching and learning of L2 writing. Even though two of them (Ellisha and Allyson) stated that they did not receive a lot of L1 writing training, all of the NES teachers in the study were experienced writers in English. All of the NES teachers also perceived their writing classes as a means to foster their own understanding of writing. In some cases, this might also influence their motivations to teach their writing classes.

In contrast with NES teachers' self-perceptions as L1 writers influencing their beliefs, not all NES teachers' self-perceptions as L2 writers were as influential. In the cases of Shawn and Ellisha, they were both advanced L1 writers and they felt confident about abilities as L2 writing teachers based on their advanced L1 writing skills. Allyson's case was different. She had advanced L1 and L2 writing skills and perceived that her advanced writing skills in both of the languages influenced her teaching. As mentioned earlier, for some L2 writing teachers, having advanced writing skills in the language they are teaching appears to be sufficient for instilling confidence as L2 writing teachers (at least in the case of such highly experienced teachers as Shawn and Ellisha, who were also experienced L1 writers). This may be because in all cases the writing teachers had advanced writing skills in the language they were teaching (i.e. English), not just any one of their languages. As a result, some NES teachers may lack advanced writing practices in their L2 (as in the case of Ellisha) and lack continuous writing practices in their L2s (as in the case of Shawn) yet still may feel confident about their L2 teaching abilities.

The findings regarding self-perceptions of NES teachers as writers partially contrast with the results regarding NNES teachers' self-perceptions as L1 writers. For both NNES teachers, it was clear that their perception of themselves as English writers was important for their teaching of English writing, regardless of their L1. In addition, while Linnea was able to comment on her extensive Swedish writing experiences in the past, Xiao Yu did not perceive herself as a highly proficient academic writer in Chinese. However, in contrast to two of the NES teachers participants' self-perceptions as L2 writers (i.e. Ellisha and Shawn), both NNES teachers' self-perceptions as L2 writers appeared to have more impact on their beliefs about the teaching and learning of L2 writing. This may be a result of their more advanced L2 skills compared to their L1 writing skills. In the case of Xiao Yu, she perceived that she lacked advanced L1 writing skills. Linnea, however, had some extensive L1 writing skills, but her more advanced (and more current) L2 writing experiences in English seem to influence her beliefs more than her L1 writing skills. It seems, similar to the cases of NES teachers, advanced writing skills in the language they are teaching seem to play an important role in teachers' beliefs regarding the teaching and learning of L2 writing.

**Research Question #2:** How do ESL writing teachers' own perceptions of themselves as writers in any language affect their instructional practices in L2 writing classrooms?

#### NES teachers' self-perceptions as writers influencing their instructional practices

Echoing some of the findings regarding the first research question, the primary finding tied to the research question revealed that while three NES teachers indicated that they felt their L1 writing experiences influenced their instructional practices, not all of the NES teachers, as in the cases of Ellisha and Shawn, who did not perceive themselves as advanced L2 writers, felt

that their L2 writing experiences play a major role in their instructional practices when teaching L2 writing. In the case of one NES teacher, Allyson, however, both her L1 and L2 writing experiences influenced her teaching practices. In all of these cases, NES teachers' self-perceptions as advanced writers, whether in their L1s and L2s, seem to influence their teaching of L2 writing.

#### NNES teachers' self-perceptions as writers influencing their instructional practices

On the issue of whether NNES teachers' self-perceptions as L1 writers impacted their teaching practices, one of the NNES teachers, Linnea, perceived herself as quite proficient as an L1 writer, yet, this self-perception, according to her own account, did not directly influence her teaching practices. Xiao Yu, on the other hand, expressed some concerns regarding her lack of L1 writing training and advanced L1 writing experiences. It is also important to acknowledge here that this lack in her L1 writing experiences did not appear to influence her teaching much in the long run, but was only perceived to be a problem when she first started teaching L2 writing as a developing L2 writer. In her current teaching, as an advanced L2 writer, she felt that her L2 writing experiences compensated for the lack she perceived in her L1 writing skills.

As far as the influence of NNES teachers' perceptions of themselves as L2 writers on their teaching practices was concerned, both NNES teachers perceived themselves as having become highly proficient L2 writers and this self-perception positively influenced their instruction, especially their empathy towards' students' errors as L2 writers. They frequently referred to their own learning of L2 writing when reflecting on how they responded to their students' writing. This finding mirrored some of the results reported in the limited amount of research, such as Liu (2005) and Tsui (1999), available on NNES teachers as writers.



