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**VYGOTSKY'S THEORY OF INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT:
THE IMPLICATIONS ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

A Dissertation in

Curriculum and Instruction

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation utilizes Vygotskian Concept-Based Instruction (CBI) as an approach to teach Chinese rhetoric to L2 learners. CBI was developed by Piotr Gal'perin (1978a) furthered by Vladimir Davydov (1988b), and has been applied as a pedagogical approach to teaching based on the notion of conceptual mediation. Through systemic instruction, Chinese rhetorical norms will be examined from various perspectives, including culture, language, and different writing patterns. The study also applies another Vygotsky's educational application, Dynamic Assessment (DA), to evaluate participants' writing performance (Poehner, 2008). DA is a framework for conceptualizing teaching and assessment as an integrated activity which understands learners' potential abilities by actively supporting their development.

This study explored the effectiveness of an enrichment program that integrates CBI and DA. In particular, this study intended to examine the following: 1) any insights gained from the CBI intervention that explained the development of learners' conceptual understanding of Chinese rhetoric; 2) the possibility of tracking and promoting learners' abilities through DA; 3) the extent of interaction that promoted learners' development in a group DA context; 4) the usefulness of this enrichment program for future praxis in the field of SLA. Seven L2 Chinese learners at an intermediate to advanced level participated in this 6-week enrichment program in a study abroad context. The focus of the intervention was to guide participants to learn the concept of different Chinese writing patterns and how each pattern influences the organization, placement of thesis statement, and the presentation of ideas, supporting examples and descriptions in a Chinese text. Procedures of DA were provided throughout the sessions in the form of one-on-one mediation or group mediations. A

microgenetic method was utilized to analyze dialogic mediation and interaction between the teacher/researcher and learners. The aim of the program was to mediate L2 Chinese learners' understanding of rhetoric styles, transforming their initial awareness into actual writing performances that reflect informed, intentional choices regarding their selection of particular rhetorical styles for a given composition.

The findings suggest that the integration of CBI and DA has a positive impact on learning Chinese rhetoric among L2 intermediate to advanced Chinese learners. The results from learners' materialization (i.e. learner-created SCOBAs, verbalization data, and writing products) show their conceptual development in its formation. The interactive data examined in DA reveals learners' abilities through ways of tracking and promoting learners' development over time. While establishing learner's autonomy and self-regulated learning, this enrichment program also renders classroom interaction more systematic and more attuned to learners' needs. Additionally, participants claimed positive effects of learning Chinese rhetoric through the CBI intervention and DA procedures, which provides useful insights for future implementation of CBI and DA in regular L2 classroom. It is therefore argued that the implications of this dissertation will inform not only theoretical research on the field of SLA but also pedagogical perspectives in classroom praxis.

Keywords: sociocultural theory, concept-based instruction, dynamic assessment, teaching Chinese as a foreign language (TCFL), Chinese rhetoric, foreign language pedagogy

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Since the 1990s the growing economic development in China has led to increased interest around the world in learning Chinese. In North America, The Modern Language Association's (MLA) survey in 2007 demonstrates a 20% increase in class enrollments in Chinese language courses at American colleges and universities from 1998 to 2002. Though Chinese is broadly offered as one choice of foreign languages in universities, the language curriculum in many Chinese programs has not been planned well to meet students' needs, especially at advanced levels (Zhao & Huang, 2010). Most of the curriculum and materials used in advanced classes still deal with writing problems at the grammatical or sentences-structure level (Li & Tucker, 2013). Little attention has been paid to Chinese rhetorical structures, the differences between Chinese and English rhetoric, and how Chinese culture and social tendencies affect how Chinese writers present their topic and ideas.

This present work builds on my own experience as a Chinese teacher as well as my interest in Sociocultural Theory and SLA. The idea behind this dissertation emerges fundamentally from two pedagogical and research concerns: which principles should guide our instructional practices when teaching rhetoric concepts in writing; and to what extent our pedagogical practices can facilitate learning and cognitive development.

Framed within Sociocultural theory, this dissertation integrates Vygotskian proposals of Concept-Based Instruction (henceforth CBI) and Dynamic Assessment (henceforth DA) to develop an enrichment program to teach Chinese rhetoric to L2 Chinese learners. Using Vygotsky's (1986) distinction between scientific and

spontaneous concepts that apply to L2 development, I focus on examining learners' growth through the teaching of scientific concepts and the DA procedures of tracking and supporting the cognitive development. A microgenetic method is utilized to analyze dialogic mediation and interaction between the teacher and learners. The aim of the program is to mediate L2 Chinese learners' understanding of rhetoric styles, transforming their initial awareness into actual writing performances that reflect informed, intentional choices regarding their selection of particular rhetorical styles for a given composition.

1.2 Focus of Research

As explained, this dissertation has at its center an enrichment program that integrates CBI and DA. Specifically, CBI offers a systematic and motivated approach to organizing the content of the program, namely, the relevant rhetorical concepts that are the focus of instruction. DA provides a framework for ensuring that dialogical interaction between the teacher and students is sensitive to their emerging understandings and in this way traces and promotes their internalization of the concepts.

Derived from Vygotsky's theory of consciousness and Gal'perin's associated theory of educational development, CBI is widely applied in the field of second language education (i.e. Negueruela, 2003; Ferreira & Lantolf, 2008; Lapkin, Swain & Knouzi, 2008; Lai, 2010; Prospero, 2012). Scholars argue that CBI provides an effective teaching-learning framework to assist learner's conceptual development through orienting attention, verbalizing and internalizing scientific concepts, and transferring concepts learned to other tasks and domains. DA, which follows Vygotsky's (1987) proposal of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), aims at

providing a framework for conceptualizing teaching and assessment as an integrated activity of understanding learner abilities by actively supporting their development (Poehner, 2008). Studies that report on the use of DA principles in second language teaching and learning claim its effectiveness in supporting learner's development during the test (Poehner & Lantolf, 2013) ; assisting the collaborative interaction between experts and novices or peers (van Compernelle & Williams, 2012, 2013; Poehner, 2008) and providing a deeper and richer description of learner's actual and emergent abilities, which enables language programs to devise individualized instructional plans attuned to learners' needs (Antón, 2009).

The present study draws on both these practices to provide a coherent approach to the instruction of Chinese rhetoric for L2 learners. Specifically, the dissertation intends to explore the following questions:

- 1. In what ways, if any, does CBI affect the development of learners' conceptual understanding of Chinese rhetoric?*
- 2. To what extent can interactions during DA actually promote learners' development, that is, their internalization of Chinese rhetorical concepts?*
- 3. How effectively can CBI and DA be used to develop an enrichment program that tailors instruction to the individual's abilities and addresses areas in which learners experienced difficulties?*

With these questions in mind, I implemented an enrichment program that included both CBI and the procedures of DA to teach rhetorical concepts to L2 Chinese learners in a study abroad context. As a minimal unit of instruction, Chinese rhetoric was examined from various perspectives including culture, language, and different writing patterns; the concepts were employed as psychological tools to understand Chinese language and culture and to improve writing performance.

Following a case study methodology for data collection and analysis, this dissertation considered data from seven L2 Chinese learners at intermediate to advanced level. Participants were recruited from the Mandarin Training Center at National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) in Taipei, Taiwan. This research context was selected as it had the longest history in providing Mandarin instruction and the largest student enrollment among language institutions in Taiwan.

The study was carried out over a 6-week period. It included systematic instruction on Chinese rhetorical concepts and following assessments to trace participants' improvement over the course of the study. All of the intervention sessions were audio/video recorded. The collected data was divided into two main categories: personal and conceptual data. Personal data consisted of bio-data on a biographical and language survey, pre-intervention interview, and post-intervention interview. Conceptual development data included learner-produced SCOBAs, learner writing, interaction data, and learner verbalizations. All of these sets of data are presented from Chapter 6 to Chapter 8 as we consider each of the research questions.

1.3 Significance

This study represents a detailed report of the implementation of CBI and DA in the L2 classroom to teach Chinese rhetoric concepts. Implications of the results will inform not only theoretical research on the field of SLA but also pedagogical perspectives in classroom praxis. As the development of textbooks, teaching materials, and curricula has not matched up with this fast trend of learning Chinese, CBI will enlighten the design of academic Chinese writing curriculum and assessment. The intervention enhances L2 Chinese learners' understanding in learning academic Chinese written communication, such as rhetorical styles and Chinese social tendencies and its

differences from the Western culture. Second, the procedures of DA applied in the intervention also enable educators to examine learners' future proximal development, and then to devise individualized instructional plans that are attuned to learners' needs. Furthermore, this empirical study will provide insights on Chinese teacher education and educational praxis to prepare pre-service Chinese teachers for future challenges.

1.4 Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into nine chapters. Chapter 2 includes reviews of CBI, including Gal'perin's systemic theoretical instruction (STI) and Davydov's pedagogy of movement from abstract to concrete (MAC), as well as the literature on its applications in both general education and L2 education. Vygotsky's distinction (1986) of scientific and non-scientific, everyday concepts is first discussed. The discussion is also related to the idea that only scientific concepts are accessible to conscious development, and thus should be the knowledge learners receive in educational settings. A comparison between Gal'perin's STI and Davydov's MAC is provided as the theoretical foundation for the design of the current study.

Chapter 3 is concerned with DA, particularly how it has been brought into and pursued within the field of L2 education. The chapter provides an overview of Vygotsky's notion of ZPD and links this idea with Feuerstein's theory of Mediated Learning Experience. The administrative principles of DA are discussed and extended to the recent direction of applying DA in a group context. Resistance to DA and new directions of DA are also discussed.

Chapter 4 examines Chinese rhetorical norms from various perspectives, including culture, language, and different writing patterns. Chinese theme and three

rhetoric structures are elaborated on in regards to their historical and cultural effects and current applications in writing. Kaplan's perspective on contrastive rhetoric and how it leads to today's notion of critical contrastive rhetoric is also discussed. This chapter promotes research and future pedagogical innovations to the fields of teaching Chinese as a second language and advanced Chinese curriculum development for L2 learners.

Chapter 5 describes the context in which the research was carried out and the methods used to explore the research questions outlined in the current chapter. Much of the discussion focuses on the development of the enrichment program and elaborates on the pedagogical materials and assessing protocols. In addition, it offers detailed profiles of each of the participant's background and motivation of learning the language.

The data collected for the study is analyzed and discussed in three chapters. Each chapter is concerned with one of the main issues discussed in the study, specifically: 1) Teacher's mediating support and learners' responsiveness throughout the CBI intervention, especially learners' self-created SCOBAs and final writing products; 2) Mediation through dialogic interaction between the teacher/researcher and individual learners; and 3) Dialogic interaction among learners in group settings. Chapter 6 examines the effectiveness of implementing CBI in a foreign language classroom, with an emphasis on improving writing performance through understanding rhetorical styles. It scrutinizes which Chinese rhetorical structure causes the most learning difficulty for language learners, and to what extent the CBI intervention assists in overcoming problems and promoting development.

Chapter 7 then analyzes the dialogic interactions between the teacher and individual learner so that it demonstrates DA's potential to assist educators to

understand and to promote learners' development in a regular language classroom. The results show that the collaborative interactions in DA serve the functions of tracking and supporting learners' conceptual development. Following the previous chapter on analyzing individual interactions in DA, Chapter 8 aims at investigating the possibilities of providing a group of learners with dialogic mediations that are attuned to their current performance. Examples of concurrent and cumulative group DA are illustrated to prove learners' effective responses to the teacher's mediations that support the group ZPD. The notion of intersubjectivity is also discussed through instances of peer interaction. It extends Vygotsky's idea of ZPD from the expert-novice pattern to include the peer-to-peer interaction that fosters learning through 'mutual scaffolding' between learners.

In Chapter 9 the major findings are summarized and critiques of the study are offered. It also outlines possible directions for future research on L2 development as a conceptual process from a SCT perspective. Finally, it advocates for the importance of using concepts as mediating tools for understanding, and assessing learners' development through dialogic mediations in ZPD.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW: CONCEPT-BASED INSTRUCTION

2.1 Introduction

Concept-based pedagogy, developed by Piotr Gal'perin (1978a) and furthered by Vladimir Davydov (1988b) has been applied to teach content area subjects in experimental schools in Russian. It recently has been taken up by researchers in the fields of general education and applied linguistics as a pedagogical approach to teaching based on the notion of conceptual mediation. This chapter aims to provide a literature review of concept-based pedagogy; this will begin with the discussion of relevant concepts in Vygotsky's educational theory, such as scientific and non-scientific concepts. Then, educational procedures inspired by the work of Gal'perin and Davydov will be explored. Finally, studies conducted in both general education and L2 education will be discussed.

2.2 Scientific vs. Non-scientific Concepts

The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) was one of the most influential psychologists of the 20th century. He (1986) distinguished two different types of concepts: scientific concepts and non-scientific concepts. These two concepts reveal different ways of representation in the consciousness. Non-scientific or spontaneous concepts are empirically based everyday understandings of and knowledge about the world. They require lengthy periods of practical experiences to develop; however, they are inaccessible to conscious inspection. The child with spontaneous concept is unable to use the concept freely and voluntarily and also forms abstractions. Scientific concepts, on the other hand, refer to theoretical or academic generalized

knowledge. They are developed through formal education and formulated deductively, and thus scientific concepts are systemic, abstract and generalizable.

The process of acquiring scientific concept reaches far beyond immediate experience of the child. It evolves under the condition of systematic collaboration between the child and the teacher. Scientific concepts 'restructure and raise spontaneous concepts to a higher level (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 220) as they organize spontaneous concepts from characteristic understanding to definitional and categorical understanding. Children enter school primary with spontaneous concepts, and it is through formal instruction in school that transits their primitive remembering and involuntary attention into higher mental processes of voluntary attention and logical memory. As a result, scientific concepts are accessible to conscious development.

The potential weakness of scientific concepts lies in verbalism, i.e. excessive abstractness and detachment from reality. Yet, Vygotsky argues that it is not concepts themselves that result in verbalism, but the way they are presented and taught.

Practical experience also shows that direct teaching of concepts is impossible and fruitless. A teacher who tries to do this usually accomplishes nothing but empty verbalism, a parrot-like repetition of words by the child, simulating a knowledge of the corresponding concepts but actually covering up a vacuum (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 150).

Although the acquisition of the foreign and the native languages belongs to one genetic process of speech development, they differ in the process of concept formation. In a certain sense, one may call the development of one's native languages a spontaneous process, and the acquisition of the foreign language in a schooled setting a non-spontaneous process (Vygotsky, 2012, p.170). Thus, the study of scientific concept has important implications to education and instruction; here I will focus on its applications to foreign/second language education.

2.3 Gal'perin's Teaching-Learning Model

Piotr Gal'perin (1902-1988), a student of Vygotsky who proceeded from Vygotsky's general position and soon went on his way to fill the gap in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and developed its educational implications. In Khar'Kov school, he conducted a series of experiments on the development of the use of tools by human being, particularly children of preschool age. He demonstrated that the use of various human tools by a child yielded a qualitative reconstruction of the child's practical activity. The skillful use of human tools was not merely an accumulation of new motor skills, but determined the whole structure of an action (Haenen, 1996). Using tools represented the unity of external practical and internal psychic activity.

According to Gal'perin (1992b), actions are conceived as conscious attempts to change objects according to some intended goals. There is always some kind of actions involved in the content of the teaching-learning process. Thus, he classified each concrete form of an action by two distinctive parameters. The first is the level of abstraction. An action may be performed on four basic levels: the materialized, the perceptual, the verbal, and the mental level.

At the materialized level, the action is performed with the aid of physical objects or their material representations—models, pictures, diagrams, displays. At the perceptual level, the action is based on information stored in images and performed without manipulation of the physical objects or their representations (e.g. refurbishing a room by looking around and “moving” the furniture mentally). At the verbal level, the action is performed by “speaking aloud”; at this level the external objects are no longer needed. At the mental level, the action is exclusively performed internally (“in the head”) and both external objects and audible speech are unnecessary. (Haenen, 2001)

The second parameter is the quality of an action. It is determined by three

indicators: generalization, abbreviation, and mastery. Generalization refers to an operation that distinguishes from the non-essential performance. Abbreviation means that once an action develops, the number of operations is reduced. Mastery refers to an action to be carried out with ease and rate. Both parameters work hand in hand to present information about the relevant aspects of an action. In order to understand Gal'perin's formation of mental actions, these two parameters allow us to analyze the structure of an action with respect to its objects and intended goal. They also provide information on outlining the teaching-learning process and the teachers' and learners' involvement in it.

Gal'perin distinguished four phases for an action to pass through before becoming a fully fledged mental action. His stepwise approach is proposed as a model to outline the teaching-learning process and the instructional interventions for the teacher to guide the learners. The four phases (i.e. orientation, materialization, verbalization, and mental stage) in the formation of actions are explained as follows:

2.3.1 Orientation Stage

The initial stage, *orientation*, refers to bring the learner's attention to a new action to be learned. This first step is meant to provide the initial requirements in order to stimulate learners' motivation and to maintain it during further teaching-learning process. According to Gal'perin, every human action is accomplished on the basis of some orientation. In his teaching strategy, orientation plays a key role and is designed to provide the learner with all the information necessary for the correct execution of a new action. He introduced the term "orienting basis of an action" (OBA), which refers to the whole set of orienting elements available to the learners (1989c). OBA requires the learning content be presented as a meaningful whole from the beginning of the

teaching-learning process. The presentation of a holistic set of materials also helps learners understand the affective, motivational and cognitive value of the to-be-acquired knowledge before the actual appropriation and ability to use it. The holistic presentation of concepts runs counter to the widespread idea in current education. Nowadays, we divide knowledge (universal concepts) into various subject matters, such as geometry, mathematics, mechanics, art, music, literature and etc. Yet, this division is one of the most important problems of the contemporary psychology of thinking that knowledge is not taught “in general,” but to be taught in a discovery of different types of knowledge. In Issac Newton’s discussion of the relation between geometry and mechanics, he clearly stated that

...the drawing of straight lines and circles, which is the foundation of geometry, belongs to mechanics...geometry is founded on mechanical practice and is nothing other than that part of universal mechanics which accurately expounds and demonstrates the art of measuring...(Davydov, 2008)

“Drawing,” “mechanical practice,” and “the art of measuring” are in fact an interconnected, unified concept which directs cognitive, object-oriented actions. Concepts are building blocks of human thoughts; they reduce the complexity of the environment and enable us to respond to it efficiently. Concept development consists essentially of a process of abstraction, because a concept refers to the essential common features of a class of objects.

Another term, “Scheme of a Complete Orienting Basis of an Action” (SCOBA), refers to the complete set of conditions leading to the successful execution of an action. Therefore, an OBA is the actual learners’ orienting basis, whereas a SCOBA is an intentionally and systematically constructed form that aims at leading learners to the correct execution of an action. In addition, while an OBA gradually changes during the teaching-learning process, a SCOBA remains the same.

2.3.2 Materialized Stage

The second stage, *materialization*, is to visually represent the orienting basis as a model, graph, diagram, drawing or other synthetic depiction. Gal'perin referred to the materialization of conceptual knowledge as SCOBAs. It is used to systematize relevant knowledge in a holistic way and to avoid rote memorization of purely verbal formulations of the knowledge (Lantolf, 2011). Talyzina's (1981) study had shown that theoretical concepts are much more coherent and better understood if they are materialized in age-appropriate forms that permit learners to visualize the concepts rather than to only deal with it verbally.

2.3.3 Stage of Overt Speech

Once the action becomes generalized, it is free from the necessity of manipulating tangible objects, such as SCOBAs. The action is then replaced by words and reflected in speech. In addition, the execution of action in speech needs to meet the requirement of social communication; that is, to use overt speech to achieve communicative purposes and then arrive at mutual understandings among interlocutors. Gal'perin's (1989b) argument is in line with Vygotsky's general genetic laws which state that social speech becomes the source of thought. The stage of overt speech also shed lights on pedagogical implications, such as think-aloud procedures, elaborated explanations in small group works (see Cohen, 1994). The importance of verbalization in a collaborative format is also discussed in Lapkin, Swain, and Knouzi (2008) study, which will be elaborated in the following section.

2.3.4 Stage of Covert Speech

In Gal'perin's teaching model, he encourages the learner to speak covertly after

speaking aloud about the action. The transition from overt speech to “speech minus sound” requires a transformation of the structure of speech itself. As Gal’perin (1967) called “the audible image of the word,” covert speech appears stronger than a perceptual image and becomes an “inner dialogue” to mentally regulate the action.

2.3.5 Mental Stage

At the mental stage, the action has been transformed into a mental phenomenon and presented as a chain of images and concepts. The learner “just knows that’s how it is” (Gal’perin, 1957, p.221) and the action is inaccessible to either observation or introspection. As a result of subsequent levels of abstraction (materialized-verbal-mental), the action has become a ‘pure’ thought and has an orienting function. Gal’perin sees the ability of orienting (looking ahead) as a precondition to learning. In current educational psychology, orientation is considered part of the student’s self-regulation as looking ahead leads to cognitive planning and monitoring. Gal’perin’s teaching-learning model reveals the content of the processes that link learning and development, which shed important insights into what constitutes developmental change. This perspective can play a substantial role in operationalizing the mechanisms of qualitative change in the development of mind.

2.4 Davydov’s Approach: Movement from Abstract to Concrete

In comparison to Gal’perin approach, Davydov’s theory is less rigid to the extent that it does not adhere to a fixed set of sequential arranged procedures designed to promote internalization of a particular concept. To Davydov, effective education is to help learners connect theoretical knowledge to specific concrete goal directed activities guided by this knowledge. In his pedagogy, learners are encouraged, with

guidance, to proceduralize theoretical knowledge in concrete circumstances that are relevant to their own interests. In other words, it promotes learners' autonomy or self-regulation as they develop 'capacity and willingness to skillfully monitor and evaluate one's own learning' (Arievitch & Haenen, 2005, p.160). These differences from Gal'perin's stepwise model are the reasons why Davydov's theory calls to my attention. In the following I will explore elements included in Davydov's pedagogical model and examine the commonalities and differences between these two models for the methodology design of current study.

Vladimir Davydov, a contemporary of Gal'perin and also an important interpreter of Vygotsky's educational theory. Following Vygotsky, Davydov (1988b) separated societal knowledge into two forms of knowledge—empirical knowledge and theoretical knowledge. Empirical knowledge, which is similar to everyday, non-scientific concept, deals with differences and similarities among phenomena and can be acquired via observation and comparison. It is developed by singling out the identical, common properties, and reflected only the external properties of objects in its conceptions. Empirical thinking solves the task of cataloguing or classifying objects and phenomena. Theoretical knowledge deals with a connected system of phenomena and can only be acquired through exploratory activities. Theoretical knowledge emerges in the process of analyzing the role and function of some particular relation within a holistic system. It is primarily expressed in mental processing activities and is connected through various symbol-sign systems, such as the means of language. It builds connections between the really existing universal relation of the holistic system and its diverse manifestations by deducing and explaining the particular and individual manifestations of a holistic system from its universal basis. A relation of this connection appears in different names, such as

“concrete abstraction,” “the objective cell of the whole being studied,” or “germ-cell” which is the term selected to use in this chapter.

Davydov proposed theoretical knowledge as a tool for thinking and for carrying out systemic practical activity, and should be the only knowledge taught in school. Theoretical knowledge must be carried out through exploratory activity. The controlled, teaching activity should be built on tasks that illuminate the contrasts found in a phenomenon’s fundamental relations. For instance, a teaching experiment based on Davydov’s germ-cell model was carried out in the Danish elementary schools (Hedegaard, 2005). The study integrated different subject matters, such as biology, history, and geography and emphasized teaching the relations between the development of nature and society. Each teaching session started with a summary of the exploration related to the general problem area of research: the evolution of animals and the origin of humans. Furthermore, the teaching was built around the children’s analysis of the concrete themes based on the questions in the exploratory process. For example, a fundamental conflict exists in the phenomenon of the evolution of species of animal: How can an animal population adapt to changes in its habitat while many individual animal cannot manage this adaption and die? Such conflict cannot be presented to students abstractly, it should be carried out in concrete activity, such as having students to analyze how the polar bear adapts to its Arctic surroundings as an individual, and how it breeds and ensures the survival of its young. Different tasks are set to ensure students understand the adaptations of the polar bear as well as the different ways of other animals in the Arctic. Once students have acquired theoretical thinking, they can finally formulate the general laws about the survival and change of an animal species. To Davydov, effective education is to help learners connect theoretical knowledge to specific concrete goal directed activity

guided by theoretical knowledge. S.L. Rubinshtein (Davydov, 2008, p.109), who drew a sharp distinction between empirical and theoretical thinking, gave a clear description of using theoretical thinking to solve problems: “To solve a problem theoretically means to solve it not only for a given particular case, but also for all similar cases.” This psychological description agrees with Vygotskians (i.e. Gal’perin and Davydov)’s logic of theoretical thinking.

In Davydov’s approach, he emphasizes that the learning activity should lead the ‘movement from abstract to concrete’ (MAC pedagogy). Davydov recommends that instruction should first make the importance of central concepts clear to students and then help students carry out these understanding in practical activities. The very concept of “the abstract” and “the concrete” denotes dialectical logic thinking. To reproduce the concrete requires an initial abstraction which has several characteristics properties. First, the abstract notion is something simple in the holistic system. Second, this abstraction should reflect the contradictions of the system’s simple relations and be devoid of differences. Third, the abstract also reflects the essential relation of the system which is undeveloped. These characteristics denote aspects of the real abstract as a certain isolated, independent part of a whole. The initial abstraction appears several different names in the literature, such as “contentful abstraction” or “cell.” These names suggest a relation of the holistic system that can be fully contemplated.

A contentful abstraction is revealed in at least two forms. First, it can take the form of an undeveloped, simple and homogeneous object that has not “succeeded” in acquiring the necessary differentiations — this would be the genetically initial abstraction of some whole. Second, it can take the form of an object that is already losing its particular differences at a given stage of development, becoming

homogeneous — in this case its differences are eliminated when there is a real reduction of the particular forms of the object to one another (Davydov, 2008). In the process of ascent from the abstract to the concrete, the contentful abstraction is first singled out by analysis (i.e. study factual data and their relations). This creates the basis for genetically deriving the whole by recreating the system of connections that reflects the development of the essence, the formation of the concrete. In other words, the recreation of the concrete is primarily linked with the process of synthesis (i.e. “reduction” and “ascent”).

An example of applying MAC approach can be found in Davydov (1998b). To illustrate his idea of object-orienting thinking, the concept of math (i.e. numbers) was taught as a unified way by asking first graders to reproduce a given quantity (length, area, volume, mass, amount of discrete objects) in a different place or at a different time. Through guided inquiry, learners discover the efficiency and effectiveness to use some third object as a unit to measure the quantity. Later in the curriculum, learners mastered the concept of numbers and were able to transform to understand multidigit numbers, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, etc. In this approach, to understand numbers means to understand the whole process of replacing a real object by numbers, not just to manipulate signs and get the right answer (which is common in traditional curriculum). The primary emphasis is on learners’ ability to go from objects (quantities) to signs (numbers), and back again, to understand the concept prior to deriving and mastering algorithms for manipulating signs that have replaced the objects. The result of MAC approach is a deep and systematic (i.e. theoretical) thinking of the concept. Learners were able to reproduce this process of ascent from the abstract to the concrete reflectively and apply it to all problems in similar scenarios.

In MAC, the tool character of theoretical knowledge becomes evident when it is formulated in a model. This type of model is characterized as a germ-cell model (Davydov, 1982). It implies that every time the model becomes complicated by new relations it not only adds to the concepts already modeled but influences and changes their meaning (Hedegaard, 2005). Davydov (1982) has described six steps in the learning activity based on the use of germ-cell models as learning tools. The steps are: 1) changes or reproduction of the problem so that the general relations are clearly seen; 2) modeling these relations; 3) modifying the relations; 4) creating new problems or tasks from the model; 5) monitoring the learning actions; and 6) evaluating the actions in applications.

2.5 A Comparison between Gal'perin and Davydov

Both Davydov and Gal'perin's approaches share the same conceptions of mind, cognition, and the broad educational goal of promoting development in ZPD. However, they have different points of views on learning activity. Whereas Gal'perin emphasizes the process of internalization, Davydov focuses on develop learners' theoretical thinking through concrete activities. Davydov's approach is more concerned with designing instruction that affects the development both in intellect and personality — that is to affect the person as a whole.

Both models emphasize that conceptual knowledge should not be offered to learners in solely verbal form, but to be materialized in an easily accessible, integrated and concise format. What differs is that Gal'perin's stepwise approach uses ready-made SCOPA to assist learners' internalization; Davydov, on the other hand, allows freedom for learners to search for their own orientations. For Davydov,

educational activity is not about making students become scientists and walking them through a rediscovery of the findings (Davydov & Markova, 1983). Rather, it is a “quasi-investigation in which pupils reproduce real investigatory and search acts in only a compressed form” (Davydov & Markova, 1983, p .67).

It is important to note that different approaches will engage students in different activities that will potentially develop them in a certain direction. The following sections elaborate on a few studies that apply the principles of Gal’perin and Davydov’s approaches in CBI to general education and second/foreign language learning.

2.6 CBI Research in General Education

Haenen, Schrijnemakers, and Stufkens (2003) study illustrated the use of Gal’perin’s mental action theory to teach historical concepts in both secondary classrooms and teacher education courses. Based on Gal’perin’s stepwise approach, the researchers formulated three principle steps in their solution for the teaching of historical concepts on imperialism. The first step is orientation to the task. The teacher oriented students to the target concept by asking them to draw a concept map based on the knowledge on textbooks and also what they previously known. The teacher then helped the students to find, retrieve, process, and elaborate new information by a sequence of short exercises, discussions, explanations, and questions. These interactions between the teacher and students are referred to as educational dialogue in Gal’perin’s principle. The third step is called the use of models. It required students to think independently of positive and negative examples of the concept under discussion, and then put these examples into a diagram. Gal’perin’s stepwise process assists learners in using everyday concepts as a basis for building academic concepts and prevents

these concepts from remaining empty shells or undigested knowledge, which in Vygotskian's term is called the 'empty verbalism.' In general, history teaching to a large extent has to rely on students' own 'construction' ability to establish historical consciousness. Gal'perin's concept-based instruction orchestrates these kinds of classroom practice, in which abstract concepts are presented in a systematic fashion and students' learning activities are the center of focus.

Kinard and Kozulin's application (2008) of Rigorous Mathematical Thinking (RMT) in classroom also emphasized placing students at the center of the curriculum-instruction-assessment process. Researchers argued that current mathematics instruction presents learners with ready-made mathematical concepts using the abstract language of mathematical symbols followed by algorithmic deductive demonstrations, examples, and problems that require direct application. This prevailing approach fails at leading learners through a 'mechanical' path that helps learners internalize mathematically specific psychological tools. The RMT theory presents a process for developing mathematical conceptual knowledge which extends the notion of Vygotsky's psychological tool. It starts first with orienting learners to build basic essential concepts from everyday experiences. Learners are then mediated to discover and formulate the mathematical patterns and relationships in the cognitive exercises. By the end of RMT process, learners can appropriately use the mathematically specific psychological tool and are able to use the tools to construct conceptual understanding and apply to problem solving tasks. Contrary to Gal'perin's stepwise approach, the RMT process does not take a rigid or linear fashion. The researchers emphasize that RMT teaching is a process that transforms mathematics content through rigorous engagement.

One of the important insights from the RMT teaching in mathematics is that the

functionality of mathematical language serves as a cognitive process because it gradually becomes the conceptual content of learners' thinking. It also becomes the operational medium for the expression of mathematical thought and conceptual understanding. Mathematical thoughts are engendered by learners' inner speech, and then this inner verbal process leads to learners' external use of mathematical language. Thus, mathematical language is essential as both a tool and a product in moving learners from symbolic thought to mathematical expression through cognitive processing. This transformative processing is also evident in language learning where a learned language is presents as a tool in regulating learners' thinking and also a product to show learners' performance. Along the similar lines with Kinard and Kozulin, Kozulin (1998) also explored the possibilities of utilizing a literature model to enhance conceptual understanding in education. He stated that literature may serve both as a phototype of the most advanced forms of human psychological life and as a concrete "psychological tool" mediating human experience. For example, Bakhtin (1990) made an observation regarding the "surplus vision" of the writers. When writing from the point of view of one character, the author "lives into" this character's horizon. But then at a certain moment in the creative process the author "returns" to his own privileged position and supplements what was visible for the chosen character by other perceptions. In addition, from readers' perspectives, take Bulgakov's novel for instance (Kozulin, 1998, p.148), it represents a dual nature of the literacy word—presents as a "sign for a thing" and as a "sign for a sign." In his novel, each dialogue and episode can be read both in the plane of reference to apparent social and historical events, and in the plane of rich illusions to cultural texts unrelated to these events. Thus, literature presents not only a source of information, images and ideas, but also a specific method of representation and human thinking, which students should be made

aware of this dual connection in literature through education. In the following section, I will discuss the application of CBI in the L2 research as it is directly related to this dissertation study.

2.7 CBI Research in L2 Education

Negueruela's (2003) study was the first attempt in North America to apply CBI to everyday L2 classroom instruction. It was conducted in a fourth-semester university Spanish—as-a foreign-language course that focused on grammar, speaking and writing. Twelve students participated in the class, which followed the same syllabus and assessment procedures as other sections of the course. Negueruela reported that despite the fact that many students have substantial amount of prior experience in learning Spanish (L2), they continued to have significant grammatical problems at the outset of the course. In addition to instruction on mandated grammar topics, he implemented concept-based instruction on three optional grammar topics: aspects, use of articles, and verbal tense. Although an ideal implementation of CBI to the classroom requires the re-organization of the entire curriculum, since mental actions and concepts are not formed in isolation, but are systematically connected to each other (Haenen 1996), Negueruela's study successfully implemented three main tenets of Gal'perin's theory. Students participated in the CBI course were presented with grammatical concepts through didactic models, carried out verbalization activities at their private space, and improvised in spontaneous oral scenarios every other week. He materialized the subject matter as the didactic models or SCOPA and then systematically engaged students in conceptual learning to understand Spanish aspect and meanings behind grammatical notions. The SCOPA chart Negueruela used present two factors that determine Spanish verbal aspect. First, lexical aspect, which

is based on the meaning of the verb (cyclic or non-cyclic); and second, grammatical aspect, which is based on the verb form used (preterit or imperfect). Six verbalization activities on aspect, ranging from narrow sentence-level translation to fill-ins to open-ended tasks which were relevant to in-class scenarios, were completed individually by students. These tasks assisted students in achieving better conceptualization of Spanish verbal aspect and thus enhancing learners' agency in meaning making. He collected two kinds of data: conceptual development data and personal data. For conceptual development data, it included performance data, verbalization data based on SCOPA charts explaining the conceptual basis of their performance; and data concerning explicit definitions of the linguistic features under analysis. For personal data, students' responses to a language history questionnaire and reflection on the course during mid and final of the semester were also collected.

His analysis showed that learners' performance, demonstrated through both oral and written tasks changes from first relying on a perceptual rule-of-thumb method to a coherent understanding of aspect. For example, from one participant's verbalization (i.e. oral tasks) at week 4 of the semester, she used perceptual rather than semantic criteria to explain why the subjunctive is used. *Cuando usa 'es probable' necesita el subjuntivo porque* (When it uses 'it's probable' it needs subjunctive because it is a phrase that you always use the subjunctive with.) By week 11, the participant was able to use semantic reasoning to explain that subjunctive is used for conveying attitude. And more importantly, she discovered that to use subjunctive is better expression to convey a meaning than using indicative morphology. *Durante el día de gracias quiero que miramos fútbol Americano por televisión.* She explained that 'I had this (i.e. *miramos*) in indicative, but I think that it could be subjunctive. I think that actually would be subjunctive because it's conveying an attitude of something...I

think that should be in the subjunctive, because it's saying it like for request, the same idea.' With explicit instruction on Spanish verb modality, learners came to understand that aspect is about speaker's perspectives on the event rather than some arbitrary property of the language. This conceptual understanding also leads learner agency in explaining the meaning behind aspects. In addition, in learners' reflections on CBI, one of the learners reported that the verbalization activity allows them to 'think on our feet' (p. 256). L2 learners are used to thinking about rules that determine their use of language, when in reality it is the speaker who decides what language to use to achieve specific communicative goals. To understand the conceptual meanings of grammar allows learners to function as agents in their new language rather than as followers of rules. Negueruela's study is important in demonstrating learners' process of internalization and how the conceptual understandings of Spanish aspect establish learners' agency in interpreting and conveying meanings throughout a regular semester in a foreign language classroom.

Serrano-Lopez and Poehner (2008) study shed insights on one stage of Gal'perin's teaching-learning model, materialization. In Gal'perin's view, presenting learners with carefully constructed cultural artifacts is the most efficient approach to ensuring internalization of academic concepts. This study differing from Gal'perin's viewpoints and also Negueruela's study suggested that learner-created artifacts, such as the three dimensional (3-D) clay model can also function as powerful mediators of learning. The 3-D clay figures applied a visual-kinesthetic method that linked the concept represented by the preposition to a physical reality. Unlike the teacher-made artifacts, learners were given the opportunity to create the model using the clay. The process of creating external, physical models presented the learners' internalizing process of the knowledge of preposition. Clay work served not only as a mediating

tool that regulated learners' thinking, but also as the final product of learners' symbolic representations. The 3-D clay modeling instruction confirmed with Gal'perin's argument that the presentation of conceptual knowledge alone does not lead to full internalization unless the process is guided by external mediation that progressively moves toward less material forms of support as learners develop their internal symbolic representations.

This study investigated the effects of 3-D clay modeling as an intervention in the teaching of Spanish locatives to L2 learners. 241 advanced university learners of L2 Spanish were divided to three groups, two experimental and one that serves as a control. One of the experimental groups, referred to as the CBI group, were introduced to the locative concepts through a formal lecture and given written practice exercises (similar to another experimental group), and also engaged in 3-D clay modeling of the concepts. The control group received no classroom instruction or assignments related to the relevant concepts during the study. The researcher assumed that these participants already had certain level of knowledge from previous grammar lessons or exposure to reference books.

Participants in the CBI group were provided with conceptual explanations and examples before they produced their own representations of Spanish locative concepts through clay modeling. After two weeks of intervention, all participants were administered the Spatial Prepositions Usage Test. The test was administered in English and Spanish with a purpose to evaluate learners' ability to correctly use prepositions in both languages. The analyses showed that the group with CBI intervention had significant effect over instruction only and no instruction group. More specifically, the CBI intervention helps resolve confusion regarding overlapping spatial concepts between L1 and L2 and also creates new mental representations that

do not exist in L1. Although the results in the immediate posttest did not show significance between the CBI group and the instruction only group, the CBI group did perform significantly better than the instruction only group.

The researchers concluded that general instruction had a positive effect on learners' acquisition of Spanish locatives, CBI with a 3-D clay modeling intervention led learners a qualitative deeper understanding of the concepts. The results confirmed Gal'perin (1967) argument that the presentation of conceptual knowledge alone does not lead to full internalization, but this process is significantly enhanced by external mediation that progressively moves toward less material forms of support as learners develop internal symbolic representations. Learners in CBI group initially relied on self-created 3-D clay models and their verbalized explanations of the meanings behind models, but gradually they became less dependent the external mediational tools as they started thinking in intramental plane to complete the posttests.

Thorne, Reinhardt and Golombek (2008) provided a corpus-informed SCOPA to raise learners' critical language awareness among an International Teaching Assistants' (ITAs) English language preparation course. Two corpora, *ITAcorp* and The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) were selected for comparing several features that are particularly problematic for ITAs. Directive language use was chosen for investigation based on contrastive analysis of differences in frequency and preferred construction between learners and expert speakers of English. The corpus-informed analysis was developed as teaching materials to first provide explicit description of directive language use; and then presented to learners as flow charts (SCOPA) to physically assist learners' conceptual understanding on pronoun choices in directives and main directive elements.

The researchers contrasted the Learner Office Hour (LOH, from *ITAcorp*) and

Expert Office Hour (EOH, from MICASE) corpora and found that LOH corpus showed higher frequencies of strongly deontic constructions, such as ‘you had better’ and ‘you should.’ Whereas EOH corpus included high frequencies of three different constructions: 1) ‘you could’; 2) ‘I would’; and 3) ‘you want to.’ Based on these contrastive analyses, the researchers designed pedagogical materials to illustrate elements of directive language use in the context of office hours consultations. Materials included explicit explanation of directive constructions with examples, flow charts (SCOBAs) and corpus analyses of usages frequencies that drew participants’ attention to directive constructions of expert language use from MICASE. Three primary elements of directive language use were presented: 1) pronoun/subject choice, which has a sense of appealing to or restricting a listener’s involvement; 2) main directive elements emphasizing a choice of grammatical form; and 3) modifier choice, which is related to a listener’s sense of agency and independence. Two SCOBAs were introduced to raise participants’ awareness of the effects of pronoun choices and also to build their sense of agency. The first chart visualized speakers’ choice of pronoun/ subject which started with questions: 1) Do you want to appeal to listener involvement? 2) Do you want to include yourself in the directive? 3) Do you want to allow the listener to identify with you? 4) Do you want to restrict listener involvement? And 5) Do you want to exclude yourself from the directive? Each of the choice led to a possible outcome of linguistic forms, which were also explicitly described with cases of actual use. For example, if a speaker wants to appeal to listener involvement, he can use the following directive constructions, let’s + imperative, we+ modal/semi-modal, or hypothetical statement to achieve. The second SCOBAs outlined main directive elements, like imperative, modals and semi-modals, hypothetical situations, and directive vocabulary. It was designed to create a high-level conceptual

map that helped raise awareness of the role of choice in language use as it related to different meanings, interlocutor relationships, degree of social distance and potential for social-pragmatic elements.

In a pilot study with two experimental sections of 20 students and one control section of 13 students, the researchers found that the experimental participants made significantly greater performance than the control group. For instance, high frequency MICASE expressions such as ‘You just wanna get a ...’, ‘You may wanna think about...’, ‘You might wanna sort of ...’ and ‘You wanna just ...’ were not used by any of the ITA participants in the earlier semester role play activity, but in the final exit exam, ten of the experimental participants used the ‘you [+hedge] want to/wanna [+hedge]’ construction in diverse and accurate ways. Other high frequency constructions such as ‘you could’ and ‘you have to’ were also used more by the experimental students, whereas they used fewer low frequency expressions such as ‘I suggest’, ‘I recommend’ and ‘you can.’ This study shows how corpus-based modified materials can be incorporated into Gal’perin’s approach and how CBI can be aligned with the currently burgeoning discourse and usage-based instruction.

Lapkin, Swain, and Knouzi (2008) investigated the role of one particular step described in Gal’perin’s model of internalization, namely learner verbalization and explored its relevance to forming a deeper understanding of grammatical concepts. Verbalizations (which Swain has described as ‘*linguaging*’) of concept-based explanations are an integral part of CBI model. These self-explanations in spoken or written language aim at fostering understanding and internalization of the concept. Negueruela and Lantolf (2006) argued that the *quality* of teaching explicit knowledge on grammar has been overlooked in most of the SLA research as previous research and empirical studies emphasize more on the overt teaching of formal aspects of the

language. They pointed out that these formal aspects consisted mainly of morphological rules of thumb that are incoherent, fragmented, misleading and fail to promote learner development. This pilot study examined the effect of self-explanation on learners' understanding of the concept of voice in French. Four elements of the concept of voice in French were established based on reviews of most frequently used grammar textbooks and existing literature. They are 1) speaker's/ writer's intentionality in selection of voice; 2) the relation between patient and agent; 3) placement of emphasis; and 4) functions of pronominal verbs in middle-voice sentences.

Six intermediate learners of French enrolled in a university course participated in two weeks of intervention. They were presented with an explanatory text regarding the principles listed above with 12 example sentences in the active, passive and middle voice. Two SCOBAs were also used to illustrate the relations between agent and patient in exemplar sentences. Participants' main task was to explain highlighted verbs in the text provided (*Sophie Mercier*) and verbalized the concept of voice. The verbalizations were conducted in their strongest language (English) and no time limits during the process. The researchers also prompted students at strategic points to encourage them to recapitulate their understanding, use their knowledge or elaborate on what they had just learned. Pretest, posttest and delayed posttest were administrated. The immediate posttest showed that participants made progress as they switched from focusing on the aspect and tense of verbs in pretest to verbal voice in posttest. A delayed posttest was conducted one week later and consisted of a cloze test and stimulated recalls. Participants were presented with the second part of *Sophie Mercier* as a cloze test and asked to choose from one of three alternatives meaning of the sentence (active, passive, and middle). The researchers reported on two

participants' performance as evidence of learning. It is showed that one participant (P. 6) made qualitative changes in his self-explanations of understanding the concept of voice. Another participant reached a better understanding of the concepts and illustrating examples as she could not only predict while reading but also challenge the explanatory text when her previous prediction did not work out. She also said that 'I guess it's easier to learn something when you actually say it out loud.' Her response was in line with Vygotskian theory that asserts the importance of private and overt speech in helping learners internalize target concepts. The pedagogical implications of this study are that encouraging verbalization (self- and also with small groups) can be productive in foreign language classrooms and it may lead to long-term internalization of important concepts rather than pure memorization of rules of thumb.

The studies mentioned above are mostly carried out within a framework for concept-based instruction inspired by Gal'perin. Ferreira's study (2005) on teaching L2 writing through genre analysis stands out as it was much more closely aligned with the work of Davydov. Ferreira's study (2005) attempted to directly address the matter of cognitive development through MAC pedagogy in a university ESL writing class. Three genres were selected for the purpose of presenting the concrete manifestation of *Abstract Communication Principle* (ACP): announcements, job application cover letters, and argumentative/expository texts. According to Davydov's germ-cell model, a visually depicted model should be first presented to learners. In this study, a model describing field, tenor, and mode was depicted to explain the abstract concept of LANGUAGE \leftrightarrow CONTEXT relationship and how understanding of this can help students use the language effectively. Participants were asked to create their own models of genre and made three modifications to it throughout the course. They also participated in various activities where they applied their models to explain related

concepts. One of the tasks was to explain the similarities and differences between cover letters in the United States and South Asia and then to describe how this genre is used in their home culture. Quantitative analysis of the data revealed that participants began to think theoretically about various genres of writing and how they can relate to the conceptual principle. But it did not necessarily mean that participants were able to carry out the knowledge in their actual writing. The researcher believed that it is due to the long history of traditional, empirical-based schooling that students had in the present study. For most of the participants, previous experiences taught them that learning to write means to follow models or structures and then produce specific kinds of texts, rather than approaching the writing process in systematic and theoretical ways. For Vygotsky, this is also because cognitive development is a revolutionary process that cannot be predicted. Only through consistent time and experiences with theoretical-based learning, students' capacity to engage in effective writing activity would continue to improve.

2.8 Conclusion

Scientific and spontaneous concepts reveal different ways of representation in the consciousness. Children enter school primary with spontaneous concepts, and it is through formal instruction in school that transits their primitive remembering and involuntary attention into higher mental processes of voluntary attention and logical memory. As a result, scientific concepts are accessible to conscious development, and should be the knowledge learners received in educational settings. This chapter presents a literature review on concept-based pedagogy. The discussions of the writings of Gal'perin and Davydov as the primary proponents of CBI and how their formulations are rooted in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory are first introduced. CBI

studies conducted in the field of general education and L2 language education are secondly presented. It also provides the foundation for the current study on teaching Chinese rhetoric to advanced Chinese learners. Both Gal'perin's four phases and Davydov's MAC pedagogy will be integrated to the research design (See Chapter 5 for details). The purpose of teaching Chinese rhetoric is not only to raise learner's awareness of preferred writing conventions of that target language, but also to assist the conceptual understanding through CBI that enable learners to interpret, generate personal meanings and eventually to exercise their communicative agency (Lantolf & Johnson, 2007).

CHAPTER 3 – LITERATURE REVIEW:

DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction

Dynamic Assessment (DA), grounded in the Vygotskian concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) theory, was originally implemented in Russia with children with various kinds of learning disabilities. It was first introduced to audiences outside of the former Soviet Union by A. R. Luria (1961), one of Vygotsky's most influential colleagues, and now DA has been widely researched in psychology and education (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004). Recently researchers have begun to examine the applications of DA to the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (e.g. Ableeva, 2008 & Poehner, 2008). The goal of DA is to reveal learners' potential future development on the intermental plane and to help it develop on the intramental plane through mediator-learner interaction. It is an effective alternative, compared to conventional assessment, not only allows teachers to establish the actual level of learners' abilities (i.e. what learners are able to do independently), but also, more importantly, it reveals their potential abilities that 'are now in the state of coming into being, that are only ripening, or only developing' (Vygotsky 1956, p.447-8, cited in Lantolf & Poehner 2004, p.51) and that are hidden during traditional assessments.

DA is at odds with the dominant perspective that the social environment must be controlled and individuals assessed in isolation in order to obtain uncontaminated measures of ability (Poehner, 2008). In a DA context, assessment and instruction are dialectically integrated as a means to move forward learners' future potential development (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). DA overcomes the assessment-instruction dualism by unifying them according to the principle that mediated interaction is

necessary to understand the range of an individual's functioning but that this interaction simultaneously guides the further development of these abilities. Mahn (2008) suggests that DA helps L2 learners move toward future potential as they draw on verbal thinking and systems of meaning, which results in greater competency, fluency and confidence. Utilizing DA to teach Chinese writing conventions creates environments for learners, in which they can expand their ZPDs in their writing and also explore Chinese cultures through mediations with the researcher and other learners.

In the following sections, I review the theoretical foundations of DA such as the concepts of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and Feuerstein's theory of Mediated Learning Experience. I elaborate how it has been introduced to the Western academic by Luria, and the current two frameworks for administering DA - interventionism and interactionism. I also discuss the implications of applying DA procedures to a group context, and mutual scaffolding in L2 peer interaction.

3.2 Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

As one of the central concepts in Sociocultural theory, ZPD is perhaps the aspect that has received the most widely divergent interpretations and applications (Poehner, 2008). As Poehner and van Compernelle (2011) observe, of all Vygotsky's descriptions of the ZPD, it is the one that appears in *Mind in Society* that is cited over and over. There, Vygotsky defines the ZPD as

“the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”

(Vygotsky, 1978 p. 86, italics in original).

Poehner and van Compernelle explain that scholars in various fields have seized on the ZPD as implying that collaboration could improve development. In the last decade, some in the L2 field have compared the concept of ZPD with Krashen's $i+1$ hypothesis (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998). In Krashen's view, human acquire language in only one way—by understanding messages, or by receiving 'comprehensible input' (Krashen, 1985, p.2). To be specific, i is "the acquirer's current competence, the last rule acquired along the natural order" and $i+1$ is "the next rule the acquirer is eligible to acquire along the nature order (Krashen, 1985, p. 101). Krashen also stated that for acquisition to happen. "input must contain $i+1$ and that "if communication is successful, $i+1$ is provided." (1982, p.21). Dunn and Lantolf (1998) argued that the specific constructs of $i+1$ and ZPD are non-translatable and thus incommensurable. According to Vygotsky, ZPD is "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1978, p.86). However, Vygotsky himself offered little details concerning how he understood adult guidance and collaboration.

The idea of ZPD came from a large-scale empirical study that Vygotsky and his colleagues conducted when children entering school (see Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991, p.334). This study was to validate his notion of providing more comprehensive understanding of children's mental functioning than IQ scores. Instead of using the traditional individualized psychometric methods to assess children's level of development (i.e. IQ tests), Vygotsky and colleagues proposed an alternative methodology for assessment, which included the use of "hints and prompts" during the testing procedures. Elsewhere, Vygotsky provided the following example to illustrate the notion that not all children would respond to such assistance in the same

manner, some might benefit more than others:

Having found that the mental age of two children was, let us say, eight, we gave each of them harder problems than he could manage on his own and provided some slight assistance: the first step in a solution, a leading question, or some other form of help. We discovered that one child could, in cooperation, solve problems designed for twelve-year-olds, while the other could not go beyond problems intended for nine year-olds. The discrepancy between a child's actual mental age and the level he reaches in solving problems with assistance indicates the zone of his proximal development. (Vygotsky 1986, p.87)

Given the impressive results of his ZPD work, Vygotsky stated that this alternative assessment provided better predictions of children's future development. Instead of rejecting the prevailing IQ tests, he argued that IQ test and ZPD assessments reported two separate domains, independent and assisted performance. He also stated that the future development of the former was determined by the latter (Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991, p. 341). By stressing the quantification of both these abilities in the form of present and potential IQ scores, Vygotsky saw quantification of the ZPD as most useful in the context of IQ reform. A mediator could proceed through a pre-determined assistance designed to help the child to complete a given task, and the child's development was determined by the quantity of assistance before he independently solve the problem (Poehner, 2005). Another possibility to construct ZPD is to allow interaction between the mediator and children. Through dialogic interactions, the mediator determines children current performance and simultaneously promotes and develops children's future ability. It should be noted that both approaches had been taken up by DA researchers (see the following discussion of Interventionist and interactionist DA).

As Wertsch (1984) stated that Vygotsky did not detail on the parameters of adult

guidance and collaboration when he proposed the idea of ZPD, the central idea could be derived from Vygotsky's viewpoint that human abilities do not simply mature on their own but instead result from individuals' histories of engaging in activities with others and with cultural artifacts. Thus, the adult guidance and collaboration can only be effective when the interaction and mediation is attuned to learners' development. In a pedagogical perspective, ZPD assists educators in understanding learners' relative proximity to the next age level of development, performing what Vygotsky referred to as "diagnostics of development."

3.2.1 ZPD as Transformative Activity

The explanatory power of ZPD is to give qualitative description as to uncover learners' *actual* level of development, and to assess their *proximal* level of development, which is understood as those cognitive functions that have not yet matured but are only in the process of maturing. L2 DA research has emphasized the ZPD as joint activity co-constructed with learners (Poehner, 2008). Teachers/ assessors or mediators negotiate the tasks with learners as co-participants. Learners may respond to mediations in a variety of ways (i.e. verbal and nonverbal acts). Through careful observation of learners' responses, mediators form part of the diagnosis of their development, indicating how far they are from independence performance. Based on diagnosis, mediators also provide further instruction to assist learners to gain better independence. Poehner and van Compernelle (2011) offered a close analysis of transcribed interactions between a mediator and L2 learners. They argued ZPD activity may involve shifting between a diagnostic focus, aimed at uncovering learner responsiveness when working through the task at hand, and an instructional focus, which is concerned with promoting learner development and may move in unanticipated directions. The authors offer an analysis of the verbal and nonverbal

means through which participants in ZPD activity co-construct what they term as collaborative and cooperative interactional frames. The former foregrounds the diagnostic function of the activity and the latter highlights its instructional potential. This dynamicity that mediators must negotiate and support (p.187) realizes the co-construction of interactional frames. According to the authors, this approach to interaction as moving between diagnosis and teaching captures Vygotsky's understanding of the ZPD as transformative activity.

3.3 Feuerstein's theory of Mediated Learning Experience and DA

Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) interaction is the key component in Feuerstein's theory of Structural Cognitive Modifiability (SCM) theory (Feuerstein, Rand, & Hoffman, 1979), which emphasizes that human beings can develop in a variety of ways depending on the presence and the quality of appropriate forms of interaction and instruction. Although Feuerstein's SCM theory was developed independently from Vygotsky and Luria's work on defectology, it is argued that MLE theory is in some aspects similar to Vygotsky's (1978) concepts of ZPD and internalization (Tzuriel, 2013b), scaffolding (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) and mediation (Poehner, 2008).

As the focus of this chapter is on Dynamic Assessment, I describe MLE and illustrate it within the context of DA. Feuerstein explained mediation in two ways: non-mediated and mediated learning. In direct, non-mediated learning, the child interacts with his environment in a trial-and-error, experimental manner. This type of learning closely resembles the stimulus-response conditioning model of the behaviorist paradigm. The child becomes too used to the here-and-now situation to interpret the world or to construct meaning in a way that will allow him to see

connections between events, situations, and individuals (Poehner, 2008). In mediated learning, the stimulus–response model is altered so that the child is no longer interacting with his environment in a direct, haphazard fashion. Instead, an adult or more competent peer enters into a relationship with the child and “selects, changes, amplifies, and interprets objects and processes to the child” (Kozulin, 1998, p. 60). Feuerstein and Feuerstein (1991) suggest 12 criteria of MLE, but only the first three are conceived as necessary and sufficient for an interaction to be classified as MLE. They are *Intentionality and Reciprocity*, *Meaning*, and *Transcendence*. These three criteria, which are responsible for the individual’s cognitive modifiability, are also considered to be universal and can be found in all races, cultures, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic status (Poehner, 2008). The other criteria are task dependent; strongly related to culture; and reflect variations in cognitive styles, motivation, type or content of skills mastered, and the structure of knowledge (Tzuriel, 2013a). Owing to the purpose of defining mediation in this section, I elaborate the first three criteria in the following:

- 1) *Intentionality and Reciprocity* refers to a mediator’s deliberate efforts to change learner’s attention, awareness, perception, processing, or reaction (i.e. structuring the experience, scheduling the stimulus, maintaining the child’s focus, etc.). Intentionality is what distinguishes MLE from the unsystematic learning that usually characterizes direct trial-and-error learning. MLE focuses on creating a ZPD with learners so that they may be guided through various activities they would otherwise not be able to complete on their own. Yet, mediation for intentionality alone is inadequate without the child’s reciprocity. Reciprocity is defined when learner responds vocally, verbally, or nonverbally to the mediator’s behavior. Feuerstein used the term, reciprocity,

to emphasize learner's status changes from being a passive recipient of knowledge to an active co-constructor of it.

- 2) *Mediation of meaning* refers to a mediator's response that conveys the affective, motivational, and value-oriented significance possessed by the presented stimuli. This can be expressed verbally by enlightening the present context; relating it to other events; and emphasizing its importance and value, or nonverbally by facial expression, tone of voice, repetitious actions, and rituals. The purpose of it is to get the learner to notice certain features, to elaborate on their significance, and to engage in cause-and-effect and inferential thinking (Lidz, 1991). According to MLE theory, learners who experience mediation of meaning will actively connect future meanings to new information rather than passively wait for meaning to appear.
- 3) *Transcendence* refers to the cognitive development required for learner to move beyond the "here-and-now" demands of a given activity. Feuerstein (Feuerstein et al., 1979, p. 92) argued that true development transcends any specific task and manifests itself in a variety of ways under a multitude of differing conditions. Transcendence is the goal of conceptual development, which depends on the first two criteria, intentionality/reciprocity and mediation of meaning, although the combination of all three criteria enhances the development of cognitive modifiability and expands the individual's need system.

What Feuerstein's concept of Mediated Learning Experience emphasizes the importance of appropriate kinds of experiences to help learners develop beyond their current abilities. Moreover, MLE stresses that this occurs through the mediator's effort of collaboration with individuals. In Vygotskian terms, MLE facilitates the

learner's internalization of social interaction with the mediator as this interaction serves as a model that the learner can imitate and transform as needed in future performance. Based on Vygotsky's and Feuerstein's theories of mediated interaction, there are two ways of providing mediation in Dynamic Assessment which will be elaborated in the following section.

3.4 Interventionist vs Interactionist Approach

In this section, I elaborate on the differences between the two primary frameworks of DA, *interventionist* and *interactionist*, which are the terms proposed by Lantolf and Poehner (2004). *Interventionist* DA is closer to traditional assessments and other psychometric methods of assessment (i.e. IQ tests) in that it provides standardized administration procedures but includes forms of support (i.e. mediation). Given concerns over scoring generalization, quantification and standardization, mediation is standardized in Interventionist DA. In other words, the mediation delivered in this approach does not respond to learner's need in a timely manner; instead, it is usually tightly scripted, created beforehand, and provided through a series of hints or prompts that go from the most explicit to the most implicit. For example, consider the mediation inventory designed by one L2 Spanish teacher, Tracy (Lantolf & Poehner, 2010). Her mediating scale consisted of 6 to 8 moves, depending on the focus of a given lesion. The first move on the scale was to merely pause in order to call the learner's attention to the fact that there was problem with the performance. The final, most explicit, move involved revealing and explaining the needed lexical item or grammatical structure. Tracy employed a chart to record her interactions with students, which was beneficial in a few different ways. First, the chart provided documentation of individuals' and the class's changing needs and abilities. Second, the chart enabled

the mediator to track individual and class development over time by discerning changes in the level of support students needed as well as how they performed when more difficult tasks were introduced (Lantolf & Poehner, 2006).

The advantage of *interventionist* DA is that it easily yields quantifiable results generated through an objective (i.e. standardized) They can be used to 1) make comparisons within and between groups, 2) contrast with other methods of assessments, and 3) make predictions on future performance. In addition, its standardized administration procedures serve as a better fit for larger scale assessment when accountability is the priority. Yet, its disadvantages also relate to the standardized procedures and quantifiable results as interventionist DA approach is not very sensitive to learner's ZPD and only accepts one valid answer.

Interactionist DA, in contrast, is flexible in its administration procedures and in fact does not limit to the types of mediation available to help learner's development. In this approach, assistance emerges from the interaction between the mediator and the learner, and is therefore highly sensitive to the learner's ZPD. Importantly, both mediator and learner share responsibility for performance and development, although as learners develop they take on more and more responsibility throughout the process. One of the advantages of Interactionist DA is that it focuses on both the mediator and the learner's side to co-creating the ZPD as the performance is constructed during the interplay between the two when they "raise questions, debate ideas, brainstorm alternatives, offer explanations and jointly work out solutions to assessment tasks" (Poehner, 2008, p.38). As individuals have different ZPDs, the interaction and provided mediation vary from person to person, and also for the same person over time. Therefore, Interactionist approach to DA allows the mediator to qualitatively assess the development of an individual learner or even a group of learners, so as to

clearly identify a problem, to establish a prognosis, and to provide fine-tuned mediations (i.e. intervention) to the learner's ZPD.

Some researchers argued that the disadvantage of Interactionist DA is that it lacks the conventional forms of standardized testing procedures and scoring, and thus the assessment may not be as reliable as expected (Büchel & Scharnhorst, 1993, p.103). Another major challenge to implementing interactionist DA in L2 classrooms is that these contexts typically do not permit the one-on-one interactions that have characterized most DA work to date (Antón, 2009; Poehner, 2005). In addition, some countries like Japan, Korea or Taiwan have a very different culture of assessment, where far less attention is given to informal classroom-based procedures than to the use of large-scale, standardized measures of students' foreign language performance, such as the College Entrance Exam. Considering the unrealistic idea of implementing one-on-one interaction of DA in regular language classroom, the current study aims to promote peer-to-peer interaction or group DA to trace and promote language learning. In the following, I present a brief overview of research that studies the use of both teacher-to-student and student-to-student mediation in group settings.

3.5 Group Dynamic Assessment

Group-based and one-to-one DA procedures follow the same general principle of offering learners mediation to co-construct a ZPD, but they differ in that Group Dynamic Assessment (G-DA) must also take account of multiple individuals who may have similar but not identical needs and capabilities. Vygotsky (1998) described the ZPD as "the optimum time for teaching both the group and each individual" (p. 204), but he himself did not elaborate the group ZPD in his published work. Poehner (2009) argued that the work of another Russian psychologist, A. V. Petrovsky (1985)

offered a useful set of principles for understanding types of groups. According to Poehner, Petrovsky's work in group psychotherapy suggested that three broad types of groups may form, each characterized by the orientation to activity of its members. Poehner termed these as *group-as-context*, *group-as-cooperation*, and *group-as-collective*. In what follows, I offer details of the *group-as-cooperation* model as it is especially relevant to conceptualizing G-DA for the classroom.

The idea of *group-as-cooperation* model is that each individual retains his/her own goals while understanding their interrelation with the goals of the other group members. Drawing from Petrovsky's clinical work, he described that all patients in the *group-as-cooperation* model are united to work toward a common goal.

At the beginning of the session, patients may understand the object of group therapy to be their own recovery; the group merely offers a context for interaction. As sessions progress, patients come to regard others as important for their own recovery (Poehner, 2009).

In other words, each individual participating in group activity is initially oriented toward overcoming his/her own problems; yet, the goal is to value cooperation with others, and to appreciate the role that others play in facilitating their own recovery. Petrovsky's way of thinking about group activity is markedly different from what one finds in many language classrooms, where group work is often not theorized in any serious way but rather is constructed as mere 'practice time' for learners to use the language.

Relatively little research has empirically explored potential whole-group or collective ZPDs. Three recent articles provide some foundations for such a conceptualization. Guk and Kellogg (2007) illustrated that G-DA could be framed through teacher's mediation to an individual or a small group of learners, who in turn

mediate the task for their classmates in group-work. They also argued that learners revealed their internalization of mediation originating from the teacher when they assumed the role of mediator for their peers. van Compernelle and Williams (2012) provide evidence from microgenetic analysis to suggest that teaching within a group's ZPD has the potential to lead to deeper, more conceptually based understandings of language variation in French. Based on findings from a classroom study involving university learners of French, they argued that the group developed as a whole as the teacher's mediational moves became less frequent and less explicit over the course of interaction. Poehner (2009) argued that G-DA applied the same principles of mediation as in individualized interactions but broadened the focus to potentially an entire class. In his view, an important area for both theoretical and empirical investigation concerns the ways in which individual and group development could be related. Thus, when investigating foreign language learners in primary school settings, he suggested two different approaches to G-DA: *Concurrent G-DA* and *Cumulative G-DA* (Poehner, 2009).

While concurrent G-DA supports the development of each individual by working within the group's ZPD, cumulative G-DA attempts to move the group forward through co-constructing ZPDs with individuals. In this regard, Poehner distinguished *primary* from *secondary interactants* in G-DA. While the teacher offers mediation to one learner in the group, this learner and the teacher are considered primary interactants, and the rest of the learners in the group are secondary interactants. Although teacher's support and mediation is specific to the one primary interactant, secondary interactants may engage overtly and gain benefits from the interactive exchanges. In the following sections, I present a brief introduction on these two approaches in G-DA with L2 learners.

3.5.1 Concurrent DA

According to Poehner (2009), the definition of concurrent G-DA refers to the event that the teacher provides mediation to an individual, but the interaction shifts rapidly between primary and secondary interactants as one learner's question, struggle or comment sets the stage for another learner. The dialogues constructed in concurrent G-DA are similar with the whole group discussion which may be seemed regularly happened in classroom. However, concurrent G-DA differs in teacher's one-on-one mediations which are aimed at promoting the whole group development.

A brief dialogue from Gibbons (2003) and discussed by Lantolf and Poehner (2004, p.64-65) demonstrated an example of concurrent G-DA in language classroom. A group of elementary English language learners were attempting to describe the outcomes from their laboratory experiences (i.e. magnetism) through the use of scientific terminology, such as repulsion or attraction. The following two exchanges reported by Gibbons (p. 264) demonstrated the teacher's mediations were focused on the group instead of giving each individual a full set of mediational prompts. These exchanges occurred consecutively during the same lesson. The teacher (T) first elicited a response from Beatrice (B) and then from Michelle (M).

Exchange 1

1. T: Tell us what happened.
2. B: Em we put three magnets together/it still wouldn't hold the
3. gold nail.
4. T: Can you explain that again?
5. B: We/we tried to put three magnets together ... to hold the gold
6. nail... even though we had three magnets ... it wouldn't stick.

At this point, the teacher turns to another learner, Michelle, nearby:

Exchange 2

1. T: Tell us what you found out.

2. M: We found out that the south and the south don't like to stick
3. together.
4. T: Now let's/let's start using our scientific language Michelle.
5. M: The north and the south repelled each other and the south and
6. the south also repelled each other but when we put the/when we put the
7. two magnets in a different way they/they attracted each other.

These exchanges were considered as concurrent G-DA as the mediator focused on the group development by providing differentiated mediations. The prompt given to Beatrice in line 4 of Exchange 1 is far less explicit than the one given to Michelle (i.e. line 4 in Exchange 2), which directly asked her to use the scientific language. From a G-DA perspective, teacher's mediation was continually fine-tuned to remain in steps with the learners' level of responsiveness. However, it was hard to discuss the level of each learner's development only from these two interactions. Although Michelle showed evidence to use scientific language, it did not indicate that she arrived at a higher level of development than Beatrice. Michelle received two tiers of mediation, one prompt for Beatrice and the other for herself; we could only assume that either she benefited from these two prompts or she was more responsive than Beatrice. Further analysis on the following interactions was needed to define learners' development in this case.

3.5.2 Cumulative DA

The definition of cumulative G-DA is that individual take turns engaging directly as primary interactant with the teacher; together each subsequent one-on-one DA interaction builds up the group ZPD. Lantolf and Poehner (2004) reported a study that implemented DA principles in the context of a laboratory primary school. The Spanish teacher, Tracy had studied a DA manual designed specifically for language

teachers (Lantolf & Poehner, 2006). In order to record each student's development, she designed a hierarchical mediating prompts from most implicit to most explicit, and assigned a numerical value to each. The chart is beneficial in three ways: First, it enables her to quickly produce a record of her interaction with each student without interrupting the flow of the class. Second, the charts provide documentation for each student's changing abilities and needs. Third, it becomes a longitudinal record for tracking learners' development over time.

The following excerpt was selected from Poehner (2009) as an example of cumulative G-DA from Tracy's Spanish intervention. Tracy (T) was helping Vicente (V) to describe that "the owl has two brown ears" in Spanish with correct modifier agreement. In this case, Vicente was considered as the primary interactant while the whole class was the secondary interactant. It was evident from the interaction that the class was engaged actively at various points. For instance, Vicente constantly turned to the class for support, such as in line 4 and 10; another learner in line 11 attempted to participate but was held back by Tracy (i.e. shhh). Although Tracy only provided one-on-one DA to Vicente, the interaction benefitted the whole class developmentally.

Exchange 3

1. T: Vamos a describir so tell me tiene la lechuza tiene cuatro (*pause*)
¿entiendes?

We're going to describe so tell me the owl has has four do you understand?

2. V: cuatro (*pause*) tiene orejas ...
four (*pause*) it has ears ...

3. T: ¿Cuántas orejas?
how many ears?

4. V: tiene dos orejas
it has two ears

(*long pause, points at the image on the cube, then looks at the teacher*)

*café

*brown

(*looks out to the class, then back to the teacher*)

*café

*brown

(*then looks back at the cube*)

5. T: ¿Tiene dos oreja * café?
it has two *brown ears?

6. V: (*looks at the cube again and points at it twice with his finger*) sí dos
orejas (*pause*) *café
yes two *brown ears

7. T: ¿*Café?
*brown?

8. V: ¿Amarillo?
yellow?

9. T: 'Café' es correcto pero ¿dos orejas café?
'brown' is correct but two brown ears?

10. V: (*no response, turns his body to face the class, looks at cube then out at class
and back to cube*)

(*murmuring from another student off camera*)

11. T: shhh (*directed to the student*)

12. T: Hay un problema (*pause*) con la palabra 'café'
there is a problem (*pause*) with the word 'brown'

(*no response from Vicente but a girl in the class says "oh" and raises her hand*)

13. T: (*looks to the girl and then back to Vicente*) ¿Es *café o cafés?
Is it *brown or brown?

14. V: Cafés
Brown

15. T: Sí muy bien tiene dos orejas cafés muy bien excelente Vicente
Yes very good it has two brown ears very good excellent Vicente

We can see a much clear example of the improvement of whole group ZPD from a later activity (Exchange 4). Another learner, Gabriela (G) also tried to describe sentence using correct modifier agreement. Although unable to perform the task independently (i.e. line 2) like Vicente, Gabriela was developmentally ahead of

Vicente as she required less mediation than Vicente in terms of completing the substantive-modifier. It is left with unknown whether Gabriela simply gained better control of modifier agreement or she benefited from teacher's mediation to Vicente. If comparing these two exchanges, it revealed that the whole group ZPD was improved and these two learners' development was differentiated. Poehner argued that Vicente and Gabriela's development may be erroneously concluded as equal in other assessments. Without explicit mediation procedures like Dynamic Assessment, it is hard to provide detailed learning profile for learners' developmental differences.

Exchange 4

1. T: okay ¿cuál animal es?
what animal is this?
2. G: uh I don't get this one
3. T: clase ¿quién puede ayudarle? ¿cuál animal es?
class who can help her what animal is this?
(several students raise hands to volunteer)
4. T: uhhhhh ¿Josué?
5. J: la lechuza
an owl
6. T: la lechuza
an owl
7. G: uh la lechuza tiene (inaudible) or ... ?
the owl has (inaudible) or ... ?
8. T: sí
9. G: uh (pause) ¿*dos ala gris? (looks to teacher) wai-wai-wait ¿*dos alas
gris?
wings? *two gray wing? *two gray
10. T: gooooo ¿*alas gris?
*gray wings?
11. G: ¿grises?
gray?
12. T: excelente muy bien Gabriela
excellent very good Gabriela

Poehner concluded that G-DA's contribution to L2 education is that it renders classroom interactions more systematic and more attuned to learners' emergent abilities. Without a theoretically grounded framework for interactions, teachers are left to follow an experiential or intuitive sense of how to support learner development. For instance, recasts, feedback, and leading questions are constantly offered without

considering their consistency and appropriateness to learners' ZPD. In both the concurrent and cumulative G-DA formats, the teacher proceeds from a developmental perspective that informs the moment-to-moment interpretations of learner needs and helps to decide how to best respond.