Overall, both NES and NNES teachers' self-perceptions as writers influenced their teaching practices. In their classroom instruction, some teachers also created certain activities (e.g. Allyson's locating sources activity, Xiao Yu's comparison activity) based on some of their own expectations as developing writers. As far as their feedback practices are concerned, the influence of their L2 writing experiences was probably most transparent in their decisions about balancing praise and criticism. Interestingly, in Shawn's case, for instance, when he decided the amount of praise to give on students' writing, he tended to draw on the writing experiences that revealed his own weaknesses as writer or lack of development. In contrast to his advanced writing skills, which seem to influence their beliefs about the teaching and learning of L2 writing, his feedback and classroom practices seem to be influenced by his "fragile" areas, what he perceived as past or present weaknesses in his own writing. As Shawn indicated, compared to his academic writing abilities in his L1, his creative writing abilities in L1 and his academic writing abilities in his L2 were not as strong. As a result, as a developing writer in those areas, he felt he needed more encouragement on his writing. When giving feedback to students in the advanced L2 writing class and balancing the praise and criticism in his feedback, he drew on some of those expectations he had as a writer. Linnea, on the other hand, preferred not to pay too much attention to some students' mistakes that may be similar to her own mistakes she made when learning English.

Finally, one of the last findings regarding L2 writing teachers' self-perceptions as writers concern metacognitive genre awareness of writing teachers. In the cases of Ellisha and Shawn, L1 writing experiences in textbook genre influenced their cognitions as tied to the teaching of writing. In the case of these two textbook writers, their metacognitive genre awareness helped them understand the process students went through writing other genres such as research papers

for classes. As far as the influence of teachers' metacognitive genre awareness on instructional practice is concerned, Ellisha, for instance, based on her awareness of readership expectations of the genre of a textbook, tried to control the process of students' encounter with various genres in her writing classes, assigning a genre with simpler audience expectations first. For some other teachers, however, Xiao Yu and Allyson, L2 writing experiences in genre (in these cases, the genre of a research paper) appeared directly to influence their instruction and practices in L2 writing classrooms. This may be because they were teaching source-based argumentation, a pedagogical genre that parallels their own research writing as graduate students. In the research literature, little attention has been paid to the metacognitive genre awareness of L2 writing teachers. As found in previous research (Negretti & Kuteeva, 2011), the metacognitive genre awareness (or lack thereof) of pre-service English teachers may influence their L2 academic reading and writing abilities. Few research studies, if any, however, have looked at English teachers like Ellisha and Shawn, who are advanced users of certain genres in their L1s, or, like Xiao Yu and Allyson, who are advanced users of certain genres in their L2s. This finding suggests that it is not only L2 writing teachers' writing experience in general that may influence their cognitions as tied to the teaching of L2 writing, but it is also their writing experiences in certain genres that may contribute to their instructional practices.

**Research Question #3:** How does (if it does) the relationship between perceptions of themselves as writers and their actual instructional practices as ESL writing teachers differ for those teachers who are proficient L2 writers and those who are not?

The last research question dealt with how and whether the relationship between teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers and their actual instructional practices as ESL writing teachers differ for those teachers who are proficient L2 writers and those who are not. As

discussed already, the theme of being an advanced and/or proficient L2 writer surfaced in all cases I explored in this study, and, in some cases (e.g., the cases of Xiao Yu, Allyson, and Linnea) it does, indeed, appear to influence L2 writing teachers' self-perceptions as writers and teachers and their instructional practices. In some other cases, the teachers, namely, Ellisha and Shawn, did not perceive themselves as proficient L2 writers. However, while well aware of their limited L2 writing proficiency, these teachers were able to draw extensively on other resources: (1) their extensive advanced L1 writing experiences, or (2) their awareness of the expectations in discourse communities for which they were preparing their students. In conclusion, all of the teacher participants seemed to use to advantage any advanced writing expertise they had, whether L1, L2 or both.

## 5.2. Pedagogical implications for L2 writing teacher training

Based on the results of the present study, there are some implications for L2 writing teacher education. It seems that, for both NNES and NES teachers, second/additional language learning experience in general, and L2 writing experiences in particular, whether advanced or not, appear to have some influence on their views on L2 writing instructional practices. Even in the cases of Ellisha and Shawn, with limited L2 writing experience, there was an awareness of what struggling to write in an L2 was like. Perhaps what is most important, then, is that L2 writing teachers have some L2 writing experience, even if limited. However, without reflection on such experiences, teachers may not realize how they may draw from their own language learning and writing experiences. Therefore, in writing teacher education courses, teacher trainers need to provide opportunities for L2 writing teacher candidates to reflect on their writing experiences.