3.5.3 Peer-to-Peer Interaction

Vygotsky's idea of ZPD emphasizes the importance of mediation for enabling individuals to function more autonomously and to gain independence from the here-and-now demands of a particular context as new insights and understandings position them for future action. A principle form of mediation is dialogic interaction, as we have seen. While the interlocutor in much ZPD research has been a more knowledgeable other, such as a parent or teacher, there is also a tradition in the research literature of examining the potential for peers to function as mediators. Indeed, peers can be concurrently experts and novices, and in the L2 field a number of studies demonstrate the impact of peer-to-peer dialogue on learning. For example, Swain and Lapkin (2002) documented the gains of two French learners who "talked it through" as they confronted and resolved many language-related problems while comparing their stories with its reformulation. DiCamilla and Anton (1997) analyzed the discourse of five dyads of Spanish second language learners collaborating on a writing assignment and emphasized the importance of co-constructed scaffolded support and guidance (i.e. repetition) through peer dialogue. Following these authors, repetition, in a Vygotskian perspective, may serve to establish and maintain intersubjectivity (see Rommetveit, 1974). It is more than simply increasing the frequency of exposure to input utterances. This study also found that through complex dialogue interactions, learners were able to construct knowledge out of their

complementary stores of language proficiency. In De Guertrro and Villamil's study (2000), they adopted a microgenetic approach to analyze the interaction produced by two intermediate English as Second Language (ESL) college students (a "reader" and a "writer") as they worked collaboratively in revising a narrative text written by one of them. The opportunity to talk and discuss language and writing issues with each other allowed the learners "to consolidate and reorganize knowledge of the L2 in structural and rhetorical aspects and to make this knowledge explicit for each other's benefit" (p.65). The results of this study showed that in L2 peer revision scaffolding may be mutual rather than unidirectional.

To this point, I have reviewed previous sociocultural theoretic studies that have explored the ways in which language learners are able to assist each other through collaborative dialogue in dyadic and small-group work. More recent research has begun to examine the ways in which peers may mediate one another and indicate responsiveness to mediation as well as engagement in classroom activities through non-verbal means. Drawing on insights from gesture studies as well as features of Conversation Analysis research, this work has underscored the embodied nature of interactions, including individual and group ZPD interactions. For example, van Compernelle and Williams (2013) reported how a secondary interactant's embodied participation in a collaborative peer-to-peer activity contributed to the whole group ZPD. This study developed an expanded orientation into group ZPD by including the contribution of non-verbal behaviors in collaborative activity.

3.6 Resistance of DA

Dynamic assessment is sometimes criticized as a subjective approach owing to its theoretical basis, which is at odds with many tenets of psychometrics, and aspects of

its methodology. Here I summarize the main points of criticism. First, DA takes more time to administer than non-dynamic, or ‘static’ testing. Especially in L2 classroom, it is always a challenge to implement one-on-one DA interactions when the teacher has up to twenty-five learners in one class. Although Group DA assists in providing a more effective theoretical framework for teachers, many concerns still relate to the possibility of implementing DA procedures with large groups of learners, like TOFEL or TOEIC tests. As discussed earlier, one of the important differences between interventionist and interactionist DA concerns the feasibility of employing DA principles with large groups of learners. Poehner and Lantolf (2013) successfully employed interventionist DA to assess L2 listening and reading comprehension through an online format. Three scores were generated through the process: actual, mediated, and learning potential scores which provides information to learners’ actual abilities and their potential development in the ZPDs. The contribution of this study demonstrated the possibility to administer computerized DA to large numbers of L2 students simultaneously and to report the results in a quantitative format which is easily for interpretation. In the near future, we can imagine the potential of DA to be considered one of the mainstream assessment tools which can provide better interpretation to language learners’ development than static testing.

Another criticism relates to issues of reliability and validity, which are fundamental in mainstream psychometric assessments. The ultimate goal of these practices is to standardize the measurements so that generalization is easier to provide over groups of learners. Yet, the objective of DA is different from such assessments. DA aims to offer interpretation of individual development within the group and over time. Such departure of DA from NDA cannot be adequately conveyed by traditional terminology, like criterion-referenced or norm-referenced assessments. Poehner (2011)

explained that DA can be more appropriately thought of as development-referenced because its effectiveness depends upon the impact it has on learner development. Due to different points of departure—NDA emphasizes on the psychometric concerns, and DA instead values on the development—it is hard to discuss issues related to reliability and validity of DA. Yet, if we shift our understanding of assessment from a criterion-referenced or norm-referenced perspective to a development-referenced perspective, we might actually see the benefit of DA instead of a threat to educational psychology.

The third concern of DA comes from the inner aspect of DA examiners. To administer DA requires more skill, better training, more experience, and greater effort than is the case in traditional standardized testing, where the administration prohibits interaction with the examinee and effectively only involves keeping track of time and ensuring that cheating does not occur. However, the professional skills necessary to do DA procedures effectively is not currently taught in typical education programs. Practitioners need to be trained in workshops before administering in one's own language class (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004, 2006). Even with excellent training, DA examiners must exercise considerable subjective judgment in determining 1) what cognitive functions are deficient and require mediation; 2) what kinds of mediation to dispense; 3) when further mediation is not needed, and 4) how to interpret the difference between pre-mediation and post-mediation performance (Tzuriel, 2013a).

Although one may argue that DA is still at the margins and with several unsolved concerns, how about many technology innovations that become important today? Airplane? Cellphone? Those technologies were considered impossible hundred years ago, but now have brought substantial impact on our lives. DA is now receiving acceptance in not only special education, but the fields of general education and SLA.

This is the time to explore DA applications to the L2 domain to make DA become a more central pedagogical approach in the future.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter attempts to outline sociocultural theoretic research that pertains to the foundations of DA, the administrative principles of DA, and few applications of DA in a group context. I review Vygotsky's notion of ZPD and elaborate on how ZPD serves as the theoretical foundation for DA. I also link the idea of ZPD with Feuerstein's theory of Mediated Learning Experience. Three criteria from Feuerstein's theory are discussed to define what the real mediation is in a dynamic fashion. To understand assessment from a SCT perspective, two different approaches of DA are also explored. In addition, I include the newly extended orientation of DA; that is, to promote the development of group ZPD through applying DA principles so that implementation with larger groups of learners would become possible. I then end the chapter commenting on the resistances of applying DA on a larger scale.

This chapter relates to the current study in several important ways. First, the study aims to assess L2 learners' understanding of Chinese rhetoric structure and various writing patterns. DA as a form of assessment allows the researcher to capture L2 conceptual development while teaching. An interactionist approach is proposed to identify learners' ZPD and to provide adequate mediation that would foster their L2 development. Second, as one of the research purposes is to study the development of group ZPD and to address the needs of larger groups of L2 learners, the G-DA approach is adopted for the design of the intervention. Yet, few episodes of interactions also happen between mediator-learner and peer-to-peer. These one-on-one interactions are also discussed and compared with G-DA in terms of the quality of

mediation and its identification of ZPD. Third, van Compernelle and Williams (2013) argued the importance of interactants' embodied participation such as gestures, nodding, eye gaze, and so forth (McCafferty & Stam, 2008) which index a learner's active engagement in the integration of new skills, knowledge, and concepts. As L2 learners of Chinese at the intermediate level still struggle with word/sentence problems or misconception of rhetoric structures, these embodied actions sometimes demonstrate their abilities that are still ripening. Therefore, these embodied movements are considered important information in the following data analysis chapters.

CHAPTER 4 – LITERATURE REVIEW:

CHINESE RHETORIC

4.1 Introduction

Since 1990s the growing economic development in China has aroused large interests in learning Chinese. Chinese language has become the second international language used in Asia. In Europe, the number of students who learn Chinese has exceeded the numbers of other Eastern languages. In North America, The Modern Language Association (MLA) a survey in 2007 demonstrates a 20% increase in the class enrollments in Chinese language courses at American colleges and universities from 1998 to 2002. The Asia Society survey (2008) also indicates that the number of K-12 schools offering the Chinese language in the U.S. rose from 264 in 2004 to 800 in 2008, an increase of 200%.

As Chinese is broadly offered as one choice of foreign languages in high school AP courses, many students have Chinese learning experiences or basic understanding on the language, such as the pronunciation (pinyin) system before they enroll in Chinese language courses in colleges and universities. However, the curriculum planned in university language courses has not fully met with these students' needs. For example, Chinese students often spend the majority time from their first semester learning about the Pinyin system and four tones, which is actually a repeat lesson for most students who had taken Chinese courses in high school. For formal Chinese written language like writing styles or rhetoric awareness, students are only introduced at the advanced level of class.

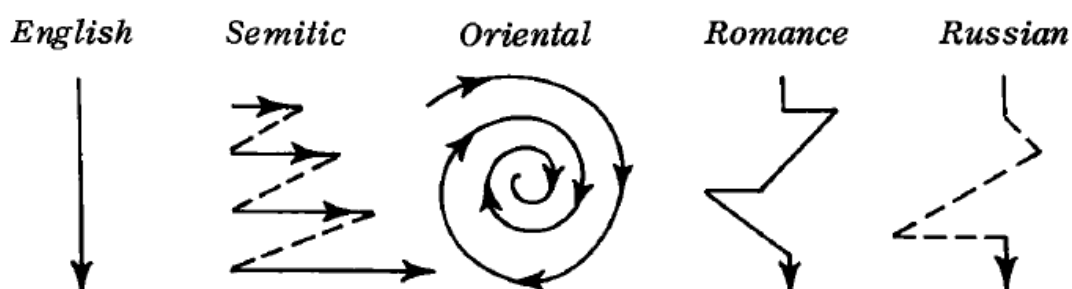
In addition, most of the curriculum and materials used in advanced classes deal with writing problems at the grammatical or sentences structures level. Little attention has been paid to Chinese rhetoric structures, the differences between Chinese and

English rhetoric, and how Chinese culture and social tendencies affect Chinese writer present their topic and ideas. Besides, most teachers believe that extensive reading on Chinese literature and various genre articles can improve students' writing performance. This reading before writing approach not only leaves students with no guidance on writing, but also fails to prepare students to meet with the practical goals of communicating in written language. This chapter aims to provide an overview on various perspectives on learning rhetoric patterns in the fields of SLA and Second Language Writing. Kaplan's hypothesis on contrastive rhetoric is first presented as well as the critiques to his arguments. The critical perspectives on contrastive rhetoric and its relation to critical applied linguistics and pedagogy are then discussed. Finally, explanations on Chinese rhetoric from an understanding of culture, language, and three different writing patterns are provided.

4.2 Kaplan's Perspectives on Contrastive Rhetoric

Kaplan (1966) hypothesized that there were differences in the organizational structure of composition written by English, Arabic, Chinese, and French writers. Figure 4.1 below represents five types of rhetorical patterns that Kaplan hypothesized for five language groups.

Figure 4.1: Kaplan's hypothesis on different types of rhetorical pattern



In his graphs, the English rhetorical pattern represented by a straight line, which means the central idea of the article goes straight to the point. Whereas the line representing the oriental pattern widens into a spiral circle with many points on its track, the spiral circle indicates the topic changes a few times in a Chinese article before it arrives at the main point by the end. By identifying these patterns, he argued that: “The foreign student’s paper is out of focus because the student is employing rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native reader” (p.45). He further stated that the rhetorical patterns of discourse strategies of a first language exert an overwhelming influence over students’ writing habits in a second language (1966). And this influence extends to the syntactical and grammatical levels as well as to the rhetorical and ideological levels of discourse.

Kaplan (1972) examined writings by Chinese ESL students and concluded that these students used a Chinese rhetorical form in their writing. They used the “*ba gu*” essay form (“eight-legged” essay form), which represents a rigid, schematic writing style advocating principles of Confucius and Mencius. According to a recent Chinese dictionary of literary terms, it denounces that the essay form is often used as a tool for feudalist rulers to fetter people’s thinking and safeguard the feudalist ruling. The “*ba gu*” essay form used in Chinese ESL students’ writing is then considered as lack of unity and coherence from a native English speaker’s perspective (p.72). He asserted that the “eight-legged” essay form, which was essentially repetitious and parallel, fits into the typical oriental “spiral” pattern, and the form still had a strong influence on modern Chinese expository writing.

To conclude with Kaplan’s hypotheses, traditional approaches to contrastive rhetoric are summarized as: (1) each language or culture has rhetorical conventions that are unique to itself; and (2) the rhetorical conventions of students’ L1 interfere

with their ESL writing (Grabe & Kaplan 1996; Kaplan, 1966, 1972).

4.2.1 Critiques of Kaplan's Hypothesis

Kaplan's assertion has encouraged researchers to look at the stylistic differences between written English and other languages, and has provoked a number of critiques. Some scholars have criticized the field of contrastive rhetoric that Kaplan led for its reductionist, deterministic, prescriptive, and essentialist orientation (Spack, 1997; Zamel, 1997). As claimed, Kaplan primarily deployed on a first-language parameter and assumed the influence of rhetorical tradition as embodied in the first language on the production of second-language writing. Liu (1996) also argued against Kaplan's assumption that "there exists an easily abstractable and consistently definable set of 'essential' characteristics on Chinese or any other rhetorical tradition" (p.322).

Some researchers (Carson, Carrell, Kroll, & Kuehn, 1990; Liebman, 1986, 1987) had followed Kaplan's approach to investigate ways of different organizing information in different language-culture groups, and how these ways are differ from native English writing. Carson's findings (1990) supported Kaplan's claim that "foreign students who have mastered syntactic structures have still demonstrated an inability to compose adequate themes, term papers, and thesis" (Kaplan, 1972, p.44-45). The findings from Liebman (1986, 1987) challenged this notion and argued that there were no cultural differences among nationalities, but there were differences in how individuals chose their preferred rhetorical strategies in different contexts. In other words, it meant that sometimes an American student and a Japanese student might choose to use the same rhetorical strategy.

Two studies were written about Chinese rhetoric: one supported Kaplan's hypothesis on the influence of the "*ba gu*" form in contemporary Chinese rhetoric,

and the other fought against it. Matalene (1985) claimed that the “eight-legged” (*ba gu*) essay structure did influence contemporary Chinese writing forms. Although the “*ba gu*” form today is always referred to as “stereotyped writing,” its method have not entirely disappeared (p.799). In China, Communist doctrine has now replaced Confucian; the techniques of repeating assertions remain and form the communist doctrinal style, the modern “*ba gu*.” Findings from Mohan and Lo (1985) argued that the “eight-legged” essay with an indirect rhetorical structure did not reflect contemporary Chinese writing while Kaplan and others claimed it did. In their study, they claimed that no organizational problems were caused by so called Chinese thought patterns in Chinese ESL students’ essays. Only the developmental problems hindered the Chinese students’ English writing, just as it was troublesome for native English speaking students in composing their essays.

However, whether the “eight-legged” essay style influences contemporary Chinese essays or whether cultural differences exist among nationalities, rhetorical norms and their relation to the cultural thought pattern have aroused numerous discussions in the field of contrastive rhetoric. Gregg (1986) responded to Mohan and Lo and argued the authors arrived at a narrow view of understanding the culture-specific style of Chinese writers in English. You and Liu (2009) also explained the myths about Chinese rhetoric in regards to the overemphasis on the “eight-legged” essay. They argued that most scholars had relied heavily on secondary sources to make inferences about classical Chinese writing and that their exclusive focus on the “eight-legged” essay had confused and oversimplified our understanding of classical Chinese essay writing and its diverse rhetorical styles. Though developmental factors did play an important role in the acquisition of expository and argumentative writing skills, the preference of “indirectness” in Chinese language and culture and other

instructional factors on English composition should also be considered. Gregg concluded that only to provide nonnative students with explicit instruction in the rhetorical norms of the second language can assist them in understanding cultural-specific styles in writing.

4.3 Toward Critical Contrastive Rhetoric

To summarize the critiques to Kaplan's theory, Pennycook (1998) argued that Kaplan constructed the binary images of rhetoric to the field, i.e., English is linear, direct, and logical whereas other languages are circular, digressive, or non-logical, parallel colonial dichotomies between the colonizer and the colonized. Because of these images, contrastive rhetoric incidentally suggests the hidden political or ideological nature of the conventional knowledge. Their criticisms had called for more attention to plurality, complexity, and hybridity of rhetorical patterns within one language as well as similarities among languages or cultures (Kubota & Lehner, 2004).

Emphasizing on human agency and rejecting historical, fixed, and simplistic definitions of cultural rhetoric, the critical perspectives on cross-cultural writings offer alternative conceptualizations for contrastive rhetoric (henceforth, critical contrastive rhetoric). Critical contrastive rhetoric has theoretical affiliation with post-foundational critical thought (i.e. poststructuralist, postcolonial, and postmodern critique) and critical applied linguistics and pedagogy (see Kubota & Lehner, 2004). For the purpose of this dissertation study, I focus the discussion on one of its theoretical constructs—critical applied linguistics and pedagogy. As Pennycook (2001) indicated, critical applied linguistics aims to problematize the common understanding of SLA constructed by research and instructional practices in such domains as

language, text, pedagogy, and cultural difference. Critical contrastive rhetoric reevaluates taken-for-granted cultural differences and instructional practices that legitimate these differences. Specifically, it explores how both educators and learners can resist assimilation and appropriate the rhetoric of power to enable oppositional voices. By doing so, it encourages students to reflect critically on how their subjectivities regarding L1 and L2 rhetoric are formed and transformed, and to question traditional assumptions about rhetorical norms and to explore rhetorical possibilities.

As applied to praxis, critical contrastive rhetoric encourages educators to critically reflect on classroom practices such as comparing and contrasting L1 and L2 rhetorical patterns and teaching/learning “preferred” discourse patterns of the target language and to reevaluate how these practices might reinforce cultural binaries and assimilation. For example, one of the appropriate starting points for classroom work suggested by Zamel (1997) is to ask individual students to think about, discuss, and write about how they perceive the ways in which they write in their first languages and critically bring their perceptions to bear on the work of composing texts in another language. A significant educational goal for a second language writing course is the addition of new and different ways of writing rather than the subtraction of ways a teacher might find inappropriate or lacking. Details about how this study fulfils this goal in the enrichment program will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Another fundamental theoretical construct to critical contrastive rhetoric is the positioning of agency in the analysis, appropriation, and critique of rhetoric (Kubota & Lehner, 2004). In a traditional pedagogical approach to contrastive rhetoric, agency is limited to the researchers who have the power to determine the rhetorical pattern for a language, such as English is linear versus Chinese is spiral. Yet in critical

contrastive rhetoric, it is important that educators aware not to put any one language in the central position. Pedagogical questions that assist educators and students to reinforce this goal are as follows: How can students/I add the target language (Chinese for this study) rhetoric to my existing literacies? What purpose students/I have to add Chinese writing to these?

To conclude, researchers supporting critical contrastive rhetoric perspective recommended making rhetorical differences explicit, raising students' awareness of such differences, and acculturating students through language exercises with concrete models that meet audience expectations

This chapter aims to provide explanation on Chinese rhetoric from an understanding of culture, language, and different writing patterns. Rather than providing a oversimplified conclusion on Chinese rhetorical norms (i.e. the spiral pattern), I first elaborate on the meaning of “theme” in Chinese essay and the function of it as compared with that in English. In the next section, different writing patterns and how each of the patterns affects the placement of thesis statement in a Chinese text are explained. Third, how communicative factors shape the cultural thought pattern and reflect in Chinese rhetorical norms will also be discussed. Examining from various perspectives on Chinese rhetoric, this chapter provides a solid theoretical foundation to the general analysis on Chinese rhetorical norms and to develop a set of teaching materials for advanced L2 Chinese learners.

4.4 Chinese Theme in Writing Instruction

A Chinese theme, called *zhuti* ('main theme') or *zhuyi* ('main idea') in Chinese (Li, 1976, p. 19), sets the boundary of the writing content or indicates the major aspect which the paper will focus on. A theme in Chinese also directly or indirectly shows

the writer's attitudes toward a subject and gives an outline of the paper. It is well accepted that one paper should only have one main idea which guide the content of the entire paper and makes it coherent and focused (Li, 1976). The definition differs from its English counterpart in that a Chinese “thesis statement” usually indicates a general aspect instead of stating a topic and making a specific assertion.

The function of a Chinese theme is to arouse reader’s interests by providing a vague clue about the topic. A Chinese theme usually originates from the title or slightly revised to a broader title. For instance, if the title is “how to write a good Chinese essay,” the writer can either use the title as the main idea or depart at a broader idea such as “the importance of writing in a language” and further develop supporting ideas relating to the main theme. The purpose of setting an indefinite theme is to arouse readers’ interests in continuing reading the article. A vague theme in Chinese writing is also more highly valued than an abruptly expressed topic sentence such as an English thesis statement.

The method to develop a theme is to examine it comprehensively, or from multiple perspectives. It is unnecessary to narrow one's focus to explore one point in depth. Instead, it is important to broadly discuss the theme or to divide the topic and discuss all of its aspects to ensure that every part has been exposed to the reader. In Wang (1994) study, he analyzed five Chinese writing texts in order to examine the aesthetics and rhetorical features of a model Chinese essay. He indicated a common philosophy across these texts that the theme of an article should center on a main point, but includes several possible perspectives. For example, Li’s book (1976) stressed the idea that the main theme cannot function well without the support of other smaller details.

Besides the main idea, there should be subordinate ideas that

function as its background and help clarify or explain the main idea, making the paper a fully developed system. Without subordinate ideas, the main idea cannot stand out and catch the reader's attention; therefore, a topic should be explained or described either from its "front and back" or "opposite and side." Only after such description or explanation is done in a proper order can the main theme be strengthened. Otherwise, the main idea will lose its brightness. (translation, p. 20).

Without the subthemes, writing does not communicate the magnificence of the main theme; the main can neither stand on its own.

In sum, a Chinese theme is not equivalent to the thesis statement in English. It is preferably spread out and examined from different perspectives, while an English topic is ideally focused on one perspective and presented in more detail in a thesis statement.

4.5 The Placement of Thesis Statement

As Chinese theme tends to be indefinite, and is usually examined comprehensively from different perspectives, the placement of thesis statement is flexible and usually decided by the author. Chinese readers need to share the responsibility to derive the theme from the paragraphs and indicate the thesis statement by themselves. In Anglo-American models of essay writing, formal logic is often divided into induction and deduction. While inductive writing style states the background information and places the claim at the end, deductive writing style places the claim in the front and then supports its argument with reasons and evidence. You (2009, 2010) argued that both inductive and deductive writing styles have been applied in Chinese expository and argumentative texts. There is not necessarily a norm in Chinese writing, although distinct styles may be identified that have become common in multiple genres and

contexts.

Two specific writing instructions on the organization of paragraphs are indicated here to show the different placement of thesis statement in Chinese texts. One is direct approach which is called “Open the door and see the mountain” (*kai men jian shan*); and the other is indirect approach, called “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” and its subdivision pattern “*Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon*.” Although the three writing patterns should not be understood as encompassing, the only rhetoric options available in Chinese — they are neither comprehensive nor obligatory — these patterns nonetheless hold pedagogical value for helping L2 learners of Chinese to understand Chinese rhetoric structures and its application in various reading and writing texts. I explain the definition and its rhetorical function of each writing pattern in the following sections.

4.5.1 “Open the Door and See the Mountain”

The direct pattern in Chinese is traditionally called “open the door and see the mountain” (*kai men jian shan*). It metaphorically implies that the introduction should touch on the theme, or “open the door” to the readers. In Chinese writing, after the theme has been touched on either implicitly or explicitly in the first paragraph, the door is opened to the reader. In this pattern, the central theme (the ‘mountain’) of an article is clearly stated in the opening paragraph. It is a popular approach used in Chinese academic writing and is also recommended for organizing the introduction paragraph.

With this writing pattern, although the author “touches on the main theme at the beginning,” it does not mean that the author has to show the main theme directly. This means only that the author cannot say anything unrelated to the theme. In other words, any indication of the theme, not necessarily an explicit statement, can belong to the

direct Chinese writing category. Therefore, whether the reader has "seen the mountain" or not, the writer has been direct in exposing his or her intentions. In terms of reader's ability in "seeing the mountains," Chinese readers share more responsibility than English readers in feeling and interpreting the writer's ideas. Chinese readers' roles are to comprehend, finish, and even polish the writer's ideas when they read. In a sense, the written information in Chinese texts is not active until the reader takes an active role in interacting with the writer. What is written functions like a bridge between the reader and the writer. Writers are responsible for building a solid bridge and readers are responsible for going across it.

4.5.2 "*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*"

One of the writing patterns indicating the indirectness in Chinese rhetoric is the *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* pattern or 'four-part' pattern, in which *qi* means the beginning section of an essay, *cheng* the following, *zhuan* the turning, and *he* the closing. In the "qi" section, the topic statement is not necessarily stated. It may simply provide a way to start an essay without topic. But it has to be related to the general theme in some way or other (Tsao, 1983). The "cheng" section can either introduce a new topic statement or continue to discuss the major theme mentioned in the "qi" part. The "*zhuan*" section functions to present "a new aspect on the problem." In the case of the argumentative essay, *zhuan* is the counterargument and refutation. The "change" or "new aspect" initiated by the *zhuan* is thus of central importance to the whole of the essay, constituting as the author's thesis, which is then expressed in more concise form in the concluding *he* section (Di, 1984). The closing "he" part may work similar to the conclusion in English texts, but it usually includes more than a summary of the previous parts. Chinese writers tend to place a greater importance on the last part than

any other part. Thus, they may present their central theme in the last paragraph or use more emphatic words to accentuate the last section. (Gu, 1992)

According to Di (1984), *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* was first applied as a structuring device to the essay during the Song Dynasty (960-1279). It was originally adopted from classical Chinese poetry and long used in Chinese prose composition. The four characters are commonly glossed as “introduction,” “development,” “turn,” and “conclusion.” They may refer to four consecutive lines of poetry, to four consecutive sentences or ideas in a single paragraph of prose, or to the four parts of a whole essay (Tsao, 1983). The following example will illustrate the use of this pattern and show how the main idea is not introduced until the last line.

In the Quiet of the Night (Li Bai, 701-762 AD)

1. *Qi* Moonlight reflects off the front of my bed
2. *Cheng* Could it be frost on the ground instead?
3. *Zhuan* I look up to view the bright moon ahead
4. *He* Thoughts of hometown bring down my head

The central theme of the poem is the poet’s homesickness on a late autumn moonlit night. Without stating the topic, homesickness in the first line “qi,” the author only describes the moonlight is shining on himself, who is far away from his home village. The second “cheng” line describes the author’s action, which serves as a continuing illustration along with the first line. In third line, zhuan, the author changes the topic from the “moonlight” to “himself.” Not until the last line, the author finally introduces the topic of homesickness to the readers.

It is believed that a delayed introduction on the topic creates impressive remembrance to the readers after the topic has been elaborated at the great length.

Although the *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* pattern is not the only writing pattern taught at school, a trace of this traditional pattern can be seen in many written texts and Chinese literature. Wang also indicates in his study (1994), the *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* pattern is still used in today's Chinese writing instruction as a beginning, middle, closing model with beginning covering *qi*, middle covering *cheng* and *zhuan*, and closing covering *he*.

Among the four elements in the *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* pattern, *zhuan* is considered the most difficult learning point for Chinese learners as the *zhuan* organization contrasts substantially with Anglo-American rhetoric. From the critical contrastive rhetoric perspective, Cahill (2003) argued that *zhuan* does not function as digression or a “circular” move, as traditional contrastive rhetoric has defined. It rather represented as expansion or development of the preceding ideas. Hinds (1983b) also stated that *zhuan* serves as the “change” and “new aspect” of the whole essay which represents the dialectical way of Chinese thinking. This reasoning of thinking was rooted in the ancient *yin yang* cosmology, which perceived the world as operating in the interplay of opposite but interrelated elements. Such dialectical thinking was reflected in Deng Xi's (546-501 B.C.) rhetorical concepts of “dual possibilities and dual interpretations” by which an argument could be presented from each side and the persuasive effect achieved through an acute understanding of opposing views and motives (Deng Xi, 1985). The dialectical emphasis was the most evident in Daoist rhetoric conceptualized by Laozi (500- ? B.C.E.) and Zhuangzi (369-286), both of whom advocated *wu wei* (nonaction), *bu zheng* (noncontention), and *wu ming* (nonattachment of language) in speech and conduct and aimed at bringing seemingly opposite elements into a harmonious whole in order to transcend apparent differences and reconcile polarized views. Li (2008) suggested that the yin/yang scheme can be

used as a better model to explain cultural comparison. In that scheme, although yin and yang are distinctly different and oppositional to each other, they are not separated by a razor sharp line; they are intertwined, curving into each other's sphere. Yin is found deep in the greatest citadel of yang and yang in yin's. When tipped, yin can be transformed into yang, and yang into yin. It is a model of fluidity based on the acknowledgement of difference. The dialectical thinking along with yin/yang scheme is not only appeared in rhetoric, but is deeply embedded in Chinese culture and its neighborhood cultures, such as Japanese *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* way of structuring essays (Hinds, 1983b).

4.5.3 “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon”

The other indirect writing pattern is known as “drawing the eyes of the dragon” (Gu, 1992), in which after the writer elaborates a topic in several paragraphs, the main idea is finally stated at the end of the essay. This writing style resembles with the belief of making Chinese art work that a painter would spend much time drawing a dragon, but save the most important step, adding the eyes to make it alive, for last.

This pattern is a subdivision of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern. It explains the beliefs that most accomplished Chinese writers prefer to state their thesis statement at the end of the paper, whereas the thesis statement usually appears at the beginning in an English writing. Therefore, this style may be considered as a “spiral” pattern for native English-speaking readers.

Indirectness is not only applied to Chinese writing patterns, but to spoken discourses as well. One instance in Matelene (1985) study indicated that making indirect requests and offering responses through third parties is highly preferred in Chinese culture. Her Chinese teacher explained that if she wants to borrow pencils

from a colleague, she would indirectly ask “How many pencils do you have?” instead of direct asking “Can I borrow your pencils?” In this way, the teacher would not lose face if her colleague does not have enough to lend. This scenario helps explain the indirectness in Chinese spoken language means further interpretation. While the social practices for the Americans is to make direct requests, offer direct responses, and generally make thoughts and feelings known, the Chinese stress the harmony of the group and the dignity of each member. And thus the more one experiences with indirect expressions in oral and written, the more civilized one is. The linguistic and social tendencies toward indirectness are naturally reflected in the ways the Chinese talk, think, and present their ideas. In the following section, I will examine cultural and linguistic factors that influence Chinese rhetoric.

4.6 Cultural Factors

In Chinese culture, perhaps the key principle in writing is to preserve general harmony and to promote social cohesion; therefore, the Chinese like appealing to history, to tradition and to the authority of both the present and the past. As Chinese tradition values authority and the prescribed group viewpoint, the importance of the individual is most often deemphasized. Besides, all Chinese major religions and philosophies advocate a group-oriented society and stress personal modesty (Gu, 1992). For example, Confucianism subordinates the individual to the group; Taoism subordinates the group to the nature; Buddhism asserts that the “self-essence of a thing is emptiness” and Marxism in China condemns individual selfishness. Although Chinese traditions are heavily affected by authority, religion, and prescribed group viewpoints, contemporary Chinese writing is influenced both by traditional Chinese rhetoric and by Western rhetoric, particularly Anglo-American rhetorical styles

(Kirkpatrick & Xu, 2012). Another important factor that distinguishes current Chinese writing styles is the socio-political context. As the Chinese socio-political situation is changing, individuality and creativity are increasingly sought by young writers and students (You, 2005).

However, the preference to appeal to authority and group orientation have still shaped a culture-specific writing style, one characterized by what Gregg (1986) called, nonpejoratively, imitative, inculcative, and indirect expressive elements. These include the following:

1. An approach to a topic which is descriptive and syncretistic rather than individually innovative and thesis oriented
2. Frequent recourse to the pronouncements of authorities, either by continual quotation, extensive paraphrase, and/or unacknowledged reproduction of key thought units
3. A flatly assertive, judgmental tone

Again, while recognizing the risk of essentializing Chinese rhetorical options, if presented properly these characteristics are of pedagogical values for instructing L2 learners of Chinese to understand the impact of Chinese culture and changes of contemporary socio-political situation.

4.7 Linguistic Factors

In Chinese, the beauty of writing is believed to lie in delicacy and subtlety, not in its straightforwardness (Shen & Yao, 1999). One of the important characters of Chinese writing is the use of allusion, analogy, and proverbs, since their usage is thought to contribute to the beauty of the language. Chinese writers are fond of fixed patterns such as proverbs, idioms, maxims, literary allusions, and analogies, and also defer to tradition and to the authority of the past. For example, the Chinese language

is exceptionally rich in metaphors, which are most commonly expressed in terms of four characters. To describe beauty is to appraise one's appearance looks like flowers and white jade; to describe someone makes things even worse is to "to add frost to snow." Four words expressions and other fixed patterns assist writers to express their ideas in concise format. As Shih (1983, p. 349) mentioned the criteria of Chinese text, "If there is any sentence that can be deleted, we know the writing is loose; and when not a word can be moved, we know the writing is well-knit." Word and sentences level structures are regarded as the basis of the whole organization of a Chinese composition. A word is the smallest factor that helps the writer makes up a composition, but it has the greatest importance in deciding the writer's expressions. Usually, the overall rhetorical structure is not examined until the writer has made sure that the words and sentences are well written. Therefore, the recurrent use of indirect expressive modes such as rhetorical question, metaphor and simile, formulaic phrasing has become one strategic method for Chinese writers to establish a well word and sentence structure.

In addition, words used for communication have their limitations, since words may appear differently from what they really mean. It is believed that "words have an end, but meaning does not." Thus, the elusiveness of allusions, analogies, and proverbs allows, or even encourages, more than one interpretation of their meaning. Chinese readers are accustomed to reading between the lines to figure out the author's intention. A text is better to be suggestive and to leave some room for readers to experience and enjoy what is written, thereby creating "overtone" (Li, 1976, p. 32).

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, Chinese rhetorical norms are examined from various perspectives,

including culture, language, and different writing patterns. Cultural factors reflect on the tendency of collectivism and the characteristics of being harmony, personal modesty, and appealing to history and authority in a written text. Linguistic factors explain that the recurrent use of proverbs, idioms, metaphors and literary allusions originates from the emphasis of language beauty on the word and sentence structure. The overall rhetorical structure is less stressed until the beauty of word and sentence structures are fully established. Thus, an inductive approach with a loosely developed theme among paragraphs is favored, which also relates to the discussion of indefinite theme in Chinese texts. As the purpose of a Chinese theme is to arouse reader's interests in keeping reading, it is considered appropriate to provide an indirect topic statement in the beginning of the text, elaborate on different perspectives in the body, and pinpoint the main focus in the conclusion with benefits to the society and nation suggested. Whereas Chinese writers have more freedom in organizing thoughts, readers have to share the responsibility to fulfill the author's intention. A Chinese theme is not equivalent to the thesis statement in English. It serves as a better explanation to Kaplan's spiral pattern that the "indirectness" still has its direction. Though the placement of thesis statement is flexible and usually decided by the author, two specific writing instructions on the organization of paragraphs are mentioned. "Open the door and see the mountain" (*kai men jian shan*) is a direct approach, often used in Chinese academic writing. Writers using this approach clearly state the central theme in the opening paragraph. The *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* pattern and "drawing the eyes of the dragon" approach utilize indirect method in organizing paragraphs. The indirect approach resembles with Chinese indefinite theme that the thesis statement is usually stated later in the article. Indirectness also applies to spoken discourses when the Chinese are making request and offering responses.

To examine Chinese rhetoric from a critical contrastive rhetoric perspective, this chapter emphasizes the writing instruction that makes rhetorical differences explicit to learners while raising their awareness of such differences, and acculturating them through language exercises with systematic instruction. It also seeks to contribute to research on teaching Chinese as a second language and curriculum development to advanced L2 learners of Chinese.

CHAPTER 5 – RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter describes the context in which the research was carried out and the methods used to explore the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. This chapter first introduces the participants and describes how they were recruited. It also provides profiles for each participant so that readers gain a glimpse into their personality and motivation in joining the study. The discussion then turns to the enrichment program, which is composed of the Concept-Based Instruction and the procedures of Dynamic Assessment. The details of the enrichment program, such as the pedagogical materials, the outlines of intervention procedures, and the process of assessment are introduced respectively. At last, data collection and the analysis procedures are explained.

5.2 Context of the Study

5.2.1 Written Performance of Intermediate Learners of L2 Chinese

The decision to focus the intervention and assessments on written performance of L2 Chinese learners was motivated by a growing interest among Chinese language researchers and practitioners in exploring Chinese discourse organization (Jin, 1994, 2007). More and more people are learning Chinese as a second language especially in high schools and universities, but the Chinese curriculum and teaching materials have not yet prepared learners to communicate effectively in authentic contexts such as the work place; that is especially true for the written language. An earlier study (Kong, 1998) compared Chinese and English business request letters and reported that these letters have a rather different rhetorical structure although they share the same

communicative purpose. From an immersed teaching experience in China, Matelene (1985) indicated that an indirect rhetorical structure is emphasized in Chinese oral and written language. However, Chinese rhetorical structure and its comparison with English rhetoric have not been applied to the pedagogical field. In fact, the majority of published studies focus on syntactic structures and conjunctions (W. Li, 2004; 崔頌人, 2003), and the nature of rhetorical differences in organization is underrepresented. Practical experiences also suggest that L2 Chinese learners follow their L1 rhetoric structure in composing written texts, which is sometimes viewed as inappropriate from a native Chinese perspective. Therefore, Chinese rhetoric structure and different types of writing patterns as described in the previous chapters are selected as the foci for the current study.