The results also indicated teachers' self-perceptions as L1 writers can also influence how they view themselves as L2 writing teachers. It seems important for teachers to observe their own L1 writing practices and reflect on areas that may be of value in their teaching of L2 writing. As Routman notes, mainly referring to L1 writing experiences of NES teachers "Noticing and valuing our own behavior has the power to inform and transform our teaching. What works for us as writers is important to bring into the classroom" (Routman, 2005, p. 37). However, it may be vital for teacher educators to encourage teacher candidates to reflect on what may or may not have worked for them in both L1 and L2 writing contexts, which may be similar or different in crucial ways.

Xiao Yu's lack of advanced L1 writing experiences may be a common tendency for NNES students pursuing their graduate degrees in TESOL programs in ESL contexts. As Xiao Yu herself indicated, such lack in NNES teachers' L1 literacy expertise may indirectly influence their confidence as teachers of writing. But for NNES teachers like Xiao Yu, when they teach L2 writing in English, they are teaching L2 writing skills when they themselves have developed advanced skills in their L2 writing, which is, unlike NES teachers' L2 experiences, in the same language that their students are learning to write in. Thus, NNES teachers should feel confident about their teaching as a result of their advanced writing skills in English. As a result, one of the most important implications for L2 teacher educators training NNES teachers seems to be to help them appreciate the value, as L2 writing teachers, of having achieved advanced literacy in their L2.

### 5.3. Limitations and future research implications

As mentioned earlier, a close examination of L2 writing teachers' self-perceptions as writers and language learners is a complex task. As with any research, there are some limitations in the present research. First, while I tried to cover a variety of writing classes — two different programs, for matriculated and pre-matriculated students, with classes at different levels in each program— this data is limited in that the study was conducted in only two programs in one university in one ESL setting. In English as foreign language (EFL) settings, some teachers' self-perceptions may differ and affect their teaching very differently than those of teachers in ESL settings. Future research might investigate teachers' cognitions related to the teaching of writing in different kinds of programs in different institutions and in different EFL settings.

For L2 teacher education research, it is important to investigate the interplay of teachers' cognitions and instructional practices. This study attempted to look into how L2 writing teachers perceive the influence of their self-perceptions as language learners and writers on their instructional practices. All of the 3 NES teachers in the study had had extensive writing experiences during the time of the study. Although they were strong writers already, they perceived a lack in their training in their L1 and L2. As a result, although they saw themselves as accomplished writers, their desire to continue to improve as L1 writers furthered their interest in the teaching of L2 writing. This may partly be because the L2 they teach is their L1. In other words, the language they teach is the language they themselves regularly practice writing in. However, in some other cases, NES teachers may not have such interest in writing for various reasons, and, in other cases, they may not necessarily practice L1 writing. Such lack of interest may also influence their cognitions related to the teaching of L2 writing. For this reason, future

research might investigate NES teachers as writers/teachers and how their instruction is influenced by their lack of (interest in) writing.

Moreover, the research attempted to combine two sources of L2 writing instruction, classroom instruction and written feedback instruction, in an attempt to investigate teachers' reflections on classroom instruction and feedback. Writing classes, in that sense, are unique and require more in-depth exploration of the complete instruction provided by the teachers, which may be different from teaching of other skills in L2 classrooms. As one of the participants, Linnea, in this study indicated,

I think most of my writing class takes place on the paper. We do activities in class to sort of build up to the writing assignment but the actual learning is their writing and my giving feedback and their responding to the feedback. Because in class, they talk to each other, or we do some activities about the content. But the actual learning is on the paper. (Linnea, Follow-up interview 2, March 15, 2011)

Thus, written feedback may be one of the sources of “actual learning” in writing classes and it may be influenced by various factors, including but not limited to teachers' language learning and writing experiences in any language. By asking teachers to comment on their practices in the classroom as well as written feedback, we can gain some insight into their cognitions related to the teaching of writing. Future studies might also include teacher reflections on their oral feedback practices in teacher/student conferences in the classroom or in their offices.

As I conducted the research, I appreciated the importance of integrating data sources regarding teachers' instructional practices in teacher cognition studies as I have attempted in the present study. However, given the complexity of teacher cognition as well as instructional

constraints, it is not possible to gain a full picture regarding L2 writing teachers' practices in a single study. Therefore, more L2 writing teacher cognition studies that include other research methodologies (e.g. surveys, think-aloud protocols, etc.) in conjunction with data regarding teachers' instruction are needed. In addition, future research could compare the researchers' observations or that of students or that of peer teachers with the perceptions of the focal teachers.

Finally, the research was conducted over a single semester. However, writing teachers change as they continue to write, learn languages, and teach over time. Thus, L2 writing teachers' self-perceptions and the possible influence on their teaching practices may change over time. This may be especially true for teachers who are actively practicing writing in their lives, learning languages, and reflecting on their teaching. Future ethnographic research should take a more longitudinal approach focusing on a single case or several cases for an extended period of time to investigate (1) the possible changes in teachers' self-perceptions, and (2) how such changes may influence their teaching of L2 writing over time.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Interview schedule for initial interviews

#### Warm up questions

1. Can you tell me about yourself a little bit?
  - a. Where are you from?
  - b. What is your first language?
  - c. How long have you been teaching English?
  
2. Can you please explain the types of writing classes that you teach?
  - a. Who are your students?
  - b. What are their goals?
  - c. Is this the first time you are teaching this class?

#### Questions regarding teachers' language learning experience

3. Can you tell me about your language learning experience? What languages did you learn as a foreign and/or second language(s)?
4. Which skill areas of your second and /or foreign language(s) do you find hard/easy to learn?
5. Can you name some instructional practices that you experienced or observed as a language learner in the past and you thought worked well for you to learn a second and /or foreign language(s)?
6. Can you name some instructional practices that you experienced or observed as a language learner in the past and you thought were not beneficial at all?
7. When you learn your second language, did your out-of-classroom experiences play a significant role in your language learning? In other words, do you believe language can be effectively learned in the classroom (or primarily there)?

#### Questions regarding teachers' writing experiences in their first and/or second languages

8. What were your experiences with writing before you became a teacher?

- a. Can you tell me your writing experiences in your first and second languages?
    - i. How did you learn writing in your first language?
    - ii. Did you receive any language writing training in your first language?
    - iii. What learning strategies did you develop as a writer in your first language?
    - iv. Did you receive any language writing training in your second language(s)?
    - v. What learning strategies did you develop as a writer in your second language(s)?
    - vi. Do you currently write in your second language(s)?
      - 1. If no, when was the last time you wrote in your second language? What kind of pieces (if any) did you write in your second language? Did you write academic papers, emails, book reports, for instance?
      - 2. If yes, how often do you write in your L2 in your daily life? What kind of pieces do you write in your second language? Do you write academic papers, emails, book reports, for instance?
  - b. Do you think writing in your second language(s) is different from writing in your native language? How?
  - c. Did these experiences influence how you teach writing?
9. Which aspects of L2 writing do you find hard/easy to learn?
10. When you learned writing in your second language, what kind of feedback did you perceive as the most beneficial for you to receive from your writing instructor?
11. For language learning and writing, do you credit particular teachers with playing a significant role in your progress (or lack of progress) as language learners and writers?

Questions regarding teachers' perceptions of written feedback

12. What kind(s) of feedback to student writing do you think are important as a teacher? Why?
13. Do you respond differently to rough drafts than final drafts? Why or why not?
14. What kind(s) of feedback to student writing do you think your students believe are important?

Questions regarding teachers' instructional practices in L2 writing classrooms

15. Do you believe teachers need to write in order to teach writing?
16. What do you believe is your role as a teacher of L2 writing? (e.g. role model, coach, etc.)
17. Can you tell me about a successful writing activity you've recently done in your class.  
Why was it successful?
18. Can you tell me about a writing activity you've recently done in class that you felt was not really successful?
19. What are your most vivid memories of the process of learning to teach writing (either in your native and foreign languages)? Did these experiences influence your teaching writing?
20. Is there anything I did not ask but you would like to add?