The rationale for recruiting intermediate learners of Chinese who study the target language in an immersed context was twofold. First, learners at an intermediate level or above achieve better control of grammatical structures or character writing, and start to appreciate Chinese idioms, proverbs, literary analogies, etc. These usages of fixed patterns contribute to the beauty of Chinese writing and thus are part of the criteria in assessing Chinese texts. These learners have the ability to produce longer stretches of discourse than beginning learners, so they can demonstrate their rhetorical style in a better sense. Second, learners who choose to study abroad are mostly pursuing their studies in Chinese for their own purposes; for example a personal interest in the language, a desire to explore the culture of the language, and/or a professional/career-related goal. This reason is important for the current study because it is thought that those learners will be more willing to commit to a six-week extracurricular instructional program.

5.2.2 Recruiting Participants

Participants were recruited from the Mandarin Training Center (MTC) at National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) in Taipei, Taiwan. This research context was selected because NTNU has the longest history in providing Mandarin instruction and they have the highest student enrollment among institutions in Taiwan. Additionally, through a proficiency test to all new-comers, MTC divided its students according to the standards established by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR). A total of nine levels which include novice, medium, superior and three subdivisions of each category (low, middle, and high) was utilized to determine classes and to design general activities. This proficiency guideline benefitted the current study as it helped screen appropriate participants.

Recruitment flyers were posted and participants were selected based on their classes taken in MTC and their writing performance. Only students who had finished the intermediate-low classes or higher at MTC were eligible to participate in the study. A total of twenty-one people showed interest in participating. The researcher met each potential participant individually and screened each of them regarding their courses taken in MTC, willingness to write extra articles, and their demonstration of personal writing portfolios. Seven out of twenty-one participants were qualified to participate in the study. All of these seven participants were at the intermediate level; five of them were enrolled in the intermediate-high class (Level 6) and the other two at the intermediate-middle class (Level 5). In order to preserve participants' anonymity, any personal data that could identify any of them has been deleted and pseudonyms were given to all. When finished the enrichment program, participants were compensated for a total of \$600 (NTD) for the study, which was prorated in the amount of \$100 per

session.

5.2.3 Participants Profiles and Commentary of Relevant Issues

I have included a brief description of each participant below with the intent of providing the reader a glimpse into the personality of the learners who participated in this study. The description of each of the seven L2 learners was based on their response to the biographical and language survey that completed at the beginning of the study. These profiles offered interesting “windows” to each participant’s personality and their life while studying abroad. They revealed the significance of certain experiences (traveling, professional expectations, views on how L2 instruction should proceed, etc) for their L2 learning. At the end of their profiles, I provide a brief commentary on some of the key ideas that emerged from all their responses and that are especially relevant to the present discussion.

Kai is a twenty-three year old American who speaks English as his native language. He was born in Long Beach, California, USA. Before enrolling in the intermediate-middle class (Level 5) in MTC in Taiwan, he had taken Chinese at university and participated in an 8-week summer intensive program in Beijing after graduation. From the time he enrolled in the intervention, he had been in Chinese speaking countries for a total of eight months. When asked for his motivation in learning Chinese, he stated that he would like to do international business, particularly trade-related. His previous work experience, as marketing coordinator at one software technology company, also illustrated his occupational inclination. His expectation of participating in this study was to learn more about structuring his Chinese writing to seem *more like a native speaker*. He believed that the present study would give him a new perspective on formulating sentences. He described L2 learning experiences as

follows:

“The role of the learner has been essential; mainly, to provide many opportunities to use newly studied words/patters. Language partners have allowed me to further advance, picking up native responses to make for fluid conversations (and also improve my listening proficiency). I am also extremely fascinated in many similarities between English and Chinese. I have always been interested in English roots (Latin) and previously studied Spanish for 5 years. While the languages are completely different, the similarities lie in the communication aspects. Additionally, globalization has sped up this process.”

While describing how he felt about L2 instruction, he also indicated his current approach in learning Chinese.

“I am good at repetition and practice. Every day I read at least one news or business article in Chinese, these have made a huge impact on my reading proficiency.”

Evan is a twenty-four year old American student who was born in Seattle, Washington, USA. He speaks English as his native language. He had taken Chinese in college and also studied it in Beijing for 6 months. By the time he enrolled in the intervention, he has studied in Taiwan for 5 months and enrolled in the intermediate-middle class (Level 5) in MTC. His motivation for learning Chinese is to help him find a good job. He realized that learning Chinese would allow him to communicate with a quarter of the world’s population. His expectation for this project was to improve his reading and writing levels. He described L2 learning experiences as follows:

“The most important thing to learn a language is being in the right environment. I studied Spanish in middle and high school but never found it interesting or never did I practice outside of class. I started learning Chinese at the USA at age 19, but quickly found it was almost useless learning there because of very little practice opportunity. In addition to the environment of study, the next most

important thing is self-motivation/interest. If you have a bad teacher or textbook, you are still able to push yourself to learn.”

While describing language learning experiences, he also related this to his living/studying abroad experiences. In addition to studying abroad in Taiwan and China, Evan had traveled throughout South America for 5 months. He reflected on these experiences of studying abroad:

“I get so much satisfaction when I can successfully interact with speakers of other languages. And I can instantly take what I learn from class and apply it to the real world. It is as if making doors of opportunity opens up every day.”

Jay is a twenty-four year old American who speaks English as his native language. He was born in Bellevue, Washington state, USA and stayed around his home town for 22 years. He has studied Chinese in college and Taiwan for two years, and is currently enrolled in the intermediate-high class (Level 6) in MTC. In addition to learning Chinese, he had learned Spanish in high school and college for 5 years and studied abroad in Chile and Guatemala. His mother is Polish so Jay also speaks Polish at a basic level. His motivations for learning Chinese are twofold. First, he wanted to gain experience for future job opportunities (i.e. diplomat) through learning Chinese. Second, he had a Taiwanese girlfriend in college and thus decided to study in Taiwan after graduation. The reason he participated in this study was because he wanted to improve his Chinese writing ability. During the time of the intervention, Jay was teaching English to young and middle school students in Taiwan.

Anthony is a thirty-six year old Vietnamese who speaks Vietnamese as his native language. He had studied Chinese in Taiwan and China, but he claimed that Taiwan provides a better learning environment. At the time of the intervention, he was enrolled in the intermediate-high (Level 6) in MTC. He used to work as a reporter in

Vietnam, but he did not indicate in the survey if Chinese learning related to his previous occupation. His expectation for this study was to improve his Chinese ability so that he would not make mistakes in writing articles. He described his language learning and study abroad experiences in Chinese, and I paraphrased it in the following.

“Learning a language is to learn more words and phrases and to apply it into practice. Never be afraid of talking to native speakers even if you might make mistakes. You also need to practice writing some short essays, and find people who have experiences to help you revise.”

Pete is a twenty-three year old American who also speaks English as his native language. He was born in Wisconsin, USA and lived there for 22 years. His motivation for learning Chinese has come from his research interests in studying Chinese history. During college, he studied the history of Qing Dynasty and wrote his senior thesis, titled “Yuanmingyuan: A dynamic case study of Chinese consciousness.” He also spent three months learning Chinese at Nankai University in China, and two months conducting independent historical research in Beijing. By the time of the intervention, he had studied Chinese in Taiwan for a year and was currently enrolled in the intermediate-high class (Level 6). He chose Taiwan as the site to learn because he wanted to be familiarized with traditional characters (i.e. most of the historical books were written with). He is an English teacher in Taiwan now, and he is also considering continuing his studies in history at the graduate level. His expectation for this study was to gain more experiences in writing articles. He described his L2 learning experiences as follows:

“Vocabulary has always been my primary focus. But my learning emphasis had predominantly on writing and reading; as a result, listening is my weakest area. The role of teacher is for drilling and explaining similar structures and

definitions in grammar and vocabulary.”

Ryan is a forty-year old Dane who speaks Danish as his native language. He moved to England at the age of 10, so he also speaks fluent British English. He had once lived in Taiwan for 8 years, but Chinese learning was not his initial motivation at that time. He was interested in learning one of the Buddhist practices, sit-in meditation. He claimed that he was *forced to study by the Visa office in order to stay in Taiwan*. He then left for China to work in a purchasing department for three years. Afterwards, he decided to go back to Denmark as he felt a loss of identity. He finished his college education in Denmark and continued to work as a physics and chemistry teacher in junior high school for about 4 years.

With three years of working experience in China and eight years living experience in Taiwan, he believed that his Chinese was at a good level, but he wanted to make it even better, so that he may able to teach Chinese one day. Thus, he came to Taiwan again (fourteen years after his first stay) and enrolled in the intermediate-high class (Level 6) in MTC. By the time he participated in the study, he had been in Taiwan for half a year. His expectation for this study was to gain improvement in making correct Chinese sentences. He described his language learning experiences in the following:

“When talking about Chinese learning, I particularly emphasize on the pronunciation because intonation is very important. I guess it came from my English teacher when I was in England. She always corrected my Danish accents. When I was in Taiwan or China, I paid a tutor to correct my pronunciation. We met once a week for an hour. During the time, I read articles or books to him. He would correct my pronunciation.”

Ryan also discussed the role of being a Chinese teacher. He thought Chinese

radicals were the most important aspect to teach in terms of learning Chinese characters though many Chinese teachers did not teach or even did not know how to teach. Chinese radicals assist learners in remembering the characters pictorially. In addition, some Chinese teachers tend to provide English translations as soon as they see learners' confusion. Yet, those translations were less beneficial than the detailed explanations in Chinese.

Carol is a twenty-six year old Swedish who lived in Örebro, Sweden for 22 years before she moved to Taiwan. She speaks Swedish as her native language. She was motivated to learn Chinese as she likes the language. She had studied Chinese in Sweden for 2 years and then for another 2 years in Taiwan. The reason why she chose Taiwan as a learning site is because she wanted to learn traditional characters. By the time she participated in the study, she enrolled in the intermediate-high class (Level 6) in MTC. She expected that she could improve her writing through participation in this study, such as using more formal and written language and essay writing strategies. She described that the teacher's role is very important in terms of language learning—

“A good teacher can make a boring teaching materials fun and inspire students to study harder.” One interesting story that she described about her study abroad experience in Taiwan was that— her Chinese had improved a lot after coming to Taiwan, but her English was worse than before. She would better understand an unknown word if the definition was written in Chinese instead of English. She claimed that “Chinese is a precise language which helps you understand the idea quickly.”

As can be seen from the above profiles, all of the participants had been studying Chinese for several years, and were enthusiastic about studying the language. Particularly, they all shared interests in learning ways to improve their Chinese

writing proficiency, such as learning more written/ formal words, essay writing strategies, and to form Chinese sentences appropriately. In other words, all the participants were motivated to learn Chinese rhetoric styles, which had met the purpose of this study. Table 5.1 summarizes and displays the general information of these seven participants.

Table 5.1: Participant information

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Native language	Number of years learning Chinese	MTC course level
Evan	Male	24	English	almost 4 years	intermediate-middle (Level 5)
Kai	Male	23	English	almost 4 years	intermediate-middle (Level 5)
Anthony	Male	36	Vietnamese	3 and half years	intermediate-high (Level 6)
Jay	Male	24	English	2 years	intermediate-high (Level 6)
Carol	Female	26	Swedish	4 years	intermediate-high (Level 6)
Pete	Male	23	English	Almost 4 years	intermediate-high (Level 6)
Ryan	Male	40	Danish	Almost 6 years	intermediate-high (Level 6)

5.3 The Enrichment Program

5.3.1 Concept-Based Instruction

As discussed in Chapter 2, both Gal'perin and Davydov's approach were integrated in this study to promote learners' cognitive development through interactive activities. The pedagogical sessions basically followed Gal'perin's stepwise approach, from the orienting stage to the mental stage, to gradually lead learners to achieve the final goal of internalization; yet, various designed activities also allowed freedom for learners to

move between different stages. In Table 5.2. I outline the pedagogical procedures for the entire enrichment program.

Table 5.2: Outline of the enrichment program

	Task description
Pre-Session interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners fill out Biographical and Language survey - Conduct pre-intervention interview with each learner - Homework: <i>My personal Mottos</i>
Session 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction on three Chinese writing styles through PowerPoint Slides - Learners explain their own convention of <i>My personal Mottos</i>
Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read and discuss the teacher-made SCOBAs - Learners create their own SCOBAs and explain their thoughts on it - Homework: read three expository texts
Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the writing conventions of the assigned expository texts - Learners revise on their own-created or teacher-created SCOBAs after reading articles - Schedule individual revising session for <i>My personal Mottos</i> - Homework: read two argumentative texts
Session 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the writing conventions of the assigned argumentative texts - Learners revise on their own-created or teacher-created SCOBAs after reading articles - Homework (1) : Brainstorm on the writing topic (i.e. Your Best Living Place) and prepare related idioms or examples - Homework (2): read five formal letter writings
Session 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the writing conventions of the assigned formal letter writings - Learners revise on their own-created or teacher-created SCOBAs after reading articles - Brainstorm and discuss the arguments for the second writing task - Learners explain their thoughts for the second writing task
Session 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share writings with colleagues - Learners discuss each other's writing conventions and make suggestions
Post-session interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct post-intervention interview - Introduce the transferring writing task

TR task reflection	- Learners reflect on their transferring writing task in terms of the writing convention and reasons for choosing
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In what follows, I explain the procedures of each intervention session in CBI. There were six intervention sessions included in this enrichment program. In the first orientating session, participants attended the class with their pre-written argumentative text, *My Personal Mottos*. The researcher started the session by asking participants about any difficulties they had during the composing process. The researcher then oriented their attention to the different meaning of ‘main idea’ in Chinese and English essay (i.e. the ‘theme’ in Chinese and ‘thesis statement’ in English), and how it leads to three different writing patterns in Chinese, such as the “Open the Door and See the Mountain,” “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*,” and “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon” approaches. In addition, the researcher demonstrated how these three writing patterns affect the placement of the thesis statement in a Chinese text. The researcher used *My Personal Mottos* as an example to brainstorm ideas about Chinese theme with students. For instance, how to define your mottos, sayings, philosophies? Do you have personal stories or experiences to illustrate? Could you think of stories from others? Why the motto or philosophy is important to you? How does it influence you? Based on one student-selected Chinese theme, the researcher demonstrated orally how to organize the thesis statement according to the three writing patterns.

After orienting participants’ attention to Chinese theme, the researcher gave an introduction on three Chinese rhetoric styles through PowerPoint presentation. The formal introduction on the scientific concepts included 1) the comparisons of Chinese ‘theme’ and English ‘thesis statement,’ 2) the purpose and functions of Chinese theme, 3) visual presentation of basic Chinese paragraph structure and its variations of three

different writing conventions, and 4) explanations of reader's involvement and writer's responsibility. By presenting the scientific knowledge on Chinese rhetoric patterns, the researcher's goal was to build an Orienting Basis for Action (OBA) for participants so that they would start to notice the preferred Chinese writing conventions and to further utilize the OBA to regulate their thinking in writing.

In regards to assessing participants' comprehension at the end of the session, learners were invited to revisit their own writing of *My Personal Mottos* and to determine which of the conventional styles their text represented. Through individual dialogue with the researcher, each participant explained their current writing convention and how they would like to make changes based on the Chinese rhetoric styles learned.

The objective of the second session (i.e. the materialization stage) was to transform students' OBA into a Scheme of Complete Orienting Basis of Action (SCOBA) — an externally presented scheme for the completion of an action. In order to transform the action into a visualized physical format, participants received didactic models in the format of flow charts representing three Chinese writing conventions. The models are defined as a “scientifically-based, learner proof “cheat-sheet” (Haenen 1996, p.135). They serve the function of meditational tools which assist learners in problem-solving situations. As Gal'perin noted, these models seem to be very complicated outside the classes, but in the course of pedagogical action, they are easily used and appropriated by participants (Haenen 1996, p.135).

The researcher first introduced the already-made SCOBA to illustrate the scientific concepts on Chinese writing patterns. As Gal'perin advocated, didactic models should represent the ‘essence’ of the structure of the discipline (Haenen 1996, p.189). Due to the complexity of Chinese writing patterns and its differences from

Anglo-American rhetoric, it is assumed that learners need further guidance in order to materialize their understanding, and thus the teacher-made SCOBAs were first presented. Yet, the goal of teaching a set of Chinese preferred writing conventions is not to limit students' writing performance, but to broaden their knowledge on Chinese (i.e. culture or linguistic effects) through the lenses of Chinese rhetoric. As Davydov promoted in his MAC pedagogy, allowing freedom in the process of materialization helps develop learners' agency in making choices. For instance, can understandings of Anglo-American rhetoric assist their learning on Chinese rhetoric? Thus, learners were invited to create their own SCOBAs on each of the writing styles to represent individual interpretations of Chinese rhetoric. Most of the students presented their comprehension of three writing conventions visually with pictures, a flow chart, and illustrations.

The focus of the following three sessions was to provide opportunities for learners to practice their understandings of writing conventions through reading different Chinese genres. Three Chinese genres such as poems, expository and argumentative were selected based on their practicality and popularity of usage in academic and business fields. The ultimate goal was to have each learner explain the scientific concept so it is comprehensible not only to himself but to others as well. In addition, when an action had been sufficiently appropriated with practical tools, learners could execute the action verbally without material presentations (i.e. SCOBAs).

In the third session, learners were divided into small groups of 3 to 4 persons. They read three expository texts and worked together to analyze the writing patterns and to explain the reasons for the choices from the concepts. During the discussion, they had the SCOBAs (both the researcher-made and their creations) available to

assist internalization. The researcher also assessed and mediated students' understanding whenever needed. As learners worked in a small group to discuss the writing convention of each expository text, the researcher provided one-one-one or group mediation to examine their comprehension. The mediation scale, (Appendix C) adapted from the study of Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) and based on practical experience from a pilot study, was used as a guide to provide mediation from the most implicit to the most explicit. Yet, the mediational techniques in the scale were flexible to change depending on the interactions between the researcher and learners at the time. The researcher explained each text after learners' analysis by providing flow charts to reinforce the concept of paragraph structures and the placement of thesis statement.

After reading three expository texts, learners were also asked to revisit the SCOBAs that they had created and to make changes if needed. At the end of the session, each student explained any changes or differences he/she made to their SCOBAs. Free group discussion on the revision of SCOBAs sometimes followed. The purpose of this verbalization activity was inspired by Davydov's approach that promotes learners' agency in searching their own materializations. It also opened a window for the researcher to see the cross-cultural differences and the effectiveness of SCOBAs and verbalizations on learners' writing performance.

The aim of the fourth session was to have students read Chinese argumentative texts so that they could apply the newly-internalized concepts to a different genre. This type of transfer allows learners to use the concepts flexibly. It is crucial to show that learners are using newly-internalized concepts to mediate their activity. As argumentative texts were more difficult than expository texts, learners requested more assistance from the researcher in terms of grammar structures, phrase explanation and

paragraph organization. The researcher mediated them with flow charts to reinforce the concepts of “Open the Door and See the Mountain” and “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*.” The comparisons between the “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*” and “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon” were also illustrated. Learners revised their SCOBAs again after reading Chinese argumentative texts; they also discussed how paragraphs were organized differently from English argumentative texts. For homework, learners were assigned to prepare writing materials for the second writing task, ‘Your Best Living Place’ (城市或鄉村, 哪一個是你最佳的居住環境?). For instance, they could brainstorm ideas, stories, personal experiences, appropriate sayings or four-character idioms, and prepare a brief presentation for the next session.

In the fifth session, learners read five formal Chinese letter texts. They also participated in a group discussion on how Chinese rhetoric styles were represented through short letters, and how the Chinese writing conventions were revealed in the writing of the second language (i.e. English). After discussion, learners were again invited to revise their SCOBAs based on their internalization of Chinese rhetoric styles. This step was crucial as learners were constantly using the SCOBAs and concepts throughout the internalization process, instead of first working on the internalization of the concepts and only later using it to think or write with.

The researcher then discussed with learners the second writing task, ‘Your Best Living Place.’ Since learners had already been assigned to prepare writing materials on this topic, the researcher opened up the discussion to guide learners to present what they had prepared, and to provide mediation in between. For instance, the researcher introduced several four-character idioms such as ‘The Three Moves of Mencius’ Mother’ (孟母三遷) along with an explanation on its history. Four-character idiom is one of the essential elements in building background of the topic in Chinese writing.

Moreover, learners expressed their deficiency in this regard, so that the researcher emphasized the introduction of four-character idioms. The researcher further brainstormed the pros and cons of living in a city or countryside with learners, and asked them to record their thoughts and discussion on a Venn diagram. By the end of the session, learners verbalized their ideas for composing, such as arguments and their selected writing styles through the diagram.

The sixth session was crucial in the CBI intervention as the learners gradually reached the independent stage in using the three Chinese writing conventions. They participated in the group dynamic assessment scenario where they read each other's writing and gave comments on other's writing style, paragraph organization, and the usages of idioms, grammatical structures and other linguistic resources. Working as a group, the learners first guessed and explained one colleague's writing convention by analyzing his/her paragraph organization. When the group's opinion about the writing style was different from the author's, learners discussed the discrepancies together and provided possible solutions to the author. At the same time, the researcher played the role of monitor, providing assistance whenever needed. Later on, learners further gave comments on each other's writing in terms of the quality of their language use. For example, they noted typos, incorrect grammatical structures, and unclear meaning of sentences or idioms.

5.3.2 Dynamic Assessment

As discussed in Chapter 3, the interactionist DA approach was adopted for this study. The guideline for administrating the assessments was not based on learners' independent performance for a certain time, but depended on the flexible interaction between the mediator and the learner as the two cooperatively performed the

assessment tasks. Additionally, in regards to the outcomes of the assessment, learners' performances were not assigned with a score or ranking, but were instead considered in terms of the appropriateness of the language they produced while completing the tasks as well as the kinds of mediation they required and how they responded to this mediation (Poehner, 2008).

5.3.2.1 Writing Task 1

The first writing task was considered a non-dynamic one as it only showcases learners' independent writing performance. The purpose of this static assessment was to provide the researcher with insights on: 1) learners' initial written performance; 2) their rhetorical styles; 3) other kinds of problems learners encounter while completing the tasks.

All learners were asked to write an expository text on the topic of *My Personal Mottos* before the enrichment program. This topic was selected because it related to the learner's personal experiences, and it was also easier to support one's arguments with stories or examples. It was hoped that this personal topic would ease some of the tension learners might feel when undergoing an assessment. The length of this text was around 400-600 words so that paragraph organizations could be easily spotted. Learners were allowed to use the word processor to type out the composition so that the difficulties in writing Chinese characters could be avoided.

In the third session, learners were introduced to the scientific concepts of Chinese rhetoric styles and read samples from the genre of expository text. They were asked to revisit their first writing task and choose one of the preferred writing styles to make revisions. Learners then participated in a one-on-one session with the researcher to discuss their revision or any further questions on rhetoric styles. While all learners

finished the second draft, 3 out of 7 students made the third draft voluntarily and requested another revision session with the researcher.

5.3.2.2 Writing Task 2

The second writing task was introduced at the fifth session when learners had read all three selected genres (i.e. expository, argumentative, and formal letter) and demonstrated gradual internalization of Chinese rhetoric styles. Learners were asked to compose an argumentative text which described their preferences of whether they would like to live in a city or rural area in the future. During the actual composition of the texts, learners were directed to use the concepts to orient themselves. It differed from the non-dynamic assessment (i.e. writing task one) in two important ways: 1) the topic on urban or rural area limited participants' preference for future living and urged them to choose one viewpoint and argue against the other with examples. 2) The "two-way" topic was considered harder because it focused more on logical thinking than describing personal experiences. The required length was 400-600 words, the same as the first writing task.

This writing assessment was considered a dynamic one as the administering procedures were similar to Dynamic Assessment. Learners were asked first to prepare related resources such as vocabularies, idioms, four-character phrases or possible sentence structures before the formal introduction. During the discussion, learners took turns presenting what they gathered on the topic, brainstormed ideas in composition, and discussed how to organize the paragraphs according to the writing conventions.

After finishing the article, learners were invited to read each other's text during the sixth session, and also to provide comments on other colleague's writing style and

linguistic features. With the researcher's mediation, learners co-constructed a group ZPD in group discussion. They also practiced their language skills in reading, listening, and speaking.

5.3.2.3 Transfer Writing Task

Two weeks after the enrichment program, learners were asked to write a response or article about a short clip¹ on Youtube. This clip describes a teacher who provides countless help and care to a low SES (socioeconomic status) student, and finally motivates the student to continue his studies and succeed in his future career. The clip provided the content for writing, but it did not limit learners' thinking of the topic. Learners could choose a title, preferred writing convention, and their own selected genre to compose the response. Directions about how to compose a response were given before the written assessment.

Transfer assessment was important because it demonstrated learners' agency in applying the concept of rhetorical structures to different genres. In addition, learners had the freedom to choose their preferred genre to compose the text.

5.3.3 Pedagogical Materials

5.3.3.1 Readings Texts

Most of the reading materials utilized in the current study were selected from various textbooks for intermediate to advanced Chinese learners, such as *Business Chinese: An advanced reader* (2004), *A learners' handbook of modern Chinese written expressions* (2000), *Advanced reader of modern Chinese* (1993), etc. As most

¹ 2011 commercial by Ministry of Education, Singapore
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIun5xGK86g>

curricula and textbooks are considered eclectic in how they construct language learning, other materials such as the literary works written by the popular Chinese writers were also chosen, like *Generosity*. The aim was to provide learners with a broad taste of formal Chinese texts, so that learners could enhance their understandings not only in Chinese rhetoric styles, but in their reading performance as well. The guidelines of selection were based on the specific genre, clearness of rhetoric structures, the level of difficulty in its language use, and also the relevance of the topic discussed. In order to assure the validity of these pedagogical materials, they were tested by two language teachers who have taught Chinese at the university level for five years, five trained native speakers and fifteen untrained native speakers.

In the following subsections, I elaborate on each pedagogical material according to its content, rhetoric features, and linguistic usages. Three categories were formed respectively: expository, argumentative and formal letter writings. Although these three writing styles may be seen as reductive in their representation of Chinese expository and argumentative writing, as explained in Chapter 4, they nonetheless provide a valuable orientation to formal Chinese writing for L2 learners.

Learners read three expository texts during the enrichment program. The articles were selected from textbooks or written by famous Chinese writers. The first expository text was *How Names for China and the Chinese Have Changed* (中國的名稱). It describes the historical changes for the name of China and what caused these changes. The text's construction is based on the "Open the Door and See the Mountain" approach which gives a direct introduction about different historical Chinese names in the beginning paragraph. Then it describes various names for China chronologically and sums up by explaining how the word "China" came to be used as the English name for *zhongguo*.

The second text is *Generosity* (雅量) which represents the abstract concept by eliciting stories to explain the importance of respect and tolerance. It starts with a dialogue to discuss various viewpoints about a fabric; then, transitions to an account about one shoemaker who points out that every pair of shoes will have a connoisseur; then, turns to human relationship about choosing a companion and summarizes with encouragement about developing respect as a lifelong project. The text utilizes the style of “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon” to gradually lead readers to understand that people will have diverse perspectives toward everything, from choosing fabric to companions; yet, nothing should be judged or result in dispute. The only one way to overcome disagreement and create harmony is to develop generosity. The theme of this text or the term ‘generosity’ is pinpointed at the very end of the article which not only represents a feeling of realization but creates overtones for readers to ponder.

The third reading text is *Women can Hold up Half the Sky* (婦女能頂半天), which discusses the issue of the equity of the sexes in China. It follows the “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*” pattern to organize the theme and paragraphs. The article opens with a popular Chinese saying to introduce the topic of equity of the sexes (the *qi* section); it then points out the overwhelming phenomena of the unfair treatment of females in ancient China (the *cheng* section); the author further directs readers’ attention to the main theme about the arising status of women by eliciting stories of active women in history such as *Mulan* and the Empress Dowager *Cixi* (the *zhuan* section); the author concludes the article with the comment that due to women’s uprising social status, current women in China actually bear more responsibility and burden than men (the *he* section).

Chinese argumentative text (lun shuo wen; 論說文) is a combination of argumentative text and expository text; in other words, it contains the characteristics

of explanation and establishment of arguments through sayings, stories, and evidence. Although the lines between these two genres are blurry, how to define and construct a Chinese argumentative text depends highly on the writer's intention and the writing convention he/she wants to convey. The two articles contained more sophisticated vocabularies and phrases and were longer than the expository texts used in the third session. In order to assist students in analyzing its writing convention, they were assigned to pre-read these two texts with a booklet that explains new vocabularies and grammar structures. Though potential threats to learners' reading comprehension, it was not hard to differentiate the writing styles when reading argumentative text because the writer's subjective viewpoints could be more easily spotted than the other two genres. Two, instead of three, argumentative texts were selected to orient learners' OBA. The reason behind the article selection was based on the authentic application of Chinese rhetoric styles, in that "Open the door" approach was scarcely used in argumentative text and therefore was not chosen.

The title of the first text is *Internet Pornography is Worse than a Tiger* (網毒猛於虎). It utilized the "Open the Door and See the Mountain" style to describe the serious problem that adolescents in China have easy and unlocked access to the pornography on the Internet. The author introduces the topic in the first paragraph by citing comments from parents and several internet users who desire to appeal to authority to ban (or at least manage) pornography on the Internet. The author further provides more information and evidence to establish his position about fighting against pornography. He also argues that neither Internet nor pornography is bad; the real problem is the limited control over the overwhelming unrated websites. The only solution to the current problem is to manage the websites so that they will not be harmful to youngsters. He concludes the article by stating his belief that a healthy and

a balanced life will be created if the government provides laws to combat pornography.

The second article, *Beauty Economy should not be Excessive* (美女經濟不應過度) is constructed with the “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*” pattern. It delineates the overwhelming phenomena of using young girls for advertisements in business fields. The author introduces the topic from a beauty competition in Shanghai to illustrate the fascination of using beauty for commercial (the *qi* section). He also points out that a beauty economy creates a win-win situation for both customers and suppliers (the *cheng* section). He then makes a transition to the disadvantages of associating beauty with products (the *zhuang* section). For example, he argues that the social values toward females has collapsed, especially how it affects young girls’ conceptions who may start to believe that only youth and beauty, not education and work, will bring fortune. In addition, a beauty economy creates a rising trend for plastic surgery and other unhealthy life styles. The author summarizes the article by indirectly appealing to the associated departments to investigate the real purpose and function of beauty in business, and suggests wise consideration for healthy and established society (the *he* section).

Learners read five formal letter writings in the enrichment program. The content of these letters varied; for example, cover letters for a job application, letters for business exchanges, and a recommendation. Although the length of each letter is around 120 to 180 words, each is still organized by one Chinese writing style. There are two letters composed with the “Open the Door and See the Mountain” approach, two for the “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon” method, and one for the “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*” approach.

The first text is a cover letter that briefly introduces the writer’s bio data and his

intention and enthusiasm to work for the company. Although it is constructed with the “Open the Door and See the Mountain” method, the thesis statement is revealed at the last sentence of the first paragraph (i.e. *I always aim for working at your honored company*). Several formulaic phrases commonly used in Chinese formal letters are employed, such as *jiu yang* (time-honored; 久仰) and *gui* (your honored; 貴). The second letter describes the writer/ the company’s desire to be recommended to other publishing companies in Los Angeles, USA. Written with the “Open the Door and See the Mountain” method, the thesis statement of the second letter is also revealed at the end of the first paragraph. These two letters represent that though Chinese “Open the Door and See the Mountain” method is similar to English deductive writing style; the Chinese theme is more indirectly introduced than English articles.

Similar with the content of the second letter, the third text also describes the company’s intention to be suggested to other interested industries. The only difference is the rhetorical style employed. The “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*” approach is applied to highlight on the *zhuan* (turning) feature. The purpose of selecting this particular text was to provide comparison to assist learners better understand two important features in the “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*” (i.e. the turning feature), and the “Open the Door and See the Mountain” approach (i.e. delayed introduction).

The fourth text requests the reader/company to provide detailed information for possible product exchanges. As the writer is in need of the information but surely does not want to pressure the reader, the writer chooses the “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon” method to exhibit his/her earnestness in collaborating to meet the final goal of business exchanges. The writer first expresses his/her appreciation in cooperation and compliments the reader/other company for providing extremely fine knitwear products. The writer only briefly reveals the purpose of this letter—to request

information about the payment method and due date, by the end of the letter.

The fifth text is different from the aforementioned reading materials as it is constructed by a Chinese student and written in English. The content of it is to ask the professor to provide a recommendation letter. The goal of including this letter is to let participants observe how Chinese rhetoric styles affect Chinese people's logic and thinking even when writing in another language. Despite that English is used as the target language, its writing style demonstrates the pattern of the "Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon" method. The writer (a Chinese student) first greets the professor, and addresses his/her own progress in finding jobs, but the writer does not express his/her intention of requesting recommendations until the last sentence. Although some may argue that a similar writing style can be observed in other letters written by English native speakers, the way that the phrases are structured and organized in this particular letter still show its relation to Chinese rhetoric style and its differences from the Western writing conventions.

5.3.3.2 Diagrams: SCOBAs

As highlighted in Chapter 2, a simple verbal presentation of scientific knowledge itself is not sufficient for in-depth understanding of the concept. The concept should be systematized in a concrete and holistic way so that it avoids rote memorization of purely verbal formulations of the knowledge (Lantolf, 2011). More attention is needed to know how the knowledge is presented to and internalized by learners. In this study, two kinds of diagrams were developed to provide learners with an orienting basis for both the mental and material activities discussed in the previous chapters. In what follows, I outline the goals of using each diagram and explain how participants engaged with each one of them.

In order to present the theoretical concepts in a coherent and comprehensible manner, the researcher materialized the three writing conventions into an appropriate form which can better assist students' internalization. First, three argumentative texts on the same topic (i.e. *Should we preserve our own culture and how could we do?*) were presented to students. The arguments and examples provided in these three texts were similar; for instance, the value of preserving culture, the liberal attitude in maintaining historic places, and examples about indigenous people of North America, a village in German, pop culture (i.e. music) created by a Taiwanese signer

Each text represented one writing pattern, and the organization of the aforementioned arguments and example differed based on the principles of the writing pattern. For "Open the Door and See the Mountain" method, the text started with a clear statement on the value of preserving culture, and was followed by three supporting examples and a conclusion. Second, in writing with the '*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*' pattern, the researcher first defined the specific aspects of each culture, discussed reasons why some cultures exist today while some disappear, illustrated the importance of preserving culture; and turned to its main argument on holding the liberal attitude in preservation and then ended with a conclusion. Lastly, when applying the "Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon" method, the researcher spent the first two paragraphs describing a dam construction over the Yantze River in China, and discussed the conflicts between a huge loss of historic places and scenic beauty and great improvement in hydroelectric and economic power. The purpose of using the example of dam construction over the Yantze River was to attract reader's attention in thinking about the dilemma. The text then provided examples from other countries which solve similar dilemmas by achieving economic improvement and preserving cultures at the same time. Finally, the text was ended by citing a famous

writer's saying and pinpointing the idea of having the liberal attitude in cultural preservations.

Each text was then broken into several strips of paper based on paragraphs. Participants manipulated these strips to map out the original texts by utilizing the charts to help them analyze different Chinese rhetorical structures. During the intervention, the researcher examined each learner's understanding about different Chinese writing patterns by asking them to explain the ways that they organized these three texts and provided needed assistance. In addition to the manipulation of Chinese texts, the concept was also presented to learners through the PowerPoint presentation. Flow-charts contained in the slides explained each Chinese rhetoric style with related pictures and a simple breakdown of paragraph structure. The researcher/teacher also discussed the issues of reader's engagement and writer's responsibility while explaining the culture and language differences. In sum, the purpose of implementing pre-made SCOBAs is to materialize the scientific concepts as tools for understanding and guiding communicative activity. The ultimate goal to make the scientific knowledge concrete is to let students work at the intramental plane to foster the emergence of conceptualizations.

The researcher/teacher-made SCOPA and the PowerPoint slides were reviewed by in-service Chinese teachers and trained Chinese native speakers to ensure the validity. The slides and the original texts of SCOBAs with English translation can be found in Appendix D.

In addition to the teacher-made SCOPA, learners were requested to work independently to draw their own created SCOBAs during the enrichment program. After each session's introduction on various genres, they were also asked to revise their SCOBAs and explain any changes or differences they made. The design of this

activity is inspired by Davydov's approach, which promotes learners' agency in searching their own materializations. It might also open a window for the researcher to see the cross-cultural differences and their effects on written language. I have attached learners' original creations of SCOBAs in the Appendix E.