## Appendix B: Start list of codes

### 1. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as language learners

- Perception of a language teacher
- Expectations as a language learner
- Empathy with students as a result of language learning experience
- Perceiving oneself as different than students (stepping out of language learning experience)

### 2. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers in their first languages

- (Not) being an L1 writer
- Writing experiences in certain genres in L1
- Lack of writing experiences in L1
- Expectations as an L1 writer
- L1-L2 literacy connection
- L1 writing experiences impacting current instructional practices
- Teaching writing impacting L1 writing

### 3. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers in their second languages

- (Not) being an L2 writer
- Writing experiences in certain genres in L2
- Lack of advanced L2 writing practices
- Expectations as an L2 writer
- L2 writing experiences impacting instructional practices
- Reactions to L2 writing learning

#### 4. Other issues

## Appendix C: Informed consent form for teacher participants

Georgia State University  
Department of Applied Linguistics and ESL  
Informed Consent for Teacher Participants

Title: Exploring writing teachers' beliefs of themselves as language learners and writers  
Principal Investigator: Diane Belcher  
Student Investigator: Nur Yigitoglu

I. Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate teachers' beliefs about themselves as writers. You are invited to participate because you are teaching a writing course for nonnative speakers of English at Georgia State University. A total of 4 teacher participants and 40 student volunteers will be recruited for this study.

II. Procedures:

Participating in the research will require about 5 hours of your time over the 15-week semester. If you decide to participate, one of your writing classes will be observed and audio-taped in different times of the semester. These observations will take place during week 2, week 5, week 8, week 12, and week 15 of the Fall 2010 semester. Additionally, you will be interviewed twice in the first four weeks of the semester, and after the classroom observations in week 5 and week 15. Each interview will take approximately one hour. These interview sessions will also be recorded. All of these interviews will take place at a mutually-agreed time either in the department of Applied Linguistics and ESL or your own office. During the interview you will be asked about your beliefs as writers and language learners and how those beliefs affect your instructional practices. In addition, you will also be asked to bring some student writing samples which you have marked up in the last two weeks before the interview. You will also be asked to talk about your feedback to the student.

III. Risks:

The only possible risk is that you will spend your time in the interviews. You might feel uneasy about being audio-taped. If this happens, the student PI, Nur Yigitoglu, will stop the recording at once.

IV. Benefits:

Participation in this study may benefit you personally in that they will have a clearer picture of the role of their beliefs as writers and language learners. It might help you reflect on your perceptions as writers and their instructional practices in ESL writing classes. In addition, this information will be beneficial for writing teacher educators as well as researchers of second language writing.

V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise

entitled.

VI. Confidentiality:

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Only the PI, Diane Belcher, and the graduate student, Nur Yigitoglu, will have access to the information you provide. Information may also be shared with those who make sure the study is done correctly (GSU Institutional Review Board, the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP). The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of Diane Belcher, the supervising primary investigator. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally.

VII. Contact Persons:

Call Diane Belcher at [dbelcher1@gsu.edu](mailto:dbelcher1@gsu.edu) or ( 404) 413-5194 or Nur Yigitoglu [dasnyy@langate.gsu.edu](mailto:dasnyy@langate.gsu.edu) or ( 404) 413-5176 if you have questions about this study. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or [svogtner1@gsu.edu](mailto:svogtner1@gsu.edu).

VIII. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, and be audio recorded please sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





## Appendix D: Informed consent form for student volunteers

Georgia State University  
Department of Applied Linguistics and ESL  
Informed Consent for Student Volunteers

Title: Exploring writing teachers' beliefs of themselves as writers and language learners  
Principal Investigator: Diane Belcher  
Student Investigator: Nur Yigitoglu

### I. Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate teachers' beliefs about themselves as writers and language learners. You are invited to participate because you are an ESL student taking a writing class with one of the teacher participants at Georgia State University. A total of 40 student volunteers and 4 teacher participants will be recruited for this study.

### II. Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to give permission to use your writing sample in the interviews with your writing teacher. During the interview your teacher will be asked about his/her feedback to you, and the reasons for providing such feedback in your paper(s).

### III. Risks:

In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life.

### IV. Benefits:

Participation in this study may not benefit you personally. However, it may help us understand how ESL writing teachers' beliefs affect the way they give written feedback to ESL students.

### V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

### VI. Confidentiality:

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Only the PI, Diane Belcher, and the graduate student, Nur Yigitoglu, will have access to the information you provide. Information may also be shared with those who make sure the study is done correctly (GSU Institutional Review Board, the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP)). The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of Diane Belcher, the supervising primary investigator. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will



not be identified personally.

VII. Contact Persons:

Call Diane Belcher at [dbelcher1@gsu.edu](mailto:dbelcher1@gsu.edu) or ( 404) 413-5194 or Nur Yigitoglu [dasnyy@langate.gsu.edu](mailto:dasnyy@langate.gsu.edu) or ( 404) 413-5176 if you have questions about this study. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or [svogtner1@gsu.edu](mailto:svogtner1@gsu.edu).

VIII. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