5.4 Analysis

Research and pedagogical practice in Sociocultural theory are not understood to be distinct, unrelated undertakings but rather they exist in a dialectical relation. The goal of research is not only to understand the world, but more importantly to transform it. This idea also applies in research that is conducted in the L2 classroom, where the investigator should develop the role of both researcher and practitioner, seeking to study and to mediate learners' process of L2 development. Being a researcher in this study, my aims is to create situations in the classroom that facilitate the process of L2 conceptual development, and to explain learners' development (i.e. behaviors, performance, etc.) through the theoretical lenses of SCT. On the other side, the role of practitioner is to use meaningful, goal-oriented activities to reinforce interaction, and to put new ideas from observation and mediation into practice. Therefore, some of my goals as a practitioner are to awaken learners' passion and curiosity for the target language, and to help them develop autonomy so that they can assume more responsibility in their own learning. With this in mind, a teacher log was maintained throughout the project to record everyday practices.

Given the dialectical orientation to research demanded by this interpretation of SCT, the collection and analysis of data for this project was approached accordingly. The primary source of data in this research consisted of five main subsets: 1) Individual interviews (i.e. pre-intervention interview, post-intervention interview); 2)

learner-produced SCOBAs; 3) learner writings; 4) interaction data (i.e. T-S and S-S interactions), and 5) verbalization data (verbal explanation on SCOBAs, reading materials).

5.4.1 Individual Interviews

Each learner participated in two individual interviews throughout the enrichment program. The initial interviews, which each took about half an hour, were held before the program. The primary purpose of the pre-intervention interview was to discover 1) their general difficulty of learning Chinese; 2) learners' initial knowledge on Chinese rhetoric; 3) previous writing experiences; 4) their writing procedure when composing a Chinese text, and 5) the quality of conceptual knowledge that they used to regulate their writing in L2 Chinese. The second interviews were held after the enrichment program, which each took 30-45 minutes to finish. This post-intervention interview aimed to investigate participants' learning processes and developments in regards to the instruction and assessment they received. Learners were asked to 1) reflect on their learning process throughout the enrichment program; 2) describe the remaining writing difficulties or any unclear Chinese rhetoric styles; 3) explain the effectiveness of teacher-made or own-created diagrams (i.e. SCOBAs); 4) compare the assistance (i.e. teacher and peers) they received in two writing tasks; 5) comment on the quality and effectiveness of the reading materials in regards to understand Chinese rhetoric styles; and 6) make suggestions for the current enrichment program if it is carried out in regular Chinese learning classroom.

Both the pre- and post-intervention interviews created a full picture of each learner's development. Detailed discussion of the analysis can be seen in the previous section on learner's profiles and in Chapter 6 for learner's reflections.

5.4.2 Learner-Produced SCOBAs

In session 2, learners were asked to create their own diagrams (i.e. SCOBAs) to represent their understandings of Chinese rhetoric styles. Later in session 3, 4 and 5, learners were invited again to revise on their SCOBAs to show how their understanding changed after reading different Chinese genres. Also, the revisions of SCOBAs demonstrate their process of internalization, and thus, learners were asked to verbalize their thoughts in making any modifications. Learner-produced SCOBAs, multiple revisions, and their verbalization data were compared and analyzed, which can be found in Chapter 7.

5.4.3 Learner Writings

The primary data source of learner-produced writing includes three parts: pre-intervention writing on expository text, post-intervention writing on a selected topic (i.e. near-transferring task), and a response to a short clip after two weeks of intervention (i.e. far-transferring task). For the pre-intervention writing, learners were provided with opportunities to revise their text based on their own selected Chinese writing style. Each of the learners received a 30-minute individual revising session with the teacher. Learners' revisions (some made up to 4 drafts) were photocopied and analyzed according to their application of rhetoric style and the quality of language use. As for the other two writings constructed after the intervention, they were evaluated based on the features of each rhetoric style, the quality of language use, and how learners regulated the scientific knowledge in their writing process. Details on the issues of the effectiveness of the CBI intervention, dynamic procedures in assessing, and transcendence will be discussed in Chapter 7.

5.4.4 Interaction Data

The instructional sessions were conducted once a week for an eight-week period. All of the intervention sessions, each lasted approximately 60- 80 minutes, were video-recorded, transcribed and analyzed. The interaction data can be divided into two forms of dialogues: the teacher to the group or individual learner, and learner to learner interactions. Reasons to frame the interactive data this way are to examine how learners were mediated through interacting with others and their process of cognitive development through the Dynamic Assessment procedures. The operational criteria for selecting video recordings from the interaction data and their accompanying transcripts were threefold. First, examining learners' cognitive development from a researcher's perspective, the interactive dialogues that pertained to learners' developmental process through the CBI intervention and DA procedures were chosen. For example, special attention was given to instances displaying learners' openness to mediation or their resistance to it, in addition to various ways in which learner responsiveness during interaction signaled their efforts to understand the relevant concepts and use them to regulate their thinking and their writing. Second, as a practitioner in this research study, the teacher's sensibility in seeing learners' signs of struggles and development during the intervention or revision sessions were also considered for data selection. That is, as both the researcher and the teacher in this project, there were instances noted in the teacher log where these signs were evident, even if it was not apparent in the transcribed interaction but was apparent given the history of interaction with these learners. Third, an effort was made to offer a representative picture of the variety of learning processes and struggles learners experienced in this study rather than only focusing on one or two particular learners who outperformed the rest. The interaction data will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8,

which focus respectively on the teacher—to—group or individual learner (i.e. T-S interaction), and on learner—to—learner interactions (i.e. S-S interaction).

5.4.5 Verbalization data

Verbalization data was collected when learners explained the rhetorical structure of reading materials, self-created SCOBAs, their revisions of diagrams and writing products. This data is important as it exhibits the learners' emergent theoretical understandings of Chinese rhetoric throughout the enrichment program. These verbal (and sometimes nonverbal) explanations, along with their performance (i.e. materializations, writings), were transcribed for analysis. The operational guidelines for selection were based on the extent of learners' internalization on each of the writing conventions, and the quality of their verbalized responses.

It was expected that, as learners developed a more conceptual understanding of rhetoric structures, an improvement would occur in their explanations of how to apply Chinese rhetoric appropriately. In particular, it was anticipated that over time learners' explanations would reflect less concern for descriptive Chinese rhetoric features, and instead focus on the understandings of using the concepts as tools to appreciate Chinese cultural and linguistic meanings.

5.5 Notes about Transcription Conventions

As the primary principle of CBI and DA is to mediate and promote learner's development through interactive activities, interaction and verbalization data are important as they reveal learner's internalization process of the concept and their cognitive development. These data in this research project are analyzed based on its

integrality to capture the signs of learner's development. The target language used in the transcription is English; but whenever learners or the researcher aimed to emphasize the feature through Chinese, three way of transcription like Chinese characters, pinyin, and English translations was provided. The transcription conventions are based on the phonetic transcription presented in Cucchiarini (1993). Only the coding conventions that directly related to the research goal were employed. A list of transcription conventions are provided in Appendix F.

5.6 Conclusion

Within the sociocultural framework adopted in the study, the data aims to enhance reader's understandings about the ways that mediated interactions in CBI and DA promoted (or did not promote) learners' internalization of the concept and conceptual development. The primary principles of CBI used in this study include the following: 1) the pedagogical unit of instruction; 2) materialization of the object of the study; and 3) verbalizations with the function of internalization. DA procedures, on the other hand, provided a theoretical lens to examine learner's engagement in interaction with the researcher or the group who offered mediated assistance in ZPD. The benefits of integrating these two theory-driven approaches were twofold: 1) to examine the effectiveness of implementing CBI in a foreign language classroom, with an emphasis on improving writing performance through rhetoric styles; and 2) to track and support learners' ZPD through interactive assessment procedures. Therefore, four analytic emphases of this dissertation are explored. First, how the scientific knowledge of Chinese rhetoric was internalized through the CBI intervention. Second, to what level learners use the conceptual knowledge as a tool to regulate learning and to appropriate it through materializations, verbalization, and writing performance. Third, the

procedures of intervening in learning and documenting learner's growth through dynamic assessment practice. Finally, to what extent DA assesses and promotes the ZPD of a group of learner through mediated interactions. The results of these analyses are reported in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCEPT-BASED INSTRUCTION AND L2 TEACHING

6.1 Introduction

The outline for the following three data analysis chapters represents the integration of CBI and DA. Each of the chapter reports the main issues discussed in this research: 1) Teacher's mediated supports and learners' responsiveness throughout the CBI intervention, especially learners' verbalization, self-created SCOBAs and their final writing products; 2) Dialogic mediation between teacher and learner; and 3) Dialogic mediation among learners in group settings.

This chapter aims to answer the first research question: *“In what ways, if any, does CBI affect the development of learners' conceptual understanding of Chinese rhetoric?”* While showing learners' awareness on Chinese rhetoric styles, it intends to report on learners' responsiveness to the intervention, especially through analyzing the learner-created SCOBAs and their final writing products. Through analysis, it scrutinizes which Chinese rhetoric structure causes the most learning difficulty for language learners, and to what extent the CBI intervention assist in overcoming problems and promoting development.

In what follows, I consider both materialization (i.e. learners-created SCOBAs), verbalization data, and learners' writing products. These data allow us to study conceptual development in its formation. Among the triangulation, verbalization data is crucial as it was collected when learners explained their materializations (i.e. SCOBAs) and writings. They exhibited the learners' emergent theoretically understanding of Chinese rhetoric not as the object of learning activity, but as tools to explain how the understanding captured the cultural and linguistic meaning of

Chinese language. Vygotsky once said that the central moment in concept formation, and its generative cause, is a specific use of words as functional tools (1986, p.107). It is the use of words as tools that transforms the word into a concept, avoids empty verbalism, and transforms material actions into mental actions creating the ideal plane (Il'enkov, 1979).

In the last section, I also present learner-participants' personal reflections on their experience with CBI intervention and Chinese rhetoric learning. This section especially brings a more personal view into the reactions of learners who participated in the enrichment program, and offers fascinating insights to the future intervention on Chinese rhetoric.

6.2 Criteria of Analysis

As rhetoric structures are hard to define and writers have agency to choose their preferred style, learners' writing performance in this study are evaluated according to the extent they internalize the concepts of each Chinese rhetoric style. The following is the criteria for the three rhetoric styles.

In "Open the door and see the mountain" approach, the central theme is revealed in the first paragraph, most of the time in the last sentence. In addition to the placement of the central theme, the "Open the door and see the mountain" approach has specific ways to conclude the article. Chinese writers sometimes add personal opinions, such as suggestions or possible solutions, to response to the discussed topic at the final paragraph.

There are two features when assessing learners' internalizing concepts of the "Open the door and see the mountain" approach. First, to examine their placement and in which ways they reveal the central theme. Second, to observe the ways of how

learners distinguish the writer's personal comments from the central theme.

One of the important features in the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach is that the writer would introduce the central theme through building up both the arguments and counter arguments gradually. The writer would employ the rhetorical techniques, such as using the conjunctions to connect contradicting arguments. In particular, the usage of conjunctions is usually employed in the third paragraph section where the central theme is revealed. Therefore, we can say that the *Zhuan* feature is led by conjunction phrases, such as 然而;雖然;不過 (however, in other words), and what follows the conjunctions is the main argument the writer intends to convey. This concept is crucial in regards of determining learners' internalization of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. It is also served as the assessing guideline when analyzing learners' diagrams with verbalization data and their writing products.

Compared with the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, the “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon” approach represents the most indirect manner that Chinese writers use for a greater reader's involvement. The central theme is only pinpointed at the end of the article; it is usually revealed by one or few sentences which have similar function as the English ‘thesis statement.’ Related historical, personal stories or idioms and etc. would be elaborated to set the mood for the conclusion. In other words, abundant knowledge on Chinese language, culture and society would be essential elements for writers who choose this approach—an aspect that is not considered easy for even native Chinese. Therefore, the assessing principles for the Dragon approach are to examine how in depth learners internalize the concept and to which level they can apply this approach into real writings.

6.3 Materialization: Learner-Made SCOBAs

As discussed in Chapter 5, learners were requested to materialize their understandings of the rhetoric concepts and made constant revisions throughout the enrichment program. To be specific on the timeline, learners were asked to create their own SCOBAs at the second session when the teacher finished introducing Chinese rhetoric concepts and the teacher-made SCOBAs (i.e. colored paragraph strips). Later in the third session, learners were requested to make modifications to their SCOBAs after reading expository texts. During the fourth session that focused on reading argumentative texts, learners were asked to alter their SCOBAs again based on what they learned from the intervention so far. At the fifth session in reading formal letter, the teacher asked if learners wanted to make further revisions on SCOBAs. In this way, the tool was an emergent part of the learners' activity. It reflected their understanding of the concepts at various points in the program while also guiding their practical activity (composing and revising texts) throughout. Thus, the learner produced SCOBAs were a firm of tool-and-result. In what follows, I present both quantitative and qualitative analysis to examine the quality of learners' 'diagrams and their process of conceptualization.

6.3.1 Preliminary Remarks

The following table presents how many times learners made revisions to their SCOBAs and to which rhetoric style they modified.

Table 6.1: SCOBAs revisions made by the learners

		Learner-created SCOBAs	1 st revision	2 nd revision	3 rd revision
Learners					
1	Evan	1. 2. 3	2	2	-
2	Kai	1. 2. 3	2	-	-
3	Anthony	1. 2. 3	2	1	-

4	Jay	1. 2. 3	1.3	2	-
5	Carol	1.3	1.2	-	-
6	Pete	1. 2. 3	2	-	-
7	Ryan	1. 2. 3	1.2	-	-

1= the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach

2= the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach

3= the Dragon approach

From the table, it is possible to see that learners made fewer revisions throughout the time. In 1st revision, all learners revised their own-created diagram, four of them only focused on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. In 2nd revision, three out of seven learners made modifications in which two of them put emphasis on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. At the final revision, none of the learners made further modifications.

When counting the total number of revisions made, the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach received the most counts (i.e. eight times), the “Open the door” the second (i.e. four times), and the Dragon approach the last (i.e. one time). Additionally, if to analyze each learner’s choice of revision for the rhetoric style, six out of seven learners made revisions on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach; particularly, four of them solely revised on this approach.

According to the quantitative analysis, the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach had been modified the most. This result corresponded with the researcher’s assumption that owing to its significant rhetoric differences from English rhetoric, this approach might confuse Chinese learners no matter in reading or writing. The “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach is unique in its delayed introduction, the way of presenting main argument, and the utilization of conjunction. To what extent learners’ revisions related to these characteristics will be discussed qualitatively in next section.

Similar with the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, another indirect writing convention, the Dragon approach, was assumed to be difficult for learners to comprehend because of its hidden theme, indefinite conclusion and enormous reader involvement. Yet, only one revision was made to the Dragon approach. Possible indications from this outcome were twofold. First, learners benefitted from the systematic instruction and other pedagogical materials, such as the SCOBAs, PowerPoint slides, and various reading materials. Second, as the Dragon approach is substantial different from English rhetoric, it was easier for learners to build scientific knowledge directly from the Concept-based instruction without any interference from perceived similarities with English rhetoric.

Another surprising result was the number of revisions that learners made for the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach. This approach was considered easier for Chinese learners as it was similar to the English deductive writing. Of course, it is impossible to compare the rhetoric styles between languages. The large amount of revisions specified that learners were aware of the rhetoric differences in Chinese. No matter that this awareness came from the influence of pedagogical materials or notices from their native language; their ability to express their understandings through materialization was a progress in CBI.

6.3.2 Learner Verbalization of Their SCOBAs

In this section, I present learners’ verbalizations to their own-created SCOBAs and their thoughts in making modifications to it. Verbalizations are the key both to organizing L2 learning instructional activity and to explain L2 development as a conceptual process. The reasons to have participants verbalize thoughts on their SCOBAs and revisions are twofold. First, teaching Chinese rhetoric is an alternative

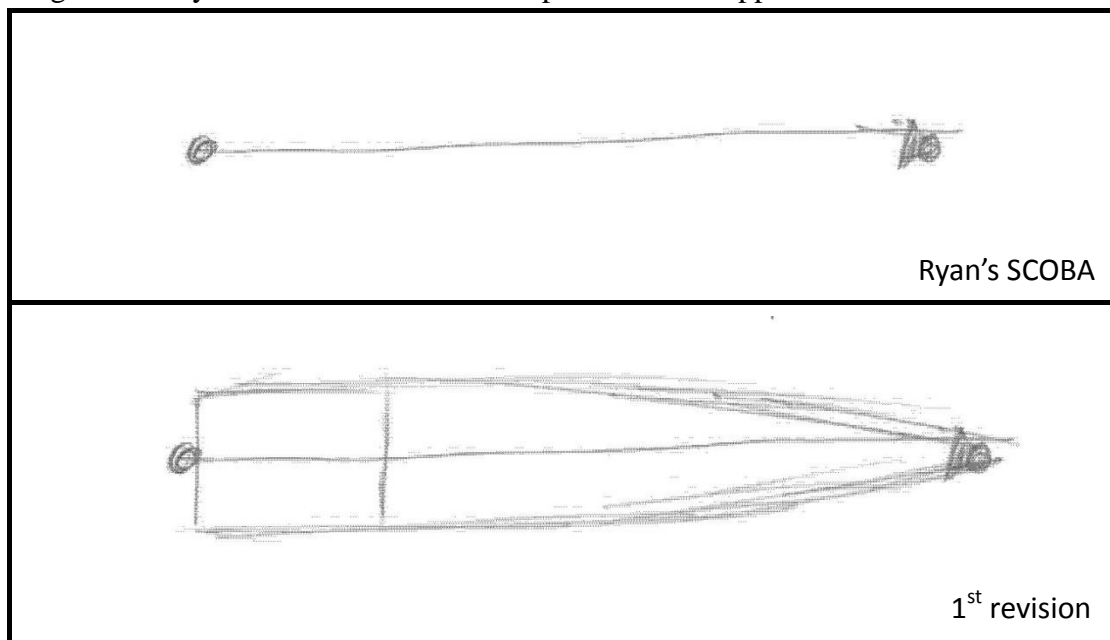
way to promote learners' understandings of Chinese language, culture, and society. Through verbalization activities, learners are internalizing the Chinese rhetoric as a concept to advance their writing abilities. They are also utilizing the Chinese rhetoric as a tool to regulate their awareness on learning another culture through its language. Second, as learners were allowed to represent their understandings through various tangible objects, verbalizations on learners' own-created materializations play a crucial role in offering chances for learners to make sense of their own creations, and for the teacher to better interpret their cognitive development. Through comparing learners' SCOBAs made at different time, I demonstrated learners' development of a more sophisticated conceptualization of Chinese rhetoric styles.

6.3.2.1 "Open the Door and See the Mountain" Approach

i. 1st revision

Three learners made revisions on their diagrams which represented the Chinese "Open the door" rhetoric style: Ryan, Jay, and Carol. The following figures 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 respectively presented the comparisons of the changes learners made. As the SCOBAs were designed based on each learner's creativity, the comparing figures were helpful in assisting readers to gain a glimpse on each of the learners' internalizing process.

Figure 6.1: Ryan's 1st revision on the "Open the door" approach



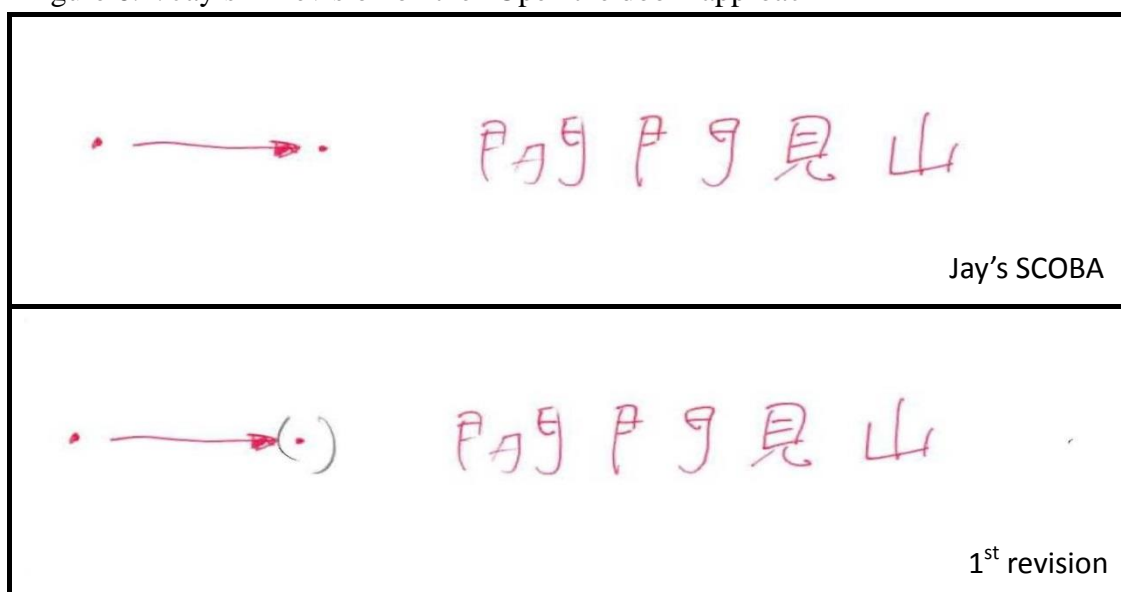
To visualize his understanding of the "Open the door" approach, Ryan first had a straight line with dots at each ends to represent its directness. During the first time revising, he expanded his original line into a plane. He described from a writer's perspective that

"he (the writer) did not explain his main argument when introducing the topic; rather he took his time to elaborate it so that readers had to wait until the very last to understand the argument."

Based on his verbalization, the teacher interrupted and asked if Ryan considered the thesis statement was placed by the end. He responded that "the thesis statement was in the first paragraph, but it was not been explained as clear as English writers did."

Similar with Ryan's SCOBAs, Jay's initial pictorial of the "Open the door" approach also demonstrated as a straight line.

Figure 6.2: Jay's 1st revision on the “Open the door” approach

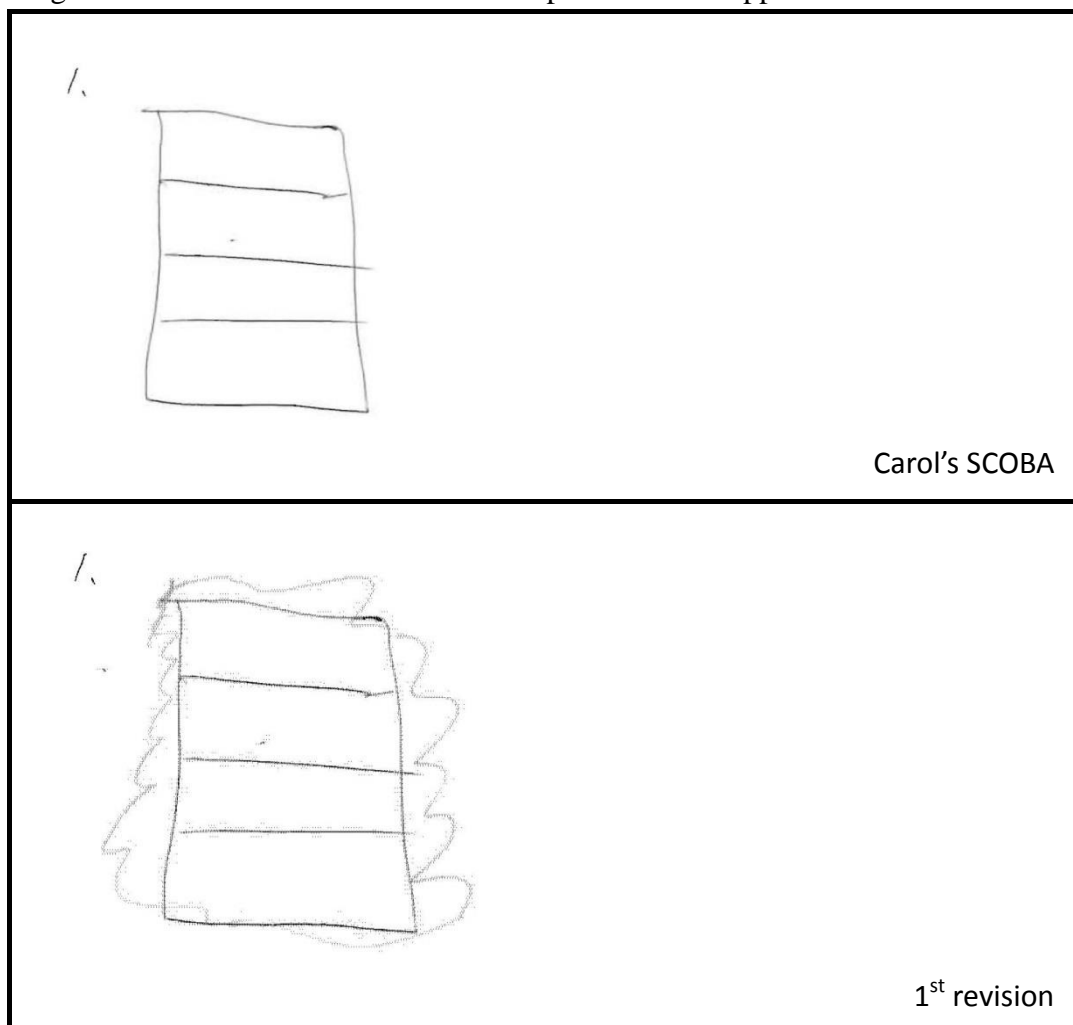


The differences were that Jay had an arrow with two dots, representing the main argument, placed separately at the beginning and final end of the line. He stated that “the main argument would be mentioned in the first paragraph, and would remain the same until the last paragraph.” Based on this statement, we could notice that Jay’s first SCOBAs was similar to English deductive writing style as the main argument would be stated at the beginning and be summarized at the concluding paragraph. It could also infer that Jay assumed Chinese “Open the door” approach was the same as the English rhetoric style—an aspect to show Jay had not yet understand Chinese rhetoric. At his revision, Jay put a parenthesis on the dot appeared at the final end, which meant that “the article sometimes would not mention the main argument again in the conclusion.” This modification indicated Jay’s initial awareness to the rhetorical differences between English and Chinese after reading expository texts.

Comparable changes on SCOBAs could also be observed from Carol’s diagrams and verbalizations. She initially had a rectangle to represent the structure of four paragraphs. She stated that “the main argument was in the first paragraph, and then

followed with examples before conclusion.” This diagram again was a lot similar with English writing style; in other words, Carol benefitted neither from the teacher’s SCOBAs nor the introduction. She initially applied what she had used to write, the spontaneous concepts, to learn Chinese paragraph organization. Later in her revision, she started to show emergent awareness on the rhetoric differences between these two languages. She remained the rectangle intact, but added squiggled lines to illustrate that “the structure of the “Open the door” method was not constructed as direct and obvious as the English writing style.” Figure 6.3 presents the comparison of Carol’s SCOBAs.

Figure 6.3: Carol’s 1st revision on the “Open the door” approach



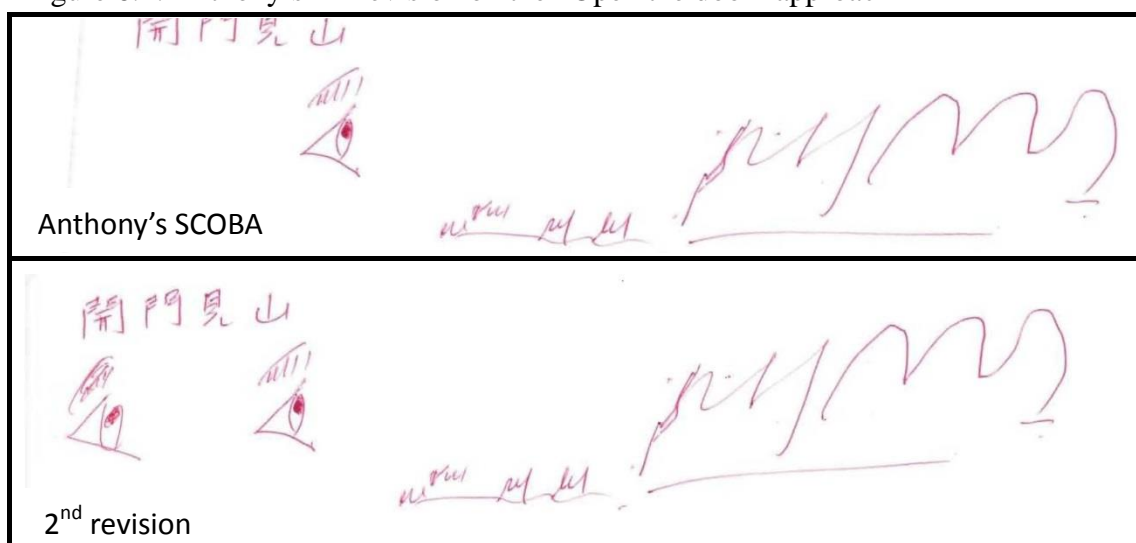
To conclude from these three learners’ revision on the “Open the door” approach,

their awareness became emergent as they progress through reading the expository texts. They started to draw lines between English deductive style and Chinese rhetoric styles, and viewed the “Open the door” approach not as direct as they assumed. Instead they claimed that the “Open the door” approach has indirect opening and conclusion. It is worth noticing that their spontaneous concepts were transforming through systematic mediation as they engaged with the texts.

ii. 2nd revision

Unlike the above learners, Anthony did not make revisions after reading the expository texts; he instead made the revisions on the “Open the door” approach during the second round. Examining from his initial creation of SCOBAs, he made sophisticated verbalizations to all of the rhetoric styles. In the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach, he drew an eye to represent from the writer’s perspective—“There are some small grasses growing in front of the mountains (i.e. the main topic) so that the mountains would not be seen directly.” Based on his expression, the teacher confirmed that he believed the thesis statement should not be put/seen in the first sentence even in this comparatively direct Chinese writing method. Figure 6.4 showed his initial SCOBAs and revisions after reading both expository and argumentative texts.

Figure 6.4: Anthony's 2nd revision on the “Open the door” approach



At the second revision, Anthony made modifications on his “Open the door and see the mountain” approach. He drew another eye which is farther behind his original one. This eye still represented the writer’s perspective, but the new meaning was created through the distance between the new eye and the mountain. The longer distance symbolized the concept that “readers would not see the main topic as they ‘open the door.’ They have to go inside the mountain and realize.” As Anthony’s metaphorical expressions sounded like his explanation for the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, the teacher interrupted and asked few questions for better interpretation. The teacher asked at which paragraph exactly the readers will notice the main topic in the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach. Anthony responded that the thesis statement would appear somewhere in the first paragraph, but not the first sentence. His statement corresponded with what I argued in the Literature Chapter that any indication of the theme, not necessarily an explicit statement, could belong to the direct Chinese writing category. Yet, while making a more detailed externalization on Chinese rhetoric, Anthony still claimed that “this is the point that sometimes make readers (or me) confused.” His frustration also showed in the post-interview when he

made requests on reading more articles with “Open the door and see the mountain” approach so that he could better understand it.

Anthony’s verbalization on the “Open the door” approach was by far the most detailed and clear explanation among the learners. According to his responses, it is claimed that he had internalized the concepts but more practice in reading and writing were needed.

6.3.2.2 The “*Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He*” Approach

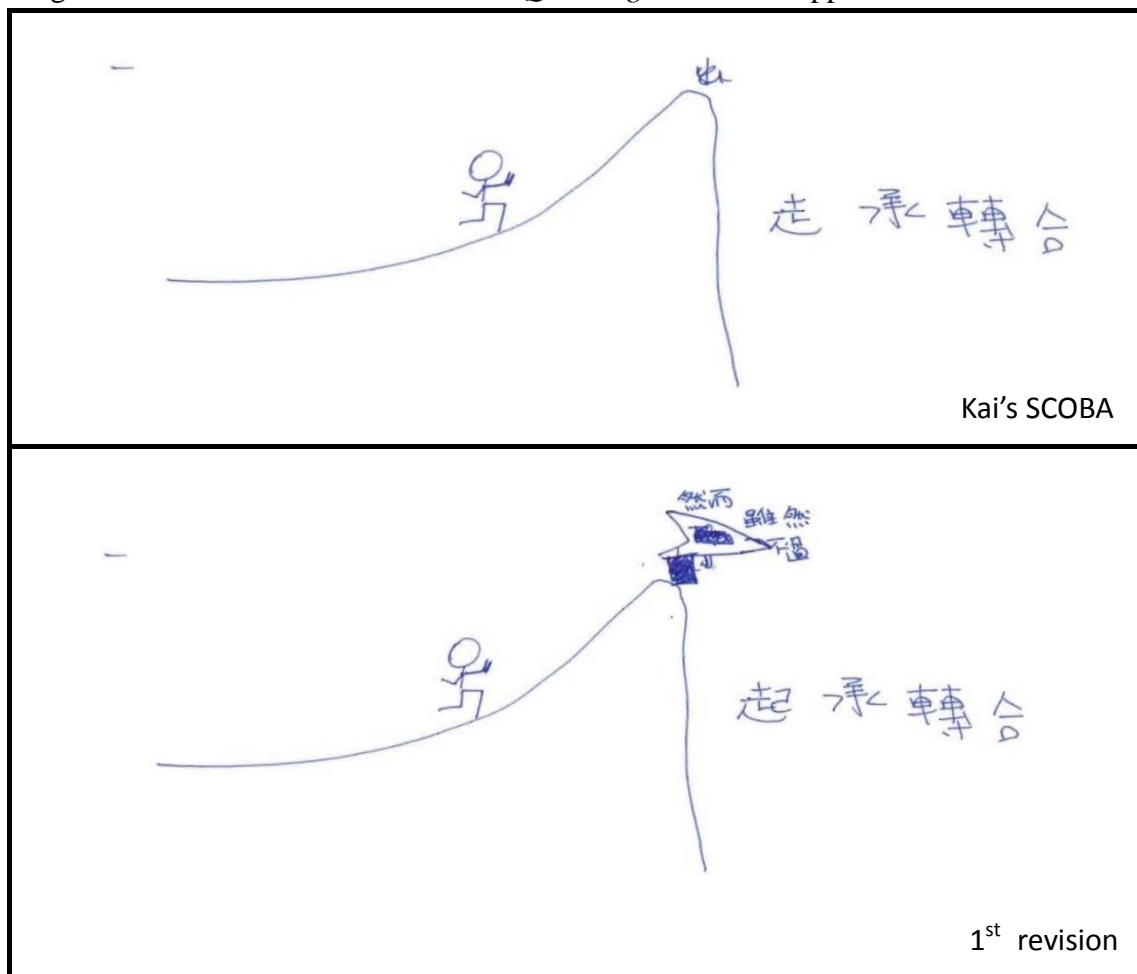
i. 1st revision

At Kai’s first SCOPA, he used an analogy to describe “reading a “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” article is like climbing the mountains.” He explained that hikers don’t know where to go if they are not given with the direction. Once the guideline is provided, it becomes much easier for hikers to climb. To apply the hiker’s example to comprehend this rhetoric structure:

“when reading an article composed with the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, readers don’t know exactly what to see in the first beginning, but at the third paragraph section readers realize the writer’s intention, reading then becomes much easier to understand.”

Figure 6.5 showed his original SCOPA and revisions after reading the expository text.

Figure 6.5: Kai's first revision on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach

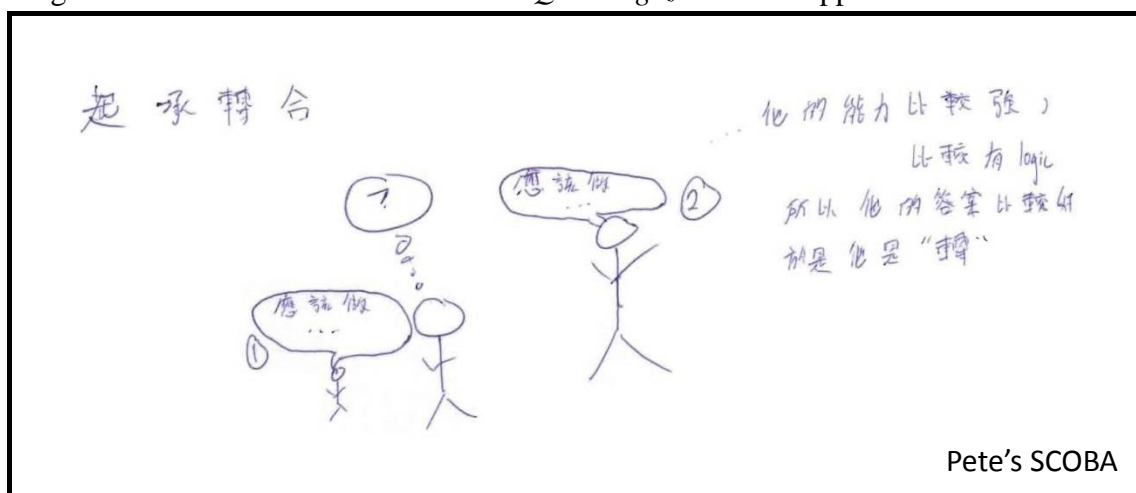


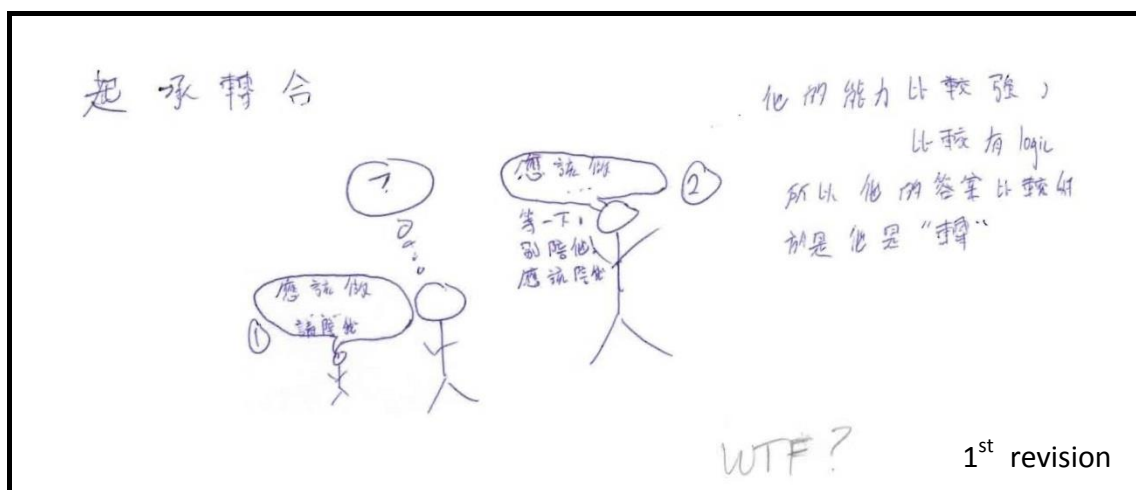
Although Kai's initial SCOB A showed that he noticed the article would become 'clear' at the third paragraph section, he was not able to use the scientific knowledge to describe what caused it happen. Additionally, the writer's intention of building background knowledge or certain argument through the first few paragraphs was neither explained by Kai. During his revision, he added a rectangle image of a hang glider to represent "the turning feature." He also wrote few transitional phrases, such as 然而, 雖然, 不過 (i.e. however, in another word) on the side of his hang glider. He described that "these transitional phrases show the turn." It was at this modification that Kai used the scientific knowledge to describe his understandings. It also showed a sign of his emergent ability to transform his spontaneous concept into the theoretical

knowledge in regards of the *zhuan* feature. Although at this point, we were not sure whether he understood the goal of establishing background knowledge in the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach.

While Kai demonstrated his understanding with pictorials, Pete used comic strips and dialogues to present the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. In his initial SCOPA, he discussed the tug of war between two persons (i.e. two perspectives). The one who was drawn larger won the game as he was more logical in explaining his perspective. Pete believed that “the one who won represented the *zhuan* or the main argument though he was given less space to elaborate.” In other words, Pete assumed that the argument led by the *zhuan* feature was more logic if compared with the other argument discussed. Although Pete’s explanation was obscure, he recognized that the main argument was led by the *zhuan* feature. Figure 6.6 compared Pete’s SCOPA and his revisions.

Figure 6.6: Pete’s first revision on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach



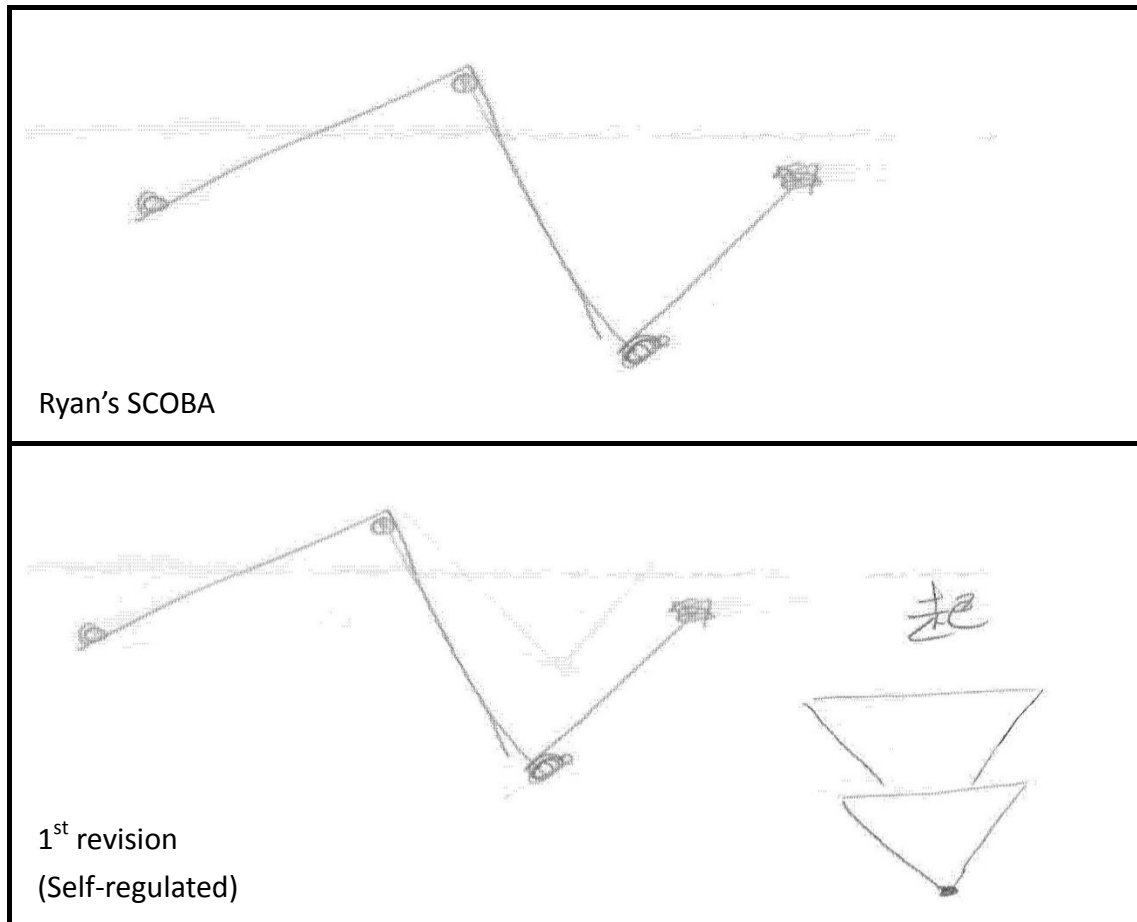


At a later revision, Pete further elaborated on the process of this tug of war. He emphasized the person drawn in the middle who represented as the champion trophy, and also the *main topic in this approach*. The other two persons were trying to win the champion trophy, the main topic. While the larger person presented as the *zhuan* paragraph, the other person represented the *second paragraph* section. Pete also described that the stronger argument was emphasized through the turning feature, and thus represent the main topic. To conclude from Pete's verbalization, it is claimed that he knew the sequence of building main arguments through examples or stories in first few paragraphs, but he was not clear about where to put the main topic and how to make the turning feature.

In terms of making revisions on the SCOPA, Ryan was self-regulated in creating diagrams while reading the expository text. In his original SCOPA, he created a lightning shape to present his understanding of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. He also had four dots on the shape to represent the four paragraph structure. Although he claimed that he understood the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, he stated that this approach did not have logic and was very unclear. He was also unable to explain the scientific concepts through his SCOPA, such as the *zhuan* feature. Examining from Ryan's initial pictorial and verbalizations, all evidence showed that he only applied

the spontaneous concept in understanding this rhetoric style. Indeed he almost appears dismissive of the idea that there are rhetorical differences among languages and that the Chinese system has a logic of its own. The following figure 6.7 showed Ryan's initial SCOA and self-regulated revision.

Figure 6.7: Ryan's first revision on the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach



Ryan made his revisions while the group was discussing the rhetoric structure for one expository text. During the discussion, Ryan surprisingly started to draw another picture of the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach without the teacher's mediation or direction. His purpose of doing was to assist his own understanding and then to gain supports from his peers. He explained that

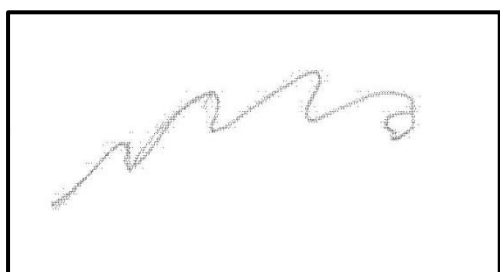
"at the beginning the writer uses an example to let us (i.e. readers) know what he

wants to say and gradually lead us to think about the topic. Then he suddenly makes a turn where it presents his argument. It is a new platform after the turn so that the writer tries to explain as well.”

If comparing what Ryan’s initial SCOPA of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach and this self-created materialization, the latter one showed the complexity in pictorial explanation and better interpretation of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. The self-regulated behavior was important because it showed that Ryan recognized the value of drawing as a symbolic tool which had relevance for his own functioning and development. In regards to his self-regulated behavior, I provide a detailed discussion on the issue of learner autonomy in the next chapter on Dynamic Assessment.

Unique from the learners discussed above, Carol did not design her SCOPA of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach after the teacher’s introduction as she honestly claimed that she was still unclear about this approach. As she was the only one who did not make the initial SCOPA but made it after reading the expository text, her case provided a window for the research/teacher to reexamine the instruction and mediated support given to her. Figure 6.8 presented Carol’s SCOPA on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach after reading the expository text.

Figure 6.8: Carol’s SCOPA on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach



Carol made an image of sea waves to present the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. She explained that

“the main topic would be mentioned in the first wave (i.e. paragraph section), and the second wave. It would be pinpointed out in the third wave and then end it at the fourth as the sea wave reached the seashore.”

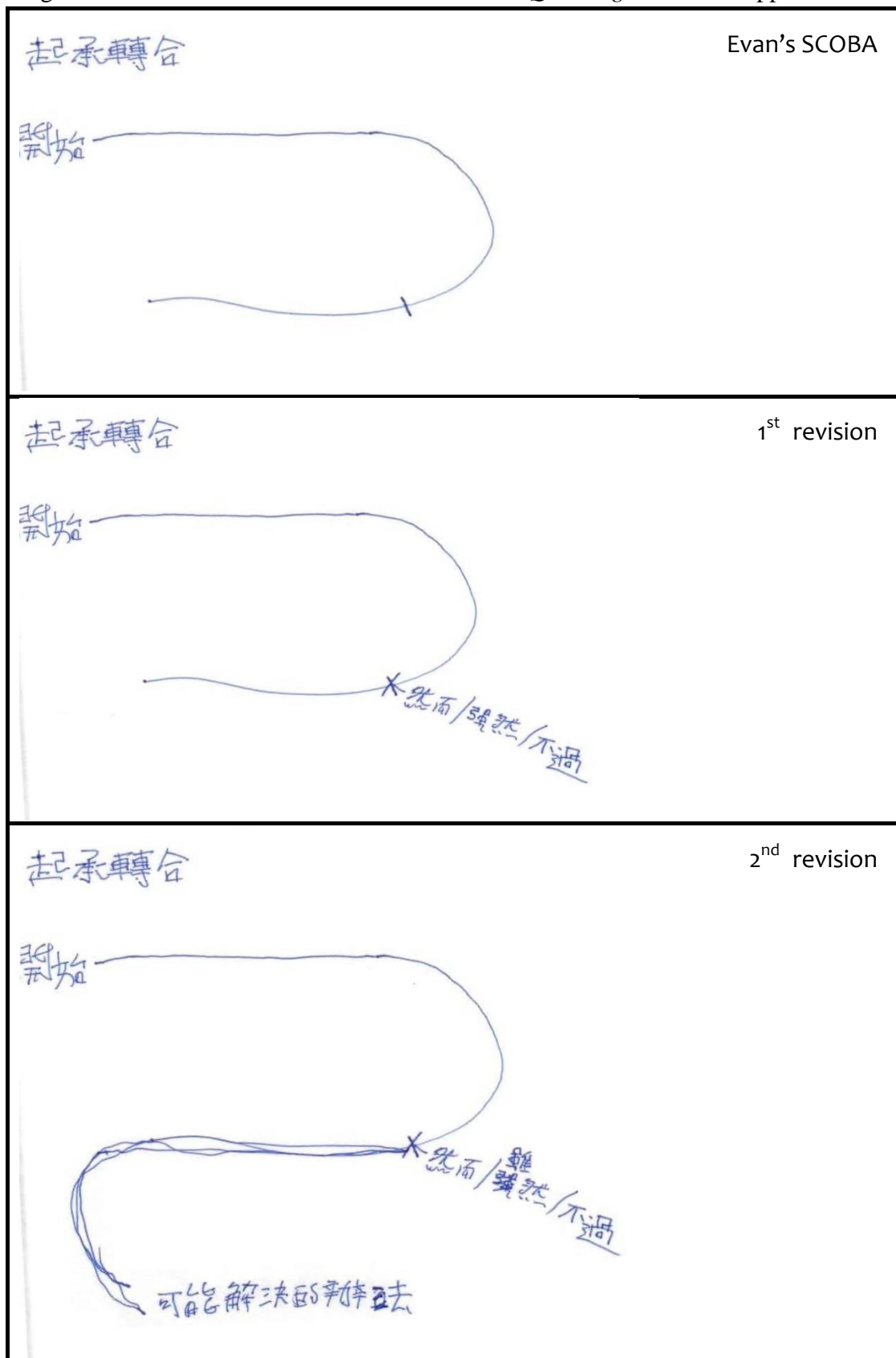
Her verbalization addressed the aspect of writer’s intention, but not the issue of *zhuan* feature.

In addition to the above four learners, Evan also made modifications on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach after reading expository texts. During the second round of revision, he again made changes on this approach. Thus I elaborate on Evan’s two times of revision in the following section.

ii. 2nd revision

Over the whole enrichment program, Evan made modifications twice; all the revisions were focused on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method. Figure 6.9 presented the comparison of Evan’s revisions.

Figure 6.9: Evan's SCOBA and revisions on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach

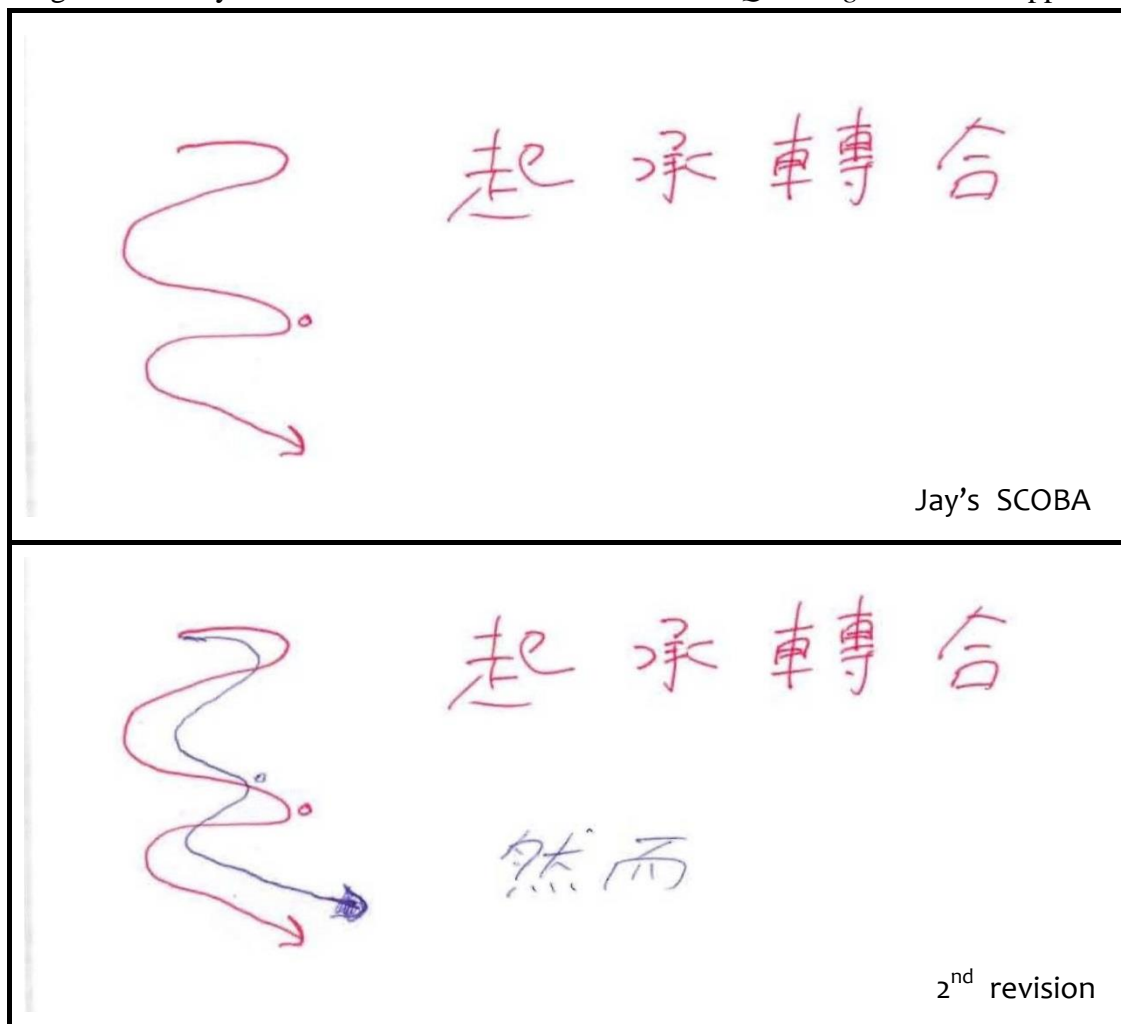


When first describing the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, Evan declared that he did not have much imagination in creating picture for this style. He had a U-shaped line and explained “you start here and continue to read until here...then you make a turn.” When the teacher asked about the meaning of the dot on line, he answered that he did not know how to finish this image so he just left it there. In other words, both his initial materialization and verbalization demonstrated that Evan had not quite understood the concept of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, especially the turning feature.

During the first revision, Evan added three conjunctions on the dot where he initially did not know how to describe. He literally wrote out the characters 然而;雖然;不過 (although, yet) to indicate that the turning feature could be led by these transitional phrases. Later at the second revision, Evan prolonged his U-shaped line to represent the concluding paragraph in the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method. He illustrated with characters (可能解決的辦法; Possible ways of solution) that the concluding paragraph sometimes presented the writer’s suggestions to the discussed topic. These suggestions however might not be the theme of the article.

Jay also made one time revision on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach after the intervention on expository and argumentative texts. Figure 6.10 presented his SCOPA and revision.

Figure 6.10: Jay's SCOBAs and second revision on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach



At Jay's initial SCOBAs, he had a curved line to represent the turning feature of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method. He also drew a dot to show the placement of the main topic. However, his verbalization was too short to examine whether he understood the concept fully. After receiving more mediation (i.e. identification and explanation on rhetoric structure) while reading argumentative texts, he drew a narrowed curved line to replace his original one as he stated that *the turning feature sometimes would not be so obvious*. Moreover, he wrote a transitional word (i.e. 然而; however) to show how the turning feature could be directed by the conjunction. Jay's revision showed that he was able to illustrate the turning feature much clearer than his initial understanding.

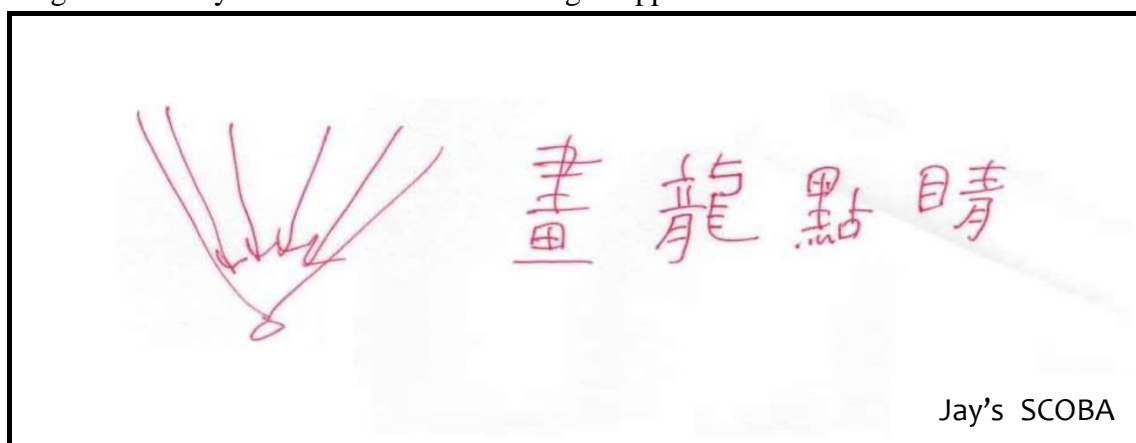
To conclude from the aforementioned learners, they all made sophisticated changes on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method. Their revisions demonstrated the growth of learning; their theoretical knowledge on the concept was developing. Some of them could name the conjunctions and indicate the function of them in a Chinese article. These cognitive development validated learners’ internalizing process.

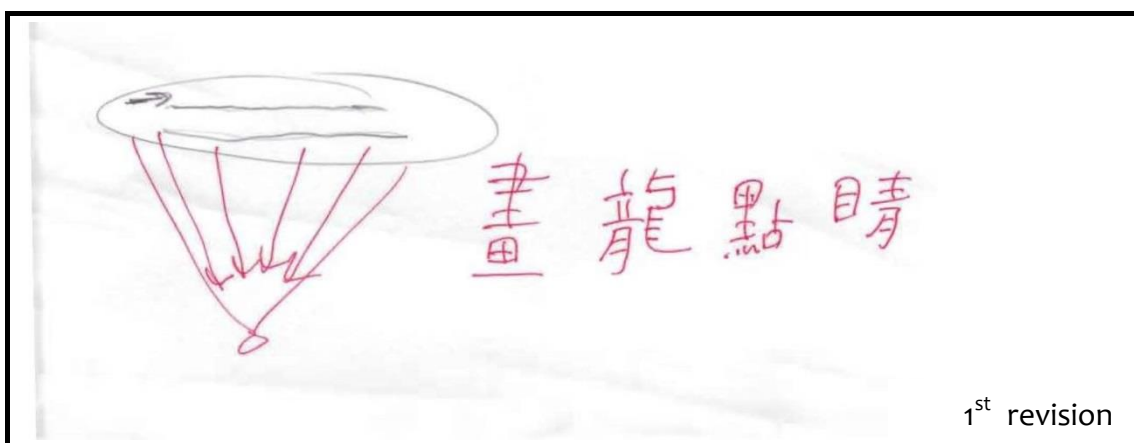
6.3.2.3 “Drawing the Eyes of the Dragon” Approach

i. 1st revision

Before moving on it is worth noting that Jay was the only learner who made modifications to the initial SCOBAs. Also, he was the one who changed all of his first diagrams during different revision times. In terms of the Dragon approach, he made changes after reading the expository texts. Figure 6.11 presented his initial SCOBAs on the Dragon approach and his later revision.

Figure 6.11: Jay’s first revision on the Dragon approach





Initially, Jay created several straight lines directed to the end point of an inverted triangle. He explained that the lines were directed from a larger space to a smaller place as *the article was introduced broadly at the beginning and the main argument was pinpointed by the end*. After reading expository texts, Jay added an oval circle on top of the inverted triangle. The oval circle was illustrated as stories or personal examples. He considered that the article constructed with the Dragon approach usually used the stories, personal or historical, to initiate the main argument. Jay's revised pictorial and verbalization indicated that he gained better control over the concept of the Dragon approach and also its paragraph organization.

To summarize the analysis to this point, several claims could be made from analyzing learners' materialization and verbalization. First, we knew from the quantitative analysis that the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach was the one that learners revised the most. If we compared learners' verbalization qualitatively on three Chinese rhetoric styles, we could also notice that the revisions made for the the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach were the most complex and refined. In addition, what learners revised was corresponded to the pedagogical instruction, such as the functions and synonyms of the conjunctions, the writer's intention in elaborating the background knowledge, and the fashion to state the main argument. Particularly,

learners reflected after reading various Chinese genres that they realized the turning feature was not always led by the conjunctions; it was still required understandings on the content to decide its rhetoric structure.

Second, four learners made revisions on the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach and claimed by the end that this approach was different from English deductive writing. They noticed that this approach does not function as directly as ‘you open the door and see the thesis statement.’ Instead, several learners claimed that the thesis statement would be placed somewhere in the first paragraph, but surely not in the first sentence. This awareness met with the principles of the rhetoric concepts, which in turn, validate the usefulness of having learners create diagrams and verbalize their thoughts. Third, revisions made during the second round were more sophisticated in that they revealed learners’ growth and internalization process.

To analyze learner’s conceptual understanding, not only verbalizations but writing performance as well is needed for data triangulation. Learners’ writing outcomes demonstrated learner’s transferring ability in applying the rhetoric concepts onto actual writing. If L2 development had indeed happened, learners’ verbalization data should be parallel with learners’ writing performance. The ultimate goal is to provide an integrated profile for L2 language teachers who are interested in applying the CBI intervention and DA procedures in regular language class.

Additionally, this study focuses on viewing the outputs within a sociocultural theoretical perspective of learning, rather than from an information-processing framework. An essential difference between these two perspectives is that the former regards output not only as a message to be conveyed, but as a tool in cognitive activity (Swain & Lapkin, 2002). Therefore, learners’ writing outcomes were not

evaluated according to the traditional testing by assigning a grade or percentage; they were assessed according to the principles of Dynamic Assessment with the ultimate purpose to uncover their learning potential.

6.4 Writing Performance

The following table presents which Chinese rhetoric structures that learners choose for constructing the three writing assignments in this study.

Table 6.2: Learners' selection of three rhetoric structures in writing assignments

		My Personal Mottos (MPS)	MPS revision	Near- transferring	Far- transferring
1	Evan	1	3	2	3
2	Kai	1	2	3	2
3	Antony	2	2	2	2
4	Jay	1	2	2	2+3
5	Carol	1	2	2+3	2
6	Pete	1	3	3	3
7	Ryan	1	3	2	3

1= the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach

2= the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach

3= the Dragon approach

2+3= the combination of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” and the Dragon approach

Among the revisions, learners used either the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method or the Dragon approach. There were 11 articles constructed with the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, and 8 in the Dragon approach. None of them constructed their transferring tasks according to the “Open the door” approach. One interesting fact was that learners noticed the rhetoric differences between Chinese rhetoric and English deductive writing when they made substantial amount of revisions on the “Open the door” approach. However, no one actually applied this new awareness into their

writings. Reasons that caused this result might be twofold. First, learners were still in the process of internalizing the scientific concepts and thus needed more systemic instruction in order to transfer into writing performance. Second, they preferred indirect approaches, such as the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” and the Dragon methods, to construct articles as they thought they needed more practice with this unique writing style.

6.5 A Case Study on Kai

Observed from Table 6.2, all seven learners had made important progress in learning Chinese rhetoric concepts through the CBI intervention. Examining from their initial writing to a later far-transferring writing task, they successfully applied the rhetoric concepts (i.e. guidelines of “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” and the Dragon approach) into various authentic writing tasks. Their writing performance were demonstrated not only through how they substituted English rhetoric with newly-learned Chinese rhetoric concepts, but also the development on better integration of cultural aspect and other linguistic features into actual writing tasks.

In order to discover the extent that the CBI intervention affects the development of learners’ conceptual understanding of Chinese rhetoric, a detailed analysis on learners’ writing outcomes is crucial for investigation. For the purpose of this section, I demonstrated one learner’s writing process through his writing assignments to examine the effectiveness of the CBI intervention. The learner, Kai, was selected not only because of the quality of his writing in terms of word expression, paragraph organization, and the integration of Chinese language and culture; but more importantly was because of the various Chinese writing conventions he had applied in writing tasks. He had tried all three conventions throughout different writing tasks. In

addition, he had made far more revisions than the rest of the learners on the three writing assignments. The revisions could be revealed the process of cognitive development in writing performance. At the same time, he also requested the most T-S revision sessions so that the ample verbalizations data could act as a great source for triangulation. The analysis on Kai's writing provided an integrated profile on both the CBI intervention and the DA procedures. In the following, three of the writing assignments were examined along with Kai's verbalization made during the revision sessions.

6.5.1 First Writing Assignment: My Personal Mottos

For the first writing on the topic of *My Personal Mottos*, Kai had a total of 510 words constructed which was divided into four paragraphs. He titled this article as '*Come Faster and Rest Longer*' (來的更快就休息更久) which was also his personal philosophy elaborated in the text. In the first paragraph, he described an experience of running with his uncle to catch a show in Las Vegas when he was at five or six. In a dialogue format, Kai recorded his uncle's response that "if we can run faster, we will get more time to rest." When concluding this paragraph, Kai named his uncle's words as his personal mottos, and indicated how this saying had great impact on his life. It was in the last sentence that the Chinese characters for personal mottos (i.e. 座右銘) had revealed. In the second paragraph, Kai further elaborated with examples on how this saying affected him in many aspects. For instance, the idea of 'do as soon as you can, and save time for more valuable thing' could be applied to work, exercise, writing articles or even personal life goal. One of the instances that Kai elaborated was his ambition to own a company. By applying this idea to his personal goal, he tried to create as many opportunities as possible to help him achieve the end goal even

faster. In the third paragraph, he discussed that this idea may sometimes cause problem, especially on the issue of the quality. It was worth noticing that Kai had rather short paragraph (i.e. three sentences) in this part if compared with another paragraphs. At the end, Kai concluded his article by emphasizing how he valued this saying and claimed from the fact that his uncle could not even remember he once said this before.

In regards to the writing convention, Kai's writing style was unlike any of the Chinese rhetoric structures. Instead, it was much similar to English deductive writing style as he first introduced the topic, elaborated with examples and then concluded. This claim could also be validated through Kai's reflection at the end of the first intervention session. When being asked to compare his writing with the concept of Chinese rhetoric styles, Kai responded as follows:

"I think I did not tell my readers what the central theme is in my article. I just go straight and explain my experience in the first beginning...Then in the second paragraph, I explain how this philosophy affects me in many different ways..."

This reflection showed that Kai was constructing a Chinese article based on his awareness of writing. As a native English speaker, he might follow the writing style of how English article was constructed, which most of the time was the deductive writing style. When being asked about his thesis statement, he answered that "I...I didn't really have a thesis statement. I just start from explaining...But if I have to say, the thesis statement is at this section (point to the first paragraph)." This claim also met with the principle of deductive writing—to first reveal the topic/thesis statement before elaborations on the examples. To conclude from analyzing Kai's first writing assignment and later reflection, it is worth noticing that Kai adopted English rhetoric when constructing Chinese article. The reasons to cause this behavior were twofold.

First, Kai had not received any systematic instruction on Chinese rhetoric styles so that he was not aware the differences out there. Second, language learners sometimes would resort to their native language when they encounter difficulties while learning the new language.

6.5.2 First Revision on *My Personal Mottos*

After the introduction on Chinese rhetoric structure in the intervention session one, Kai claimed that he would like to revise the article based on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. To analyze Kai’s first revision on *My Personal Mottos*, I first present a brief outline of his revised article before analyzing his writing convention and the mediations he received during the revising sessions.

Unlike other learners, Kai made two revisions on *My Personal Mottos*. In the first edition, he composed with four paragraphs, a total of 524 words. The main argument and his personal philosophy, ‘*Come Faster and Rest Longer*’ remained the same, but he added a discussion on young generation that served the introducing function for his revised text. In terms of the paragraph organization, he revised the first two paragraphs so to make a new introduction. In the first paragraph, he offered a new perspective on how the young generation benefited from the updated technologies and convenient devices these days, but they did not take the advantage of it to save the time to do what was of real importance. To continue the argument for the second paragraph, Kai argued that young generation very enjoy the leisure time, but they sometimes use this as an excuse to escape from the reality. This perspective however was contradictory to what Kai believed. In his third paragraph, he provided a counter argument to explain why and how he chose a different path toward his life. He remained the example of running with his uncle from the first draft and pointed

out his personal philosophy and the Chinese characters (i.e.座右銘). His conclusion retained the same as the first draft. The only difference was that he expanded his elaboration by referring back to the younger generation that mentioned in the beginning paragraphs. For providing a personal suggestion at the last paragraph, he considered that this generation should take advantages of the latest technologies and other convenient devices to do more. Instead of escaping from the responsibility, it was better to face the difficulty and then control the success.

Kai's writing style could be easily spotted as the application of “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach because he demonstrated several crucial features of this writing style. First, the methods he chose to introduce the central theme by building up the background knowledge in the first two paragraphs met with the concept of ‘*Qi*’ and ‘*Cheng*’ paragraphs. Secondly, he employed a conjunction, ‘然而’ (i.e. however), to indicate the beginning of his main argument. In the *zhuan* paragraph, he further elaborated on his philosophy by eliciting a personal story and located his thesis statement by the end of this paragraph. In the concluding *he* paragraph, other than summarizing thoughts on his motto; he also provided personal opinion to other youngsters like him to consider saving time for greater things.

6.5.2.1 Teacher Mediation through Interaction

During the revision session, Kai claimed that he revised his article based on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. The operational definition for selecting this particular excerpt was to show how the learner identified one's own problem under the teacher's mediation. Here, Kai elaborated on what he wrote for the *cheng* paragraph and reasons for making these changes. The function of *cheng* paragraph in Chinese rhetoric is to introduce a new topic statement or to continue the discussion on the

major theme mentioned in the first *qi* part.

In what follows, I present the teacher's support through the interactive dialogues, in which one focuses on mediating learner's awareness on the rhetoric structure (i.e. *cheng*), and the other on forming scientific concept through selecting appropriate linguistic choices. Excerpt 6.1 first showed the interactive dialogues between the teacher (T) and Kai (K) on the discussion of '*cheng*' paragraph in the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach.

Excerpt 6.1: Mediation to assist learner's awareness of rhetoric structure

- 1 T: Can you explain your revisions on the *cheng* paragraph?
- 2 K *Cheng* is the part where I continue to develop my topic. The meaning of this paragraph is....these convenient devices would change our life and our common ideas....what I'm saying is more related to modern society because we have lots of technologies. Every one of us has computers, cellphones and everything which means that we can have totally different life. We don't need to worry what we eat today or will we survive tomorrow. Thus we really emphasize on the quality of our life...so we enjoy leisure activities because we have more...time. But we always use this as our excuse to escape from the reality. For example, we know we should do this and that but we want to play video games first.
- 3 T [Oh
- 4 K [I think this article has...some limitation...it's kind of short
- 5 T Do you mean this paragraph?
- 6 K Um no... yes the whole article
- 7 T Do you mean the length requirement or..?
- 8 K Because you said we only have 600 words
- 9 T If you want to write more, you could
- 10 K: Really?
- 11 K: I think if I could add one more sentence or something, I could make readers more clear (of what I said)
- 12 T: I think here you can add one example in the *cheng* paragraph, like the one on video games

Observed from this excerpt, Kai was taking the lead to explain his thoughts on

organizing the *cheng* paragraph. The teacher, on the other hand, provided the most implicit mediation to assist Kai to elaborate, such as to further insure Kai's meaning in line 3, 5 and 7. Teacher's mediation here seemed only maintain the flow of the interaction, but indeed the teacher was examining Kai's performance and his ability to self-identify the problem. Kai admitted that his revised *cheng* paragraph was rather limited in terms of the content. He also claimed that the reason he did not illustrate with few more examples was because of the limitation on the word account (line 8). The mediation was helpful as it discovered Kai's real problem in constructing the *cheng* paragraph. (See full discussion in next chapter on the section of *Understand L2 development through DA*).

In addition to the mediated supports on the rhetoric structure, the teacher also assisted Kai to better use conjunctions (i.e. *li ru*; for example) in his article. The following interaction happened when Kai explained his organization of *he* paragraph, the last paragraph. The teacher suggested Kai to utilize one of the conjunctions in Chinese to assist readers' reading comprehension. The operational definition for selecting was to demonstrate the common phenomenon when second/foreign language learners compared the newly-learned language concept with their native language. This simple comparison without systematic analysis on the language and cultural differences may result in what Vygotsky called the pseudo concept or spontaneous concept which is unable to form abstractions for future educational purpose. Excerpt 6.2 exhibited the teacher's mediation assisted better transformation from spontaneous concepts to scientific concepts through the explanation on the functions of conjunction in Chinese.

Excerpt 6.2: Mediation to form scientific concept

- 1 T *pao bu de hua, xie wen zhang de hua* this is your example, right?
2 ((such as running and writing articles))
3 K yes (.) right
4 T How do you think if we add *li ru* ((for example)) in here?
5 K maybe(.) it probably(.) [will be smoothier
6 T [so readers know that you provide two examples here
7 K oh.
8 T so this sentence ((point to Kai's motto)) contains many aspects, for
example, running and writing articles
9 K okay
10 (7.0) for English sometimes you don't need this
11 T yes (.) sometimes you don't need.
12 Why I think it needs in here because *zhe ge zuo you ming de yi si jiu shi*
((this philosophy means)) is to explain what follows
13 and then you provide examples to illustrate the meaning
14 K Oh. so it is more (clear)

One important aspect to notice from this dialogue was Kai's silence and later responses in line 10, and also the teacher's mediated support in line 12 and 13. While accepting the suggestion of using the Chinese conjunction, *li ru*, Kai was comparing this scenario in English. His indication of 'English sometimes do not need conjunctions here' showed the transforming process of spontaneous concepts into scientific concepts. Instead of building the scientific concepts through the comparison of rhetoric differences in English and Chinese, the teacher assisted Kai by directly explaining from the current case—the reason it needed the conjunctions and the function of it.

6.5.3 Second Revision on My Personal Mottos

Based on the mediation received from the revision session, Kai voluntarily revised his article again and requested another revision session with the teacher. In his second

revision, he remained the paragraph structure from the first revised edition and enhanced on what the teacher had suggested, such as the *cheng* paragraph and the use of conjunction at the fourth paragraph. Observing from the improved quality, his second revision validated the successfulness of the mediation.

According to what Kai verbalized, he added examples in his *cheng* paragraph to illustrate the fact that youngsters nowadays enjoy leisure time, but frequently use the excuse of quality life to escape from the reality. Figure 6. 12. presents the differences between two revisions.

Figure 6. 12: The comparison of Kai's revisions of *My Personal Mottos*_ rhetoric structure

現代人隨著便利設施而改變社會的共同想法。在發達國家,年輕人很重視自己的生活素質。換句話說,年輕人很愛休閒活動,也常常以生活素質的理由逃避現實。

(English translation on 1st revision: With modern amenities, people are easy to change the social idea toward the society. In developed countries, young people attach great importance to their quality of life; in other words, young people love leisure activities, and are often use this excuse to escape from the reality.)

現代人隨著便利設施而改變社會的共同想法。在發達國家,年輕人很重視自己的生活素質。換句話說,年輕人很愛休閒活動,也常常以生活素質的理由逃避現實。比如,寫文章的時候,絕對大多數的大學生會滑網路持續把文章延遲,職場的情況也越來越類似,上班族不上班,不過滑臉書而已。

(English translation on 2nd revision: With modern amenities, people are easy to change the social idea toward the society. In developed countries, young people attach great importance to their quality of life; in other words, young people love leisure activities, and are often use this excuse to escape from the reality. For example, when writing, the majority of students would continue to slip the phone and delay the due date for the article. Similar situation happened in workplace as well. Workers do not work, they just play Facebook.)

To respond to one's own verbalization and the teacher's mediation, Kai added two examples for his *cheng* paragraph: one on student's attitude toward school assignment, and the other on adults' working attitude. Although the appropriateness of

these two instances needed further judgment, their purpose of illustrating Kai's argument was successful. They not only fitted well with the concept of *cheng*, but also assisted readers to better understand Kai's intention in developing the arguments.

In regards to the conjunction usage in the fourth paragraph, Kai not only added the appropriate conjunction as the teacher suggested (the red circle in Figure 6. 13), but also elaborated the personal meaning that this motto had on him (i.e. the blue underline). The following figure 6. 13 present the comparison of Kai's revisions on the conjunction usage.

Figure 6. 13: The comparison of Kai's revisions of *My Personal Mottos*_ conjunction usage

對我來說, 這個座右銘的意思就是, 你的工作做完以後, 你省了多長時間, 就是你休閒的時間。跑步的話, 跑完以後, 就可以做另外的運動。寫文章的話, 寫完以後, 就可以做你喜歡的活動。所以, 這句話的意思包括很多方面。在加上, 可以擴大這個意思為涵蓋最終目的。我覺得這一代有極大機會用科技進步做更厲害, 更奇妙的事情。與其逃避責任, 不如先面對生活的困難, 然後欣賞握有成功。

(Partial translation on the red lines:

For me, the meaning of this motto is: when you finish working, how much time you save is your leisure time. After running, you can do another sport. Finishing writing articles, you can do your favorite activities. ~1st revision)

對我來說, 這個座右銘的意思就是, 你的工作做完以後, 你省了多長時間, 就是你休閒的時間。例如, 跑步的話, 跑完以後, 就可以做另外的運動。寫文章的話, 寫完以後, 就可以做你喜歡的活動。所以, 這句話的意思包括很多方面。再加上, 可以擴大這個意思為了涵蓋最終目的。有一天, 我想當一個老闆, 以便為了在地球上留我的蹤跡, 不過, 很多人等一輩子當老闆, 這樣不僅理想, 所以我想儘可能早當老闆才能累積更多經驗和當更好的老闆。我覺得這一輩的人有極大機會用科技進步做更重要, 更奇妙的事情。與其逃避責任, 不如先面對生活的困難, 就可以好好地欣賞握有成功。

(Partial translation on the red lines: For me, the meaning of this motto is: when you finish working, how much time you save is your leisure time. For example, if you finish running, you can do another sport. If you finish writing articles, you can do your favorite activities.

Partial translation on the blue lines: One day, I want to be a boss so that I can leave my trail on earth. But a lot of people wait for a long time to become a boss. It is not ideal, so I want to be a boss as soon as possible in order to have more experiences

and become a better boss.)

It is worth mentioning that the personal example Kai added was crucial not only strengthened the rhetoric structure but also enhanced the quality of his writing. Kai's desire of becoming a boss assisted the elaboration of the main argument and served a great connection to the *zhuan* paragraph. It helped readers understand how Kai valued this motto and start to consider taking this motto for their own good. One of the rhetoric functions of the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach is to convince readers and to seek recognition from them. This self-regulated approach showed that Kai had a deeper understanding of this writing style.

To conclude from Kai's revisions on *My Personal Motto*, we notice the extent Kai internalized the rhetoric concepts through the quality of writing, his sensibility to the mediation, and his self-regulated thinking. His revisions also demonstrated the effectiveness of CBI intervention in terms of the systemic explanation on rhetoric concepts.

6.5.4 Near-Transferring Writing Task

As discussed in the Methodology chapter, the second writing assignment was administrated according to the dynamic assessment procedures. The teacher and the learners discussed the arguments and rhetoric structures together to construct this article. Each learner verbalized their outline which explained the rhetoric structure they intend to employ, examples/ Chinese four-character idioms they wish to apply, their arguments or counter arguments, and etc. Kai's outline was presented in Appendix G. For analyzing purpose, I first present Kai's verbalization on his outline, and then disclose how he carried out the ideas in actual writing. In particular, three concepts were discussed: paragraph organization, examples used to illustrate, and the

main argument.

Kai claimed that he would like to use the Dragon method to construct the article. Recall that the Dragon approach prefers to convey the central theme through efforts on developing stories or personal/social examples. And the purpose of this is to create readers' overtones. Thus, how Kai uncovered the central theme and to which manner the examples were selected and applied were crucial when triangulating between his writing performance and verbalization. Kai's main argument was to convey that people need to have different kinds of life experiences, such as both living in a city or a country, so that they can choose the life style that better suits. Instead of picking a side, Kai intended to discuss what he considered as appropriate life style, which required him to argue the pros and cons for the living environment in a city and country. As judged by the researcher, Kai had made a judicial decision on choosing the Dragon approach because this kind of logic thinking could be best elaborated through this specific writing style. It is worth noticing that the rhetoric logic has been appropriated as a tool to regulate Kai's thinking while writing Chinese article.

In regards to the examples employed, Kai claimed that *he would use the story of Mengzi that the teacher introduced, and the personal effects of changing living environment*. He connected the story of *Mengzi* with his personal experience that his mother transferred him for three different schools in order to find him the best education. He also referred to his life experiences of living in southern California (i.e. city) during school years and mid of Indiana State (i.e. countryside) during summer time. All of these experiences equipped him to appreciate the opportunity of having varieties in life.

During the spoken out, Kai also mentioned a Chinese idiom to help illustrate his main argument, such as 旁觀者清，當局者迷 (i.e. The onlooker sees most of the

game). He explained this idiom as

“people are so used to their daily life, so that it is very hard to change what are already become habits. But if you are moved from your old life, say if you go traveling; you can see clear about your habits and life you are so used to.”

Although Kai’s explanation was slightly different from the true meaning of this Chinese idiom, it was still considered appropriate in illustrating Kai’s intention in this article.

The above verbalizations examined Kai’s initial thoughts on writing this article. In what follows, I present a brief paragraph organization on Kai’s writing piece and discuss the quality of this writing in terms of the rhetoric structure and the idea correspondence with the verbalization. Kai divided his article into six paragraphs, which was a total of 916 words. He started to unpack his main theme in the first paragraph by elaborating with various examples. In the first paragraph, he described the phenomenon of phototropism and used this as analogy to express that similar to the plants, human beings were able to select the most appropriate living environment.

This instance was not recorded in his previous outline; yet, it attracted readers’ attention by comparing the well-known phenomenon in natural science with human behavior. At the second paragraph, Kai elaborated on the story of *Mengzi*, which was basically a summary from the teacher’s explanation. One thing different was that Kai extended the general concept of *Mengzi* story — the most appropriate living environment not only refers to the place, but the people live in that place, unto the situation of living in a city nowadays. Although city might offer better school education and social amenities, he thought that creativity was limited because of the common thinking of those people who live in the city. He continued to discuss the disadvantages of living in a city in the third paragraph. These two paragraphs set solid

background for the central theme and demonstrated Kai's ability to lead readers to consider the pros and cons of living in a city. Starting from the fourth paragraph, Kai elaborated on the pros and cons of living in countryside by talking through his personal experiences. At the last paragraph, he started by stating that no one can decide the best living environment as each place has its own benefits and drawbacks. However, what is ideal is to create opportunities for experiencing a variety of life. Only at the last few sentences of the article, he revealed his thesis statement through the use of the mentioned Chinese idiom, 旁觀者清，當局者迷 (The onlooker sees most of the game).

In conclusion, Kai's near-transferring writing task discovered his internalization of the Chinese rhetoric concept, particularly, the Dragon approach. He successfully integrated the rhetoric elements, such as indirect opening and knowledge on Chinese culture and society in his article. Additionally, his final writing product basically followed what he proposed in the outline. It showed the benefits of the brainstorming session during the CBI, such as learners' preparation of the topic, teacher's mediation, and learners' opportunity to verbalize the ideas and to discuss with others classmates.

6.5.5 Far-Transferring Writing Task

As illustrated in the Methodology Chapter, far-transferring task was conducted two weeks after the enrichment program which requested learners to respond to a short clip. The purpose of administrating the writing assignment after the program was to assess learners' transcendence of the internalizing concepts. This assignment was considered authentic as learners were free to select their preferred title, genre and Chinese rhetoric styles. Kai had titled his writing piece as '*The Importance of a Teacher.*' Selecting the argumentative text, he constructed this article with the

“*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method, in which five paragraphs, a total of 840 words were included.

The central theme of his article was to emphasize the influential effect of teacher on student, especially in creating the positive environment for students. Kai revealed the thesis statement at the fourth paragraph (the third paragraph section) in which he directly responded to the short clip. Several aspects that worth mentioning were the perspectives that Kai elaborated in the first few paragraphs, and the suggestion he made at the last paragraph. Kai first discussed the importance of an environment on youngsters. To be a broader sense, the environment includes everything surrounds the young generation, such as the family, friends, living environment, education, and etc. Yet, among all the factors, the government plays a crucial role in stabilizing the environment for the youngsters, especially in providing public education. This argument was powerful in not only setting the background for the article, but also transited to the central theme of a teacher’s effect. In other words, it prepared the reader for the turning feature in the fourth paragraph. Additionally, at the end of the article, Kai referred back to the government’s role in changing the general public’s attitude toward the teacher. Teachers are influential as they educate the young generation, but they usually at the comparatively lower social status if comparing to other business-related occupation. Kai wanted to arise readers’ resonating on the issue of the importance of teacher’ effect.

To summarize, Kai’s far-transferring writing task demonstrated his transcendence in applying the Chinese rhetoric concepts into a more authentic writing. The improved quality could be observed from how he applied the writing conventions in actual writing and his knowledge on Chinese language and culture. Kai also revised his article based on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method for the first writing assignment. If

to compare these two writing pieces, it is possible to notice the maturity Kai demonstrated in the transferring task, such as the delayed introduction, the *zhuan* feature, and possible suggestions for reader's overtones.

In summary, the case of Kai provided a holistic profile on a learner's process of internalization. To scrutinize in detail, each writing sample revealed how Kai transformed from the interpersonal plane to the intrapersonal plane, and how the teacher provided mediated support from explicit to implicit. In order to enable Kai to revise the writing style from English deductive style to Chinese "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach, the teacher met with him twice individually to provide ample mediation on the rhetoric structure and other linguistic knowledge. At the second writing assignment, Kai also received mediation from the teacher but it was only provided during the group discussion. Instead, Kai was given the opportunity to propose the outline for one's own writing. At the third assignment, no further mediation was provided; however, Kai examined the maturity in selecting appropriate genre and rhetoric style, applying the style onto actual writing, and eliciting suitable instances or Chinese idioms in constructing the writing task. Analyzing the quality of learner's writing qualitatively showed the effectiveness of the CBI intervention and possible integration with the DA procedures in a foreign language writing class.

In what follows, I explore learners' reflections on their experiences learning Chinese rhetoric through the CBI intervention. It serves to validate learners' cognitive development (i.e. impact of learning), transcendence (i.e. plans for future activity), and to assemble learner's lingering thoughts after participating (i.e. remaining difficulties), and suggestions for future works.

6.6 Learner Reflections

Learners were interviewed by the end of the enrichment program. I have organized learners' responses in connection to the main theme that I have touched in the previous pages. Mainly, the focus is to report on how the teacher's mediations assist learners' cognitive development through CBI. Few subsections are 1) the impact of learning Chinese rhetoric through CBI intervention, 2) the remaining difficulty that needs further mediation, 3) transcendence to other learning activity, and 4) suggestions for future enrichment program. This will help the reader to situate and to concretize many of the issues that have been discussed so far, and are very revealing in confirming the relevance of CBI for L2 learners. The reflection questions prompted learner responses are the following:

Post-Interview Questions (final week of the intervention)

1. Please comment on any ways in which you feel your participation in the enrichment program changed over the period of time.
2. Please describe any features of Chinese rhetoric that remain difficult for you to understand.
3. Will you plan to write according to the Chinese rhetoric structures in the future writing activities?
4. What impact do you think your participation in the enrichment program may have had on your Chinese learning?

6.6.1 *Impact of learning Chinese rhetoric*

All of the learners claimed that they were surprised to know that Chinese language has its own rhetoric styles, and these writing conventions are very different from what they had used to. Through participating in the enrichment program, they began to understand various writing styles in Chinese rhetoric and knew how to construct articles according to them. Various reading and writing activities included in the

enrichment program also enhanced their Chinese learning. In the following, I report on several learners who provided specific responses on their learning experiences after participating.

Carol compared her experiences of participating before and after the program. “Before this enrichment program, I did not know any of Chinese writing styles; I just followed how I write in Sweden or English to write Chinese articles. The teachers in MTC also did not teach us how to write. Now I knew this is not right, but it was really hard for me to follow Chinese rhetoric, because you had to change your thinking first before you can change your writing styles.”

In other words, the most influential aspect for Carol was that she noticed she had to alter her logic thinking from Western English to Chinese — “I had to force myself to think about Chinese rhetoric before I can actually write.” Her responses showed that she was aware that the notion of Chinese rhetoric does not function as grammatical rules of thumb, but as the theoretical thinking that would change her mind set.

Pete also reported that the enrichment program had great effect on his writing styles. “Every semester we need to write articles. In before I did not use of any specific rhetoric structures, but now...I start to think which structures to choose.” Evidently, Pete had internalized the rhetoric concepts so that he could regulate his thinking in selecting appropriate writing styles to express his meanings. To be specific, Pete said that

“I found out that I need to pay attention to these conjunctions like however, in other words, and etc. We usually use these phrases (i.e. conjunctions) to make sentences, instead of writing short paragraphs or even articles. I don’t know their importance in rhetoric structures.”

Judged from his statement, before the intervention Pete only had spontaneous concepts on Chinese conjunctions. It was only through formal education or systematic

intervention that Pete began to possess the scientific concepts. This reflection responded to Vygotsky's (1987, p. 220) statement that scientific concepts 'restructure and raise spontaneous concepts to a higher level' as they organize spontaneous concepts from characteristic understanding to definitional and categorical understanding.

Along the same lines, Evan also related his cognitive changes after participating in the program.

"I knew how to write with the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" and Dragon approach. I could also tell the differences among the three writing styles. I felt that it was easier for me to write Chinese articles because I already changed my writing habits....to consider the rhetoric structure first."

From the above reflections, learners' process of acquiring the scientific concepts on rhetoric was revealed; and how scientific concepts could become accessible to learners' conscious development was also discussed.

In addition to cognitive changes on learners' writing, Kai reported on how the enrichment program assisted him better understanding Chinese culture and Chinese people's logic—"This is very helpful to me because I want to do business with Chinese people in the future. Their thinking is really important." Furthermore, Kai felt this program was interesting because "he did not notice there were different rhetoric structures existed and these structures even represented totally different world. He claimed that he started to apply what he learned about Chinese writing styles onto his daily thinking which also included his writing assignments, oral presentations in MTC classes. "I especially use the '*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*' approach because it can best illustrate my idea. I think I am good at this approach now." The ultimate goal of this research program is not only to enhance learners' writing performance, but to promote

learners' awareness and understandings of Chinese language and culture through the teaching of rhetoric. Learners' responses showed that they were in the process to achieve this end.

6.6.2 Remaining Difficulty

In general, the majority of learners did indeed improve remarkably both in their understandings of Chinese rhetoric and in their applications in writing after the CBI intervention. When being asked about the remaining difficulty, most of them expressed that they needed more practice in order to apply it appropriately to their writings. For instance, Ryan stated that although he could identify the rhetoric structures from readings, "it was another issue to apply the concepts in real writing because it related to the topic and one's own abilities." Moreover, he claimed that "I am still in the process to figure out how to select appropriate writing style for different genre." Although there wasn't a specific writing style to be used with a given genre, some rhetoric logic could be better illustrated with specific writing style like Kai's case on the Dragon approach. Thus, Ryan's comments honestly demonstrated that he was establishing his own agency in selecting appropriate Chinese writing styles for expressing ideas.

Other learners' reflected on their struggles in utilizing the learned scientific concepts onto either writing or other related activities. Each of the writing pattern as well as other learning difficulties had been discussed. First, Anthony considered "Open the door and see the mountain" approach still remained as the hardest one to understand. He claimed that "it was difficult to read the "Open the door" approach and found the main topic correctly." Kai also stated that "I did not quite understand the "Open the door" approach. It was similar to the general English writing style but

was still different.” Based on the fact that both Anthony and Kai claimed their difficulty and confusing on the “Open the door” approach even after the intervention, further discussion on this approach is needed.

“Open the door and see the mountain” approach is considered as the approach that most similar to the Western deductive writing style. Yet, it still differs in that the theme is not necessarily being exposed to the readers, as long as the theme is being ‘touched’ at the beginning paragraph. In other words, the thesis statement may not be appeared at the first sentence, instead the main idea is expressed within the first paragraph. Moreover, when reading an article with “Open the door and see the mountain” style, readers need to share more responsibility in feeling and interpreting the writer’s ideas. During the intervention, some learners seemed to assume that the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach was the same as their regular English writing style, and were eager to alter their style into the other two approach. For instance, six out of seven learners claimed that they constructed the first writing task (*My personal Mottos*) with the “Open the door and see the mountain” approach, but none of them were willing to revise it according to the Chinese way of deductive writing. These reflections provided great suggestions for the future research which will be discussed in the Conclusion chapter.

On the contrary, Pete thought the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach was harder to construct because this approach was “similar to the English rhetoric but not the same.” He explained that

“the similarities lie in the first paragraph as the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach aims to give a broad definition on the topic. English writers sometimes do the same for their beginning paragraph but would be much direct than Chinese writers.”

For Evan, the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach was also his difficulty.

“Every time when I tried to write with the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method, I always ended up with the Dragon approach. I didn’t know where to put my thesis sentences in the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach.”

Examining from these two learners’ verbalization, it was noticeable that Pete and Evan’s confusion were at different levels of development. As the main pedagogical point for the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method was to reveal the thesis statement in the third paragraph, Evan was obviously confused the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” with the Dragon approach. To scrutinize Evan’s writings, his thesis statement was weak and the *zhuan* feature was relatively unclear; yet, Evan himself did not seem to notice his weaknesses. This might due to either his incomprehension with the rhetoric concepts or his inability to form paragraph structure appropriately.

Unlike Evan, Pete showed awareness to compare and contrast Chinese rhetoric style with his native language, English. He was able to notice that Chinese rhetoric did not represent the ‘spiral’ pattern as Kaplan argued, but the writing style rather employed a method of delayed introduction or much indirect approach to reveal the theme.

Compared with the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, Jay considered the Dragon approach the most complicated one to apply into writing— “I tried to utilize the Dragon approach to revise ‘My personal Motto’ (i.e. the first writing task), but I had not succeeded yet.” Carol also reflected from her writing experience with the Dragon approach— “I did not know what to say in the first three paragraphs because you could not talk about the main topic. I am afraid that I am making a boring article.” To examine from Carol’s internalization of the Dragon approach, she seemed that she did not realize the goal of the Dragon approach is to create reader’s overtones by

elaborating through paragraphs. The Dragon approach is a subdivision of the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern, and is considered as the hardest approach to construct. Usually most accomplished Chinese writers prefer using the Dragon approach to disclose their thesis statement at the end of the article for creating lasting overtones. Consider the purpose of this research study, having participants to master the Dragon approach is not the goal. Rather the research aims to let participants become aware of Chinese rhetoric styles and understand how their various applications create meanings for readers. To write articles constructed with the Dragon approach well is heavily based on the writer’s knowledge on Chinese culture and history, and how to represent this knowledge through the use of idioms, stories and/or four-character phrases. Apparently, both Jay and Carol were in the process to learn how to apply the Dragon approach into their writings. It is believed that their struggles can be overcome if they are given more systemic instruction and practices on this matter.

In regards of other difficulties than rhetoric styles, both Kai and Jay argued that the problems on how to generate appropriate examples or stories to illustrate the topic were lingered. “This is important because you need these stories to start your article... a totally different style from English articles.” Although this issue was not the primary concern of this study, the ability to relate to Chinese culture and society is highly connected to a writer’s performance. Extending Chinese learners’ understanding of Chinese culture through the CBI intervention on rhetoric styles can be an idea for future study, which will be discussed in the Conclusion chapter.

6.6.3 Plans for Future Writing Activity

Transcendence refers to the cognitive development required for learner to move beyond the “here-and-now” demands of a given activity (Feuerstein et al., 1979, p.

92). Feuerstein argued that true development transcends any specific task and manifests itself in a variety of ways under a multitude of differing conditions. Although this research implemented near- and far- transferring tasks to examine learners' transcendence, it is still useful to gather their ideas on future possible development. When being asked about how they will plan future writing activities after learning Chinese rhetoric, learners' responses demonstrated their agency in thinking about the issues of content, genre, and rhetoric.

Anthony laid out his priority in organizing future writing activities: first to consider the content, and then to select the writing structures based on the genres. Although content was Anthony's first priority, he still claimed that he would also organize his writing based on the rhetoric structures as he noticed that paragraph structures exist "even with two or three sentences, like business letters." This viewpoint was similar with Jay — "different topic needs different structure. I would choose the most appropriate style to write with and then think of any stories or examples to apply." To conclude, these learners reported on their thinking that both content and rhetoric writing structures were both important while writing articles. This reflection corresponded to what I discussed in Chapter 4 that both cultural and linguistic factors affect the quality of a Chinese written text. Though this enrichment program emphasized on the instruction of Chinese rhetoric, it also aimed to improve learners' understanding of Chinese culture through various reading and writing activities.

On the contrary, Evan stated that he would first decide on which writing styles to write with and then organize his thoughts according to it. For instance, he said

"if I decide to apply the '*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*' approach, I need to generate several related stories and examples for my argument and also maybe counter-arguments. Especially, to find the one for the indirect opening. But if I

write with the “Open the door” approach, I probably do not need to find such indirect beginning example. I can start with my argument directly.”

Carol also commented on her first choice in selecting rhetoric structure when constructing articles.

“I would use the ‘*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*’ approach because you said this was the style that Taiwanese students learned the first, so I thought ‘*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*’ approach would be more popular and applicable.”

Evan and Carol stated that rhetoric structures would be their first concern when planning future writing activity. To interpret from their reflections, it was worth noticing that they had different orientation on considering rhetoric structures while writing. Evan was able to consider the principles of each rhetoric structures and choose one approach that could best present his argument. Carol, on the other hand, was firm on selecting the ‘*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*’ approach to compose any of the genres. More important, though we could not determine the extent of their internalization on the mentioned rhetoric structures, their different level of agency in applying the writing styles could be observed. Compared with Carol, Evan attained higher agency in adding the new and different ways to his writing repertoire. But Carol was applying a rather subtractive way for learning Chinese rhetoric.

6.6.4 Suggestions to Future Enrichment Program

Though some ideas for improvement were emerged from previous reflection on learners’ remaining difficulty, this section particularly reports from learners’ perspectives of how they believe this enrichment program can be better implemented. The suggestions were centered on the difficulties and loads of reading and writing tasks, and the format of peer-revision. In regards of reading materials, most learners

considered that the level of difficulty should be based on each learner's reading ability. Pete named two articles, *Women can Hold up the Sky*, and *Internet Pornography is Worse than a Tiger* that especially caused his reading difficulty. He indicated that there were too many unknown words and phrase that impeded him in finding the central theme. Even though he appreciated the teacher sent the articles with the booklet on new vocabularies and grammar to them a week earlier, he sometimes did not have the time to read. Carol also commented on her difficulty in reading argumentative texts, namely, *Beauty Economy* and *Internet Pornography is Worse than a Tiger*. But what impeded her reading fluency was the new vocabularies not its structure. As discussed in the Methodology Chapter, the base line of selecting particular reading materials was based on their rhetoric structures and attractive theme. The phrasal difficulty was designed to be achieved through extra assisting materials like vocabulary booklets. Yet, learners' suggestions on the effectiveness of these assisting materials are worthy of discussion for future studies.

Another issue relating to the pedagogical materials is the loads of reading and writing tasks. Some learners requested to increase in-class reading and out-of-class writing activities. Although Anthony thought the loads of reading materials were adequate, he recommended including more articles that were constructed by the "Open the door" approach. It might relate to Anthony's remaining confusion on this particular approach as discussed in the previous subsection. Similar comments on the loads of reading materials were also made by Kai and Jay. Kai considered a few more reading samples, such as formal business letters, could "improve him to better differentiate among these three writing styles." Additionally, for the weights of writing tasks in the enrichment program most learners claimed that a few more writing practices could assist them better understanding Chinese rhetoric. For

example, Anthony suggested “adding the load of writing tasks as he thought writing could best assist him in learning Chinese.” Carol also believed more writing tasks could offer opportunity to practice. In regarding the direction that the teacher provided for writing, Jay believed some limitations were required to help learners gain better control of using each rhetoric style. For instance, having learners write two or more articles for each writing style and then discuss with the teacher or the group to examine their effectiveness. In above, learners’ responses demonstrated that applying rhetoric concepts unto authentic writing activities was the best way to promote learners’ internalization, a key point for further implementation.

In terms of the format of peer-revision, learners claimed that “it was useful to let learners read each other’s article.” Pete thought it was a great educational opportunity to appreciate colleagues’ writing and to provide comments on phrases and grammar points. It helped them change the perspective from a writer to a reader, and consider the rhetoric “at a higher level.” Ryan also suggested an idea to have two learners co-construct an article. Each of the members took different stands, such as agree vs. disagree, and positive vs. counter examples, and etc. Through discussion, they could generate ideas much quicker and easier. Ryan believed this way of constructing articles could assist learners better familiar with rhetoric structures and also learned from each other while discussing and constructing. Carol on the contrary thought the issue of personal privacy in sharing the articles, though she did not participate personally in group revising session. She believed what content to discuss and share would be an issue, such as sharing the first writing task (*i.e. My Personal Mottos*) would be inappropriate. Peer-revision is the specific research design for the current study that aims to promote mediations among the participants. The effectiveness of peer-revision on the second writing task will be discussed specifically in the data

analysis chapter on group dynamic assessment.

The last point discussed by most learners was the idea of implementing group work in the whole enrichment program. Evan and Carol considered small group work was the most effective with three to four learners. They also claimed that “if this enrichment program will be offered in a larger class, the teacher has to divide students into small groups.” Their statement fitted well with the current CBI and DA studies that most of them aimed to promote internalization through T-S or S-S mediations. However, the idea of conducting CBI and DA research with larger group of learners will be an important issue to consider.

6.7 Conclusion

The study of L2 development as a conceptual process emerges from a Vygotskian view on concept development. Yet, the conceptual meanings are not normally provided in L2 pedagogical practice. Spontaneous concepts instead build most of the meanings and main activities in traditional language classroom. In addition to this, the understanding of rhetoric concepts in a language is bound to take a long time to develop both in non-instructed and even in conventional instructed settings. Many advanced language learners achieve near-native oral skills, but never acquire the ability to write as native speakers of that target language. This study provides a revolutionary instruction that aims at the development of theoretical knowledge (Negueruela, 2003). Through instruction, it promotes the internalization of theoretical knowledge to become as the cognitive tools to lead the development for future transcendence. The quality and complexity of learners' SCOPA revisions and writing outcomes showed that they not only develop a more sophisticated understanding of Chinese rhetoric concepts, but also widen their repertoire of formal features of the

Chinese language.

Major findings from data triangulation among learners' self-created SCOBAs, writing outcomes and verbalization in revisions and reflections are as follows: 1) the revisions on the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach was the most refined among the three writing conventions. 2) Kai's writing performance proved that the effectiveness of the CBI intervention in assisting learner's awareness and applications to various rhetoric structures. His case also provided an integrated profile on both the CBI intervention and the DA procedures. 3) Based on the interpretation from learners' reflection, several feasible plans to improve the CBI intervention on teaching Chinese rhetoric styles were suggested. For instance, the instruction and practice on the differences of Chinese the "Open the door and see the mountain" approach and English deductive writing style.

CHAPTER 7- TRACKING AND SUPPORTING LEARNER CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT

7.1 Introduction

In previous chapters, I discussed the effectiveness of CBI intervention either their verbalizations and writing products, throughout the CBI; this chapter I present the dialogic interactions between the teacher and individual learner in order to demonstrate DA's potential to assist educator's to understand and to promote learners' development through the collaborative dialogues in DA sessions. The examples of mediator-learner interactions described in this chapter are taken from session 3 to 6. These collaborative dialogues can be analyzed as teaching episodes in which learners were offered support that is sensitive to their ZPD. They can also be interpreted as assessing tools as the interactions reveal the full range of learners' current abilities and potential future capabilities.

The purpose of the present chapter is to provide evidence in support of the second research question: *To what extent can interactions during DA actually promote learners' development?* The organization outline of this chapter is partially built with reference to Poehner's (2008) book on understanding L2 development through DA. Few subsections are added to show the differences from Poehner's case on French learning, and to examine the uniqueness of learning Chinese rhetoric in the immersed context (i.e. Taiwan). The first set of DA interactions described in this chapter reveals learner's development through DA and how the teacher understood learners' progress by using DA as a tool for prognosis. DA interactions not only help learners to reconsider and think through problems, such as Kai's conceptual changes during DA; but also better enable the teacher to identify the quality of learners' understanding of relevant rhetorical features, like Ryan's additional learning difficulties. The

subsections included the following: underestimates of learners' abilities can be avoided; the proper source of difficulty can be ascertained; and sudden changes in learners' performance can be documented and explored. The second data set in this chapter provides evidence on how DA promoted learners' development over the time. Through comparing learners' interactions with the mediator at the start and end of the DA program, two learners' conceptual development of their awareness on rhetoric structures is discussed. The third data set discusses the issue of learner autonomy. According to Arievitch & Haenen (2005), autonomy is developed when learners start to build 'capacity and willingness to skillfully monitor and evaluate one's own learning.' In previous chapters, I demonstrated how learners self-regulated one's own learning through the exhibition of their SCOBAs and multiple revisions of writing products. Here, I focus on the T-S interactions to assist learners overcoming the struggles and then making efforts to even extend their knowledge to rhetoric structures other than those under study. Finally, I conclude this chapter by including an example of teacher's misdiagnosis to illustrate the importance of teacher's sensibility in providing appropriate mediation.

7.2 Understand L2 Development through DA

DA techniques provide learners with a "mediated learning experience" (Lidz, 1991, p.14) in which through social interaction, experiences are filtered, focused and interpreted by the learner. A fundamental difference of DA with non-dynamic types of assessment is the active role taken by the examiner/mediator during the testing situation. The examiner/mediator guides learners in highlighting important content, making connections, setting goals, planning, regulating, and controlling behavior, etc. The examiner/mediator provides learners with scaffolding that may allow them to

improve subsequent unassisted performance (Antón, 2009). In what below, I present how the teacher's mediation serves as a diagnosis to understand not only learners' current ability but also future performance.

7.2.1 Mediation and tracking learner responsiveness over time

With regard to the diagnostic function of DA interactions, the following excerpts demonstrated the learner's emerging abilities over time. Through continuing to examine Kai's conceptual changes on the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" method, the excerpts aimed to show the changes of Kai's understandings of the *zhuan* feature in the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" pattern and his responses to teacher's mediations. Three excerpts were selected from the beginning, middle and end of the intervention program as these exchanges demonstrated Kai's understandings of the *zhuan* feature from various reading and writing tasks. In the initial session of DA, Kai was reading an expository text, *Women can Hold up Half the Sky*, which was written in the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" method. Kai originally thought this article was constructed in the "Open the door" method. The following exchanges showed the teacher's gradual prompts to lead Kai to rethink about the feature of *zhuan*.

- 7 T why do you think it is a open the door method?
- 8 K because I don't think there are any changes it is an explanation just like the expository text there is one main topic and the author explains the topic. there is no changes in here ((point to the third paragraph section)) and there is no special meaning in here ((point to the fourth paragraph section))
- 9 T okay. pay attention to these two paragraphs ((point to the third and fourth paragraph sections)) look at the words here(.) it explains that people in the past emphasize men over women
- 10 do you know what it means, People prefer men more. they don't like women
- 11 K I understand
- 12 T well, read this paragraph ((point to the third paragraph section)) again and try to understand what it means

- 13 K (24.0) although the culture used to prefer men than women there is a female who became emperor which means they change their mind to prefer women than men. but this section said that the culture has long history, it is hard to make changes
- 14 T so it used to emphasize men like Zhu Yingtai in the story of Butterfly Lovers but in Tang and Qing Dynasty people prefer women instead(.) like the story of Mulan and the Empress Dowager Cixi
- 15 K right
- 16 T Okay(.) if you read this sentence *jie guo*...
(It results...)
- 17 so there is some changes in between, right?
- 18 K um
- 19 T Well (.) you can read it again

In line 7, the teacher first requested Kai's verbalization of his understandings on this article and its rhetoric style. He stated that the author plainly explained the topic and remained the argument throughout the whole article. Kai's responses appeared that he either did not understand the meaning of each paragraph in the article, or he had some rule-based understanding of *zhuan* feature that the main argument topic would transit suddenly at the third paragraph section (line 8). The teacher gave first implicit prompt to ask Kai to focus on the third and fourth paragraph sections (line 9); T also directed Kai to pay specific attention to the words and how the words built different meanings to the author's argument. In the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" pattern, counter argument represents one of the *zhuan* features and is gradually built up through the previous arguments. The words/phrases, four-word characters or historical stories thus play a crucial role in the third paragraph section in demonstrating counter argument. In this case, for example, the four-character idiom (i.e. *zhong-nan-qing-nu*) appeared at the beginning of the third paragraph initiated the opening of the author's main argument. In order to differentiate Kai's misconception, T first examined Kai's understanding of this idiom in line 10. Kai's responses in line

11 demonstrated that his misconception was not because the difficulties on phrases, but the misunderstandings on rhetoric structures, the *zhuan* feature. Therefore, the teacher gave a second prompt, a more explicit mediation, to indicate the focus reading area for Kai to re-examining the *zhuan* feature.

With a relatively long pause (24 seconds), Kai pointed out the central theme of the third paragraph (line 13) was that *people change their mind to prefer women than men*. Followed with his correct understanding on the paragraph, T further indicated two examples explicitly from this paragraph (i.e. Mulan and Empress Dowager Cixi) with the purpose to enhance Kai's awareness on the main argument. These two historical stories were considered important as they represented how the topic changed from emphasis on men to women. In line 16 and 17, T then asked Kai if he noticed the theme changes between the second and third paragraph. Without receiving a positive react from Kai (i.e. 'um' in line 18), the teacher decided to give Kai more time to rethink about the *zhuan* feature and how the meaning of these two historical stories build up the counter argument.

Within the same DA session, below we could examine the process of Kai's conceptual changes while reading the article, *Women can Hold up Half the Sky*. Although Kai was now choosing the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach over the "Open the door" method, his inability to recognize the *zhuan* feature became obvious throughout the mediations.

28 T do you change your decision?

29 K yes

30 T why

31 K because this section changes ((point to the fourth paragraph section))

32 this paragraph says that now it is equal (.) women can hold up the half sky and then this section changes ((point to the third paragraph section)) it describes the culture supposed to be like this. but it is not.

- 33 T do you say it changed to prefer women than men?
34 K yah, but I really don't know how to differentiate which section is *zhuan*

In line 31, Kai indicated specifically that the main topic changed in the third paragraph so that this article was constructed in the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method. Although his explanation on the writing pattern was correct, he was not clear in elaborating how words/phrases or historical examples in the article supported the central theme (line 32). In this case, dynamic assessment provides another layer of support through interaction. Kai stated clearly that he had difficulty in distinguishing *zhuan* section. The teacher thus led Kai to examine how the argument gradually changed to its central theme and how the *zhuan* section was defined. In the following excerpt, we see T offered step-by-step mediation to illustrate both of the manners to define *zhuan* section in *Women can Hold up Half the Sky*.

- 36 T oh, I see. there are two examples describing people prefer men than women like *Zhu Yingtai* and *Mulan*.
37 it has the phrase *sui ran* ((however)) its *zhuan* section(.) last time we learned *ran er* ((however)). *sui ran* is another transitional phrase
38 K yah...this is why...I think this is *zhuan*
39 T okay. except for the transitional phrase (.) we can see that the author's idea also changes.
40 K Yes...yes
41 T it begins with emphasis on men and turns to emphasis on women
42 K yes
43 T but this last sentence is also important(.) it tells you how gender equality is now
44 K they ((women)) actually have more responsibility

In line 37, T reinforced the transitional phrase (i.e. *sui ran*; however) used in the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method and tried to connect to other conjunctions that Kai learned earlier. T started the mediation with transitional words as this feature was

easier to be noticed; like Kai explained in line 38 the usage of transitional word was the reason he selected the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern. In line 39, T continued to elaborate on how the author’s main argument was gradual changed. Kai responded actively to T’s mediations, first with a short yes/no answer (i.e. line 40, 42) and then a full illustration of his current understanding on the argument (line 44) —although gender equality is achieved in China, females still carry more responsibility than males. Kai’s reacts in line 38 and 44 showed that he started to have emerging understandings of these two manners of *zhuan* feature. This short DA interaction functioned more than likely a teaching episode on two manners of *zhuan* feature; but it differed with the regular teaching in that every prompt T offered was sensitive to Kai’s ZPD. DA emphasizes the dialectic integration of instruction and assessment which means that diagnosis is only possible through intervention. In Vygotskian theory, DA is used as a tool for prognosis to identify learners’ future learning potential. Through active intervention, DA also provides diagnosis of current performance or a problem’s existence.

Although Kai showed the changing conception of *zhuan* feature in previous excerpts, it was not clear whether he internalized the concept or had the ability to transfer the concept onto other genre. The following interactions were selected from the fourth intervention session where Kai was explaining his viewpoint on the writing pattern of an argumentative text, *Beauty Economy*, in a group setting. Kai considered this article was constructed in “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method though his idea was different from the other learners. He succeeded in defending his viewpoints by illustrating the logic in each paragraph (line 2) and also by elucidating the central theme in the third paragraph (line 4).

- 1 T where do you think *zhuan* is?
- 2 K I think (.) the first paragraph explains the culture that manipulates beautiful woman for advertisement and the second paragraph explains that it has some advantages like the example of Miss World can help promote the company. And then the third paragraph is the main topic (.) it says that it may have some advantages. but there must be with some problems it causes the undesirable culture (.) and the fourth paragraph the fourth section. People worry about the craziness for beauty contest like I said earlier it results in the undesirable culture which causes problem to female's social status and impedes the society progress
- 3 T Right. but they think that the last sentence is the main topic. how to promote and utilize Beauty Economy is the problem we have to face now (.) how do you think?
- 4 K i think the main topic is from here to (inaudible voice) ((point from the article))
- 5 it is similar to what you explain about the open the door approach that it has some possible solution by the last section (.) I don't know if the *Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He* method has it (.) i think this is a possible solution it gives a reader the idea of you have to do this.

If we examine the above collaborative dialogue specifically, we would notice how the teacher's prompt altered and Kai's sensibility in responding. In line 1, T first challenged Kai to identify the area for the *zhuan* section. Instead of only pointing out the *zhuan* section, Kai illustrated the meaning of each paragraph, which was an even clear explanation. Recall that identification of the *zhuan* section was one of Kai's learning difficulty in previous DA session. This growth is almost impossible to be detected and identified through non-dynamic procedures — through interactions DA aims to explore learners' potential in development.

As this exchange was happened in a group setting, the teacher engaged all learners by offering mediation closed to the group ZPD. While Kai correctly identified the writing pattern of *Beauty Economy*, the other two learners believed this article was written in the dragon approach so that the main topic lied in the last

sentence, "*How to promote and utilize Beauty Economy is the problem we have to face now.*" In order to examine Kai's understanding T further challenged him in line 3 to differentiate the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" method from the Dragon approach. Kai first pointed out the main topic physically from the article in line 4, which was considered correct. And even surprisingly, he explained that last sentence was actually *the possible solution* (line 5) provided by the author, which argued against what the other two learners believed as the Dragon approach. Possible solution is the concept which describes that Chinese writers used to provide suggestions to the government or the society. Those suggestions are frequently added at the end of the article, and mostly appeared in the "Open the door" approach. The teacher mentioned this concept while explaining the "Open the door" approach. In effective, Kai not only defended his argument but also demonstrated his internalized understanding of the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" method when applying it onto argumentative text. Additionally, we see Kai started to connect what he learned about Chinese writing styles and built his own awareness of Chinese rhetoric styles. His response met the goal of this research program—that is to promote learners' agency and autonomy to grow.

Before moving on, I will briefly offer another excerpt to demonstrate Kai's deeper conceptual understanding of *zhuan* feature and the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" method. It was selected from the sixth intervention session in that learners exchanged their written product and analyzed each other's writing pattern. In a group setting, Kai and the teacher were providing suggestions to Evan to revise his article based on the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach.

- 1 E but I don't want to be superb in this and it's not what I planned to write (.) I have issues to write the *Qi-chen-zhuan-he* method
- 2 T okay. so we focus on the third paragraph this time (.) if he wants to write in the *qi-chen-zhuan-he* method (.) can we make suggestions on his turning point?
- 3 K use one phrase that we learned before like however or otherwise

During the peer reading, Evan's article was considered as the Dragon approach by other three learners including Kai. Yet, in line 1, Evan directly pointed out he had problems to construct article with the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" method. He accidentally put his thesis statement in the last paragraph; thus, in line 2 the teacher requested the group to focus on his third paragraph and offered suggestions for revision. In line 3, Kai suggested Evan to use transitional words to form the *zhuan* feature. Remember that the usage of transitional words is one of the features to construct the *zhuan* concept. Although Kai did not suggest revisions on Evan's arguments or words/phrases usages at that time, the excerpt showed a window to Kai's cognitive development which enabled him to offer prompt mediation to another learner, a complicated role that mediators play. Vygotsky's work on the ZPD insists that dynamic procedures do not only look for improvement within the assessment context, but aim for the actually cognitive development that extends beyond a given pedagogical task (Poehner, 2007). In a later interview, Kai also claimed that more time was needed to understand Evan's writing purpose and argument. In addition, as this was his first experience to criticize other's Chinese article, he did not want to embarrass his peer in front. Those might be the reason that Kai did not provide further suggestions on the gradual construction of the counter argument. As a diagnostic tool, these collaborative dialogues showed the learner's gradual development of the conceptual understanding throughout the time.

7.2.2 Mediation as a mean to avoid underestimating learner's abilities

After formal introduction on three Chinese writing conventions, Kai was asked to revisit his own text and explained which convention better suited his writing on the first writing assignment, *My Personal Mottos*. He revised the writing style of his text into the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern. Four clear paragraphs were formed in his revision which made the structure easily spotted. In his *cheng* paragraph, he had only three sentences, a total of 65 words, which was too short to meet the guideline of *cheng* paragraph (see Figure 6.12 on Kai's writing). It was not because its shortness, but because Kai's paragraph did not function well, both in its structure and meaning, to continue the argument discussed in the first *qi* paragraph. Therefore during the one-on-one DA session, the mediator/ teacher (T) initiated dialogues in order to further identify Kai's understandings on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern.

- 1 T: can you explain your revisions on the *cheng* paragraph,
- 2 K *Cheng* is the part where I continue to develop my topic the meaning of this paragraph is (.) these convenient devices would change our life and our common ideas (.) what I'm saying is more related to modern society because we have lots of technologies every one of us has computers cellphones and everything which means that we can have totally different life we don't need to worry what we eat today or will we survive tomorrow thus we really emphasize on the quality of our life (.) so we enjoy leisure activities because we have more (.) time but we always use this as our excuse to escape from the reality for example, we know we should do this and that but we want to play video games first
- 3 T [oh
- 4 K [I think this article has (.) some limitation (.) it's kind of short
- 5 T do you mean this paragraph?
- 6 K um no (.) yes (.) the whole article
- 7 T do you mean the length requirement or?
- 8 K because you said we only have 600 words.
- 9 T if you want to write more (.) you could
- 10 K: really?

- 11 K: I think if I could add one more sentence or something I could make readers more clear ((of what I said))
- 12 T: I think here you can add one example in the *cheng* paragraph like the one on video games

Kai first expressed his thoughts in writing *cheng* paragraph in line 2. If comparing his verbalization here with his written essay, it was clear to notice that he had better delivering of thoughts in speaking than writing. With certain discrepancy between Kai's written and oral expression, the teacher was deciding which mediation to offer and how to differentiate whether Kai's problem lied in insufficient ideas or unclear about rhetorical structures. But soon Kai was quick to self-identify that his problem came from the shortness of the paragraph. He explained the limitation on the word limit (Kai had a total of 538 words), and stated that he would add sentences or examples (line 11) to help illustrate his ideas if there was no length limitation. In line 12, the teacher determined that lacking sufficient examples in *cheng* paragraph was Kai's real question as he clearly illustrated the function of *cheng* in the beginning of this collaborative interaction. Only through dialoguing Kai's ability was revealed.

The excerpt demonstrated that Kai was fully aware the function and purpose of Chinese paragraphs in the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" pattern and was able to notice his own inadequacy in composing the *cheng* paragraph. Without having dialogic interaction between mediator and learner, it is easy for any Chinese teachers to assume that Kai misunderstood the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" pattern as his written paragraph barely showed his ideas in either rhetoric structure or arguments. A non-dynamic procedure would more than likely underestimated Kai's level of development.

7.2.3 Mediation and the identification of additional problem area

In previous subsection, we examined Kai's conceptual changes of the *zhuan* feature in "Qi-cheng-zhuan-he" method throughout the intervention sessions. Although he achieved better control of the concept, the teacher identified additional problem area, the differentiation of Chinese paragraph sections, during the dialogical mediation with Kai. Recall that Kai stated that he did not know how to differentiate *zhuan* section in the article. In the following protocol, Kai restated his uncertainty in dividing paragraph sections while describing the "Qi-cheng-zhuan-he" writing pattern in the article, *Women can Hold up Half the Sky*. The teacher noticed that paragraph division started to become a learning difficulty for Kai to distinguish rhetoric structures. Though paragraph division was not an assumed learning difficulty for Chinese learners, it is the idea that closely related to the rhetoric structures. Hence, the teacher began to target on the ideas of Chinese paragraph sections. Through dialogic mediation, Kai not only claimed his uncertainty on paragraph division, but expressed that his confusion with the meaning of *cheng* in "Qi-cheng-zhuan-he" pattern, a problem related to the focus on the intervention.

- 46 K yes but I still don't know how to differentiate these sections ((point to several paragraphs in the article))
47 because I forget that (.) the concept of *cheng*
48 T *cheng* means to continue
49 It means to continue the previous argument. emphasis on men than women
50 K but all of these paragraphs continue the argument. I know this is *cheng* (the 2nd paragraph), this is *cheng* (the 3rd paragraph), and this is *cheng*, too ((point to the 4th paragraph)). I know it begins to turn here but (.)
51 T oh then you need to know how to differentiate Chinese paragraph sections

- 52 in Chinese article sometimes one sentence forms a paragraph. but like in English it at least needs two to three sentences so you first have to know how to divide the article into four big sections we know the main topic changes in the third section in "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" method, the fourth section in the Dragon method (.) Usually you divide by the logic behind and their example used
- 53 K (10.0) I haven't got used to this writing pattern

In line 46 and 47, Kai expressed his reasons and difficulties to distinguish the paragraph sections in the article. The teacher offered support — the definition of *cheng* and how *cheng* had been applied and represented in this article in line 48 and 49 — which was highly sensitive to Kai's ZPD. This interaction is what Vygotsky called for cooperative dialoguing that assistance emerges from the interaction and is extremely attuned to the learner's current understanding. With T's prompt, Kai elaborated on his confusion that he felt the idea of *cheng* could be applied in most of the Chinese paragraphs (line 50). In other words, he did not aware the approach to differentiate paragraphs based on its meaning and argument. Thus, in the following line, the teacher indicated that the importance of paragraph division was to assist readers to distinguish its writing pattern. Chinese paragraphs were divided by its logic and how the historical stories, four-character idioms represented the arguments. The teacher also elicited examples from both Chinese and English articles to examine how the paragraph was constructed differently.

As an American, Kai was honest in claiming his unfamiliarity with Chinese writing style (line 53). It was left with unknown whether Kai gained control over paragraph division in the future, but these exchanges were important as they arouse learner's rhetoric awareness across cultures. Without dynamic procedures in assessment, it is impossible to notice that Kai's misunderstandings of writing patterns

may result from his inability to distinguish Chinese paragraph sections. Although Chinese paragraph division is not part of the instructional plans, the dialogical mediation is beneficial in two ways. First, it reveals the exact problem the learner has while learning. For instance, many reasons stand for Chinese learners' misunderstandings of rhetoric structures, such as unfamiliarity with the writing styles, incomprehension of words/phrases, sentences or idioms, and etc. Inability to correctly distinguish Chinese paragraph sections was just one of the many. Second, it provides useful insights for the teacher in designing future curriculum, such as integrating this concept of paragraph division with other intended instructional plans.

In what follows, I offer another example which also illustrates DA as a diagnostic tool to identify learner's additional learning difficulty during the intervention. Similar to Kai, Ryan also misinterpreted the Chinese writing patterns when reading the same article, *Women can Hold up the Sky*. Without the interaction, it was easy to conclude that both Kai and Ryan were misunderstood the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern. Yet, only through collaborative dialoguing with the mediator, it resulted that neither Kai nor Ryan misinterpreted the pattern; their confusions actually came from different sources—a decisive reason that is often ignored by traditional assessment.

The following short excerpt was selected from the third DA session when Ryan was together with another two learners in a group setting. He was questioning how the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern was applied to the article, *Women can Hold up the Sky*. To be specific, he had difficulty in understanding one sentence in the last *he* paragraph. This sentence was considered crucial as it affected learner's choice in deciding the article's rhetoric structure if he/she does not understand its meaning.

- 1 T Chinese people used to emphasize men than women the last sentence says
that in order to change the emphasis on men and to promote women's social
status
- 2 R wait (.) This is for changes (.) Who is changing? Who? The government?
Someone wants to change and everyone listen to him?
- 3 T [the society
- 4 P [gradually
- 5 R so I am so confused
- 6 T Chinese language used to omit the subject this sentence means that the
society wants to change and it changes gradually but in Chinese the author
would not write explicitly that it is the society wants to change
- 7 R Oh okay I understand. The society changes gradually.

Ryan acutely requested mediation in line 2 after T's prompt in explaining the critical sentence, "In order to change the emphasis on men and to promote women's social status." It was unknown whether Ryan noticed this sentence was so important that can define the structure or he simply did not understand the meaning. Both the teacher and the other learner, Pete provided mediation in line 3 and 4. Yet, these mediations seemed ineffective as they both failed to be attuned to Ryan's ZPD. He still felt confused in line 5. The teacher noticed that Ryan's difficulty in understanding this sentence was closely associated with the concept of null subject in Chinese language. A null-subject language, like Chinese, permits an independent clause constructed without an explicit subject (Q. Wang, Lillo-Martin, Best, & Levitt, 1992). This concept was closely related to Chinese reading at the phrasal level, thus the teacher tried to provide mediation on this concept. She utilized the scientific language, such as 'subject omission', and offered explanation from this sentence. Finally, Ryan was able to retrieve the subject, *the society*, back to the sentence (line 7). Indeed, this short excerpt did not demonstrate Ryan's final understandings on the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" pattern; some may argue DA's effectiveness in examining the target language aspect.

However, it is important to note that DA is not simply documenting that an error has occurred, but it serves to highlight the sources of the error and to help the individual overcome it.

I have presented mediator–learner interactions that illustrate DA’s potential to diagnose learner development. The dialogic mediations in DA also provide a much more detailed view of learners’ L2 development than would be likely to emerge from non-dynamic approaches. In what follows, mediator–learner interactions are also examined for the purpose of tracking learner development over time or within a single session, and for promoting learners’ autonomy or self-regulation as they develop ‘capacity and willingness to skillfully monitor and evaluate one’s own learning’ (Arievitch & Haenen, 2005, p.160).

7.3 Promoting L2 Development through DA

Poehner (2008) stated that dialogic interplay between mediator and learner may not always result in a sudden or dramatic shift to problem-free performance, but it does nevertheless impact learner development. T-S interactions can not only promote independent performance over a time or within a single interaction, but also assist learners become more agentic in taking on a greater responsibility for their learning. Development in Vygotskian sense is slow and complex; yet, there are subtle changes developed through the mediator-learner interactions. In this subsection, I explore learners’ verbalizations that occurred during DA interactions and examine how these reveal conceptual shifts over time as learners became more autonomous.

7.3.1 Conceptual Shifts in Understanding Over Time

I present examples of learner verbalizations at the beginning and conclusion of the

DA program in order to study changes in their conceptual understanding. In the initial DA session, Ryan was assigned to read the article, *How Names for China and the Chinese Have Changed*, and then to analyze its rhetoric style. One of the main learning points in this article is to understand the placement of thesis statement in the “Open the door” approach. Though “Open the door” approach is much similar to English deductive writing style where the main point is introduced at the first beginning sentence, this approach usually places the thesis statement anywhere in the first paragraph section. In what follows, Ryan had issues in comprehending the “Open the door” approach. His difficulties did not come from differentiating “Open the door” approach with the other two writing styles, but from his awareness imbued with English rhetoric.

- 1 R you are right but he ((the author)) does not explain his reasons (.) why he writes this article
- 2 T this is expository text the author is introducing [
- 3 R [I know but where to know...how do we know this is his objective
- 4 because it has title we need to explain the title
- 5 for foreigners we have to explain like I'm explaining where the name of China comes from. do you understand?
- 6 it has to be said very very clear like *I'm going to tell you how the word China came about and then I will do this*
- 7 T I completely understand because [
- 8 R [*We have to say when you title it, you have to explain why you...*
- 9 T still remember the open the door approach it can't open in the first beginning sentence. right?
- 10 R right
- 11 T the main topic usually not in the first sentence like *yan huang zi sun* is at the last sentence
- 12 R yes
- 13 T that is one of the names for China
- 14 R right
- 15 T Chinese people seldom use the method you just said
- 16 The purpose of this article is to tell you what are the names for China

- 17 R wow you are bewildered
18 you read an article (.) need longer time (.) I don't have time

Ryan assumed that Chinese writer who utilizes the “Open the door” method would explain the purpose of writing at the beginning of the article just like English writers. Thus, even though he acknowledged the writing style, he still questioned the writer’s vague introduction (i.e. line 3). He switched from Chinese to English in line 6, to explain what an English writer should do when illustrating the thesis statement, such as the author should write like this *“I’m going to tell you how the word China came about and then I will do this.”* In line 8, Ryan further explained from his own English writing experience that it was the writer’s responsibility to explain the title. It is worth of noting that this was the only occurrence of all DA sessions that Ryan turned to his native language, English, to seek ways to communicate with the teacher. His reason of using English was not because of his inability to clarify the correct rhetoric style, but to try to address the issue of cross-cultural differences in writing styles, English and Chinese in this case.

Apparently, Ryan needed further mediation in order to understand the concept of “Open the door” approach in details. The teacher pointed out in line 9 that the thesis statement would never state at the first beginning sentence even with the “Open the door” approach. As I discussed earlier in the literature review chapter, the Chinese theme in “Open the door” approach should be touched on either implicitly or explicitly in the first paragraph. It is only through the readers’ active role to interpret the writer’s ideas. In other words, exposing explicit statement on the theme is not the common strategy that Chinese writers prefer. In order to further elaborate on this idea, T indicated clearly the exact placement of the main topic of this article in line 11, which received agreement from Ryan. From the excerpt, we could see that Ryan did

not seem unfamiliar with the concept of theme placement as he responded positively to T's mediations in line 10, 12 and 14. Only when T mentioned that English deductive writing style was considered inappropriate application in Chinese "Open the door" method in line 15, Ryan expressed his feelings of "bewildered" toward Chinese rhetoric in line 17. He also felt time-consuming if applying the concept of delayed theme in reading articles (i.e. line 18). These comments demonstrated that Ryan was confused with Chinese writing styles and its paragraph organization, and made efforts to explain from his own reading/writing experiences of English. In the next excerpt, I present an interactive conversation between Ryan and another learner, Pete to illustrate how Ryan overcame the initial confusion and his conceptual changes of this concept throughout the DA program. In a group setting, he joined with Pete to read few Chinese business letters and analyzed their rhetoric structures.

- 1 T which writing style is it,
- 2 R this is the open the door
- 3 P I think this is "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*"
- 4 R not right
- 5 R this is the open the door because he ((The author)) has told you what he wants already
- 6 P why
- 7 R open the door is to tell you first what you have to do.
P right
- 8 R its main topic is to ask you to provide something and here ((point to the sentence and read)) *ru guo nin neng ti gong bi gong si you guan luo shan ji yi xie dui jin kou zhong wen shu ji you xing qu ke kao de gong si ming dan* ((If you can provide our company some buyer lists in San Francisco who will be interested in international Chinese books))
- 9 R So his main purpose is to ask you to introduce some books for exchanges
- 10 P okay but I think to say people who are interested is not direct
- 11 R yes but this is how they think is direct

Ryan was able to identify the rhetoric structure correctly (line 2) and to explain the definition of “Open the door” approach from the letter (line 5). More importantly, he provided mediation to Pete by reasoning out the main point of the letter- request for book exchanges in line 8 and 9. Interestingly, Pete also as a native English speaker commented his doubts toward the “*indirect*” opening (line 10) of this business letter. Ryan’s response in line 11 *that’s how they (Chinese) think is direct* demonstrated that now he was able to think differently from his English background and to differentiate what the “*direct*” opening meant in Chinese rhetoric.

By the end of the DA session, Ryan’s conceptual understanding of the “Open the door” approach was qualitatively improved. From initial struggling to regulate colleague’s learning, Ryan was much closer to the independent control of the “Open the door” approach. Again, while a non-dynamic procedure might simply surmise that in neither interaction was Ryan *able* to understand and to control the concept, the interactive evidence revealed that Ryan’s obvious progress throughout the DA program.

7.3.2 Learner Emerging Autonomy: Materialization for Self-Regulation

In the previous chapter on learners’ verbalization of Chinese rhetoric concepts, I discuss how verbalizing one’s thought functions as a form of mediation for learners to self-regulate their learning. Yet, verbalization is not the only way in CBI intervention or DA procedures to promote cognitive development. To allow learners materializing the concepts into concrete forms of learning also encourages learners to overcome their individual problems. Poehner (2008) mentioned that rendering the language concept in a more material form also enable learners to reflect on and manipulate specific structures. More importantly, learner’s materialization also serves to highlight

their source of learning difficulty so that the mediator can intervene to provide remedial programs. In the following examples, a student-made material representation of Chinese rhetoric style was presented and how this materialization helped learners to struggle through and overcome difficulties during DA was discussed. In the first DA session, while the class appropriately determined the writing pattern of one expository text, *Women can Hold up the Sky*, Ryan still struggled to define the main topic and rhetoric structure of this article. In order to externalize the concept of “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method, he drew a picture as an aide to assist comprehension. Although making revisions on students’ own SCOBAs after reading each Chinese genre was part of the CBI intervention program, this instance was not happened during the assigned activity or under the teacher’s direction. It was Ryan who self-regulated to create materialization and explained his understanding through it. His materialization also achieved agreement from both the teacher and other two colleagues.

- 1 R but I still think that its main topic is at the last paragraph ((circle out the sentence from the article))
- 2 T you are not totally wrong.
- 3 the reason that this article is “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” pattern
- 4 because right at this paragraph the author started to turn to his main topic
- 5 R Ohhh (.) ((gesture an inverted triangle))
- 6 T it's turning to the main topic ((repeat the inverted triangle gesture and then add a gesture of twisted finger))
- 7 R Ohhh (.) yes (.) yes yes ((repeat the triangle gesture))
- 8 T the viewpoint of first few paragraphs was to explain the higher social status of men
- 9 R understood (.) understood
- 10 T but starting at the however paragraph it told you that although we used to emphasize men than women. but nowadays it is neither the higher status of men nor women it's women who do more things
- 11 R can I say this? do you understand, ((start to draw a picture))

- 12 T okay ((both T and the other two students look at the drawing))
I understand. Is this your *Qi-cheng-zhuan-he* pattern?
13 R ((nod))
14 C Oh (.) I understand
15 C but (.) hm (.) in the middle ((repeat the double triangle gesture))
16 P this part needs to be smaller ((point to Ryan's drawing))

In examining the turn-by-turn mediations above, it is important to report Ryan and the teacher's gestures to show how body movements played a role in Ryan's materialization and understandings. In the first line, Ryan claimed that he thought the main topic was at the last paragraph; his statement could be assumed that he believed this article was written with the Dragon approach. Noticing his confusion on the Dragon and the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach, the teacher explained in line 4 that *zhuan* in "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" pattern did not mean an abrupt change but a gradual move to its main topic. Her mediation resulted in Ryan's gesture of an inverted triangle in line 5, which could be explained that he knew the argument had been pointed out inductively at the end of the article, similar to the lower point in an inverted triangle. Yet, both the Dragon and the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach could be applied with this gesture. Thus, the teacher emphasized the concept of "gradually turn" in line 6 by first repeating Ryan's gesture and then adding a gesture of twisted fingers. T's two-step gestures did not seem beneficial as Ryan duplicated the inverted triangle gesture in line 7. His act drew the teacher's attention; she decided to provide more explicit mediation through explaining the logic behind each paragraph (i.e. line 8 and 10). Although T's mediations seemed repetitive, her real purpose was to determine the real source of Ryan's learning difficulty. In DA, errors in themselves have far less importance than the underlying sources of the errors since only the latter have explanatory power (Poehner, 2008). In addition, the role of mediation in DA is

to diagnose the sources of error and to help learners to overcome it, rather than to simply document when an error has occurred.

Based on T's prompts Ryan seemed well-understood with the paragraph structure (line 9). He then started to draw a picture representing what he considered the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach was without teacher's mediation or direction. (See Figure 7.1). His materialization quickly received agreement from T and two other learners and also aroused discussion on his SCOA. Both learners were able to comment on Ryan's picture with suggestions from their own understandings of the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach (line 14 to 16). This materialization regulated not only Ryan's understanding of the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach, but also stimulated other learners' awareness on the externalization of the writing styles (i.e. their SCOBAs).

If comparing what Ryan's SCOA of the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach (Figure 7.2) and this self-created materialization, the latter one showed the complexity in pictorial explanation and better interpretation of the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach. These differences demonstrated two important aspects. First, the act of externalizing the rhetorical concepts in material form was valuable for Ryan as he selected this format to assist comprehension. Second, Ryan's self-regulated materialization promoted autonomy toward learning a writing style which was far different from his native language.

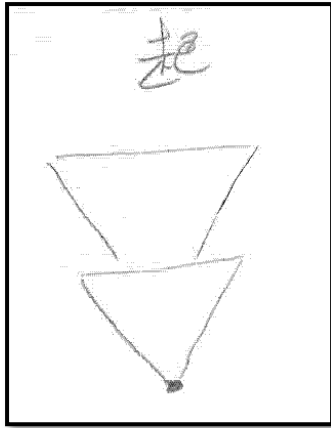


Figure 7.1: Ryan's self-regulated materialization

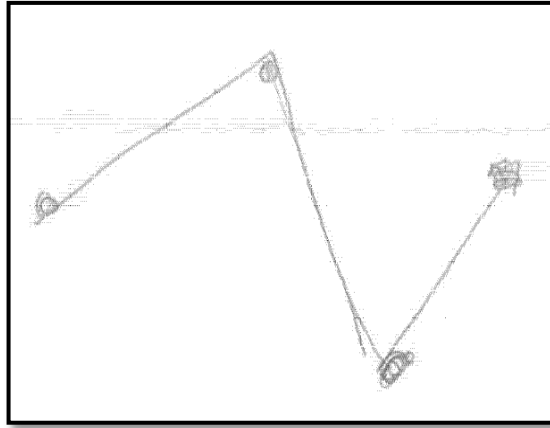


Figure 7.2: Ryan's SCOBAs

7.4 Misdiagnosis and Inappropriate Mediation

In what follows, I presented an example of the teacher's inappropriate mediation that failed to promote development. The excerpt was selected from the last DA session in that four learners exchanged their written product and analyzed each other's writing pattern. As the focus of the current section was to analyze the interaction exchanged exclusively between the teacher and the individual learner (i.e. Evan), peer-to-peer interactions would not be discussed here but the next chapter on group DA. Yet, we all have experience that interaction in real classroom is sometimes messy and hard to catch on the discussion, especially in a group setting. Therefore, I would first give information on the quality of Evan's writing and then present the ideas that had been discussed among the student group. Both of the aspects had impacts on the teacher's misdiagnosis. Later, I included a crucial excerpt to indicate the teacher's inappropriate mediation.

Based on the direction of the second writing task — to write an argumentative text to describe your living preferences; Evan wrote a solid four-paragraph essay with a total of 783 words. He intended to write this topic through the '*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*'

method, but was identified as the Dragon method by the teacher and the other two colleagues. The reason of it was because Evan had a clear-stated sentence in the last paragraph, ‘*No matter where you live, it has advantages and drawbacks. What suits you now may not be comfortable in the future, it depends on different periods of your life.*’ His argument seemed like he had preference neither for a city nor the countryside. One of the characteristics for constructing the Dragon method is to save the main topic at the end of the essay in order to attract readers’ attention and create overtones. In addition to examining from the placement of his thesis statement, Evan’s paragraph organization was considered obscure in elaborating the advantages/drawbacks of living preferences. He initiated the second *cheng* paragraph by indicating the disadvantages and benefits of staying in the countryside respectfully, and then he started the third, *zhuan* paragraph with similar structure but describing the pros and cons in the city. In other words, Evan did not have a strong turning point between his *cheng* and *zhuan* paragraph, an important clue to define his article as the Dragon method but not the ‘*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*’ method. These two signs made the teacher suggest Evan to revise based on the Dragon approach as it seemed more of an appropriate structure for his article.

Surprisingly, Evan claimed that he wanted to revise the article according to the ‘*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*’ method as he had already constructed the first writing assignment on the Dragon approach. He would like to practice writing through the ‘*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*’ method. The teacher agreed with his decision as it led to the learner’s autonomy in choosing their preferred writing styles. After all, the goal of teaching a set of Chinese preferred writing conventions is not to limit participants’ writing performance, but to broaden their knowledge on Chinese (i.e. culture or linguistic effects) through the lenses of Chinese rhetoric. Thus, aiming to promote

group interaction at that specific session, the teacher requested the group to give suggestions to Evan's revisions. What follows was discussed in the previous section that Kai recommended Evan to use transitional words (see detailed discussion on the subsection: Mediation and sensibility to change during the assessment).

What I wanted to examine here was the teacher's first prompt in reacting to Evan's claim on revising through the '*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*' method.

- 23 T does it the point you want to express? ((point to the sentence in the last paragraph, *it depends on different periods of your life*))
- 24 E Humn (.) no (.) I also said [(murmuring) (.) is the best ((try to find sentences from the article))
- 25 K ((Respond to T)) [I agree with you. I also see this sentence the topic of this article is where you want to live and which place is a better choice but he didn't point out what he wants (.) he explains the disadvantage of living in the city such as air pollution and poor public security which leads me to assume he prefers the countryside but he didn't say it clearly.
- 26 T ((Turn to Evan)) do you want to [improve your third paragraph, rr do you want to remain the Dragon method,
- 27 E [*wei le zhe xie zhuang kuang, zhu zai cheng shi shi zui jia de ju zhu di fang* ((point out his thesis statement from the article))
- 28 ((Because of these situation, living in the city is the best choice))
- 29 T Hum (.) so you think this is your thesis statement. So here ((point to the 4th paragraph)) is your possible solution (.) suggestion,
- 30 E maybe, it's possible
- 31 T Okay. if this sentence is his thesis statement how do you think, ((turn to the group))

In line 23, T wanted to make sure if the sentences from the last paragraph were the main statement that Evan argued. If they were, it would realize T's assumption on Evan's writing style, the Dragon approach. However, Evan argued against T directly in line 24 although he had not yet found the sentences to support his claims. Kai quickly interrupted Evan's searching and made agreement upon T's viewpoint on Evan's writing style and his loose paragraph organization. While T was asking Evan

whether to remain the structure or to revise in line 26, he finally read out what he considered as the thesis statement from the article, ‘*Because of these situation, living in the city is the best choice.*’ This sentence was appeared at the third from the last sentence in *zhuan* paragraph, which was an important clue for T to reconsider Evan original intention and strong motivation to write with the ‘*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*’ method. For instance, how did this sentence function in the third paragraph? Did it represent the turning point for his argument? If this sentence was the main argument as Evan claimed, what was the relationship between this one and the ones in the last paragraph? Thinking through these questions could make the mediator better understand the learner’s purpose of writing, estimate his conceptual development, and provide appropriate mediations to promote learning. Instead, without reading Evan’s article again to scrutinize his intention and reasons of claiming, T posed the question back to the group in line 31. This act not only fell short in preparing the group to work in the whole group ZPD, but also failed to identify the real source of Evan’s learning difficulty. This was the first inappropriate action that resulted in the teacher’s misdiagnosis.

As I discussed in the previous section, Kai suggested Evan to use the transitional words, such as “however” to highlight his turning feature. The following excerpt reported the continuing exchanges that showed the teacher’s inappropriate mediation.

- 44 E I thought I can use *fan guo lai shuo* ((in another words)),
- 45 T do you mean use in another words in your paragraph? any reasons that you think however does not fit in your article,
- 46 E Or use in other words which has similar meanings as however,
- 47 T yes, they do. however and in another words have similar meanings
- 48 T ((turn to Kai)) so you think he can use transitional words. where can he put those transitional words,

- 49 K Huh (3.0) if this is (.) his thesis statement the transitional words should put here(.) if he describes more sentences after transitional words then the turn is not clear.
- 50 T I found one problem (.) here.in another words he wrote as ((another Chinese character))
- 51 T here. this word. do you mean "in another words" here,
- 52 K ((gesture to show understanding))
- 53 E huh (.) yeah, maybe I type it wrong
- 54 T if you mean in another words here your turning structure could be much clear.

Evan responded Kai in line 44 to ask if he could use another transitional word, 'in another words'. The reason why Evan mentioned about 'in another words' was because he included this phrase in the *zhuan* paragraph. But the problem was that one of the Chinese characters in the phrase of 'in another words' was miswritten in another Chinese character which created the totally different meaning than its original function of transitional words. Apparently, the teacher did not notice this mistake and thus offered the mediation in line 45 which failed to promote development. T misinterpreted Evan's difficulty came from his inability to differentiate the phrasal meaning between 'in another words' and 'however.' Gladly, Evan asserted his understandings of the two phrases in line 46. The teacher again did not examine Evan's article thoroughly and turned the question to Kai. This was the similar act as in line 31 which all lost the opportunity to interpret the learner's ZPD. It was until line 50 that T found out the mistake of writing the Chinese character. As soon as T pointed out the typo in the transitional phrase 'in other words,' Kai made a gesture of understanding to represent how the typo made the meaning and writing style confusing. T also indicated in line 55 that the turning feature would be much clear if the typo was corrected.

The above excerpts and discussion demonstrated an example of the teacher's

inappropriate mediation. The real source of Evan's writing difficulty was his loose paragraph organization, not his awareness of constructing the '*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*' method. Poor paragraph organization might relate to his writing ability in his native language. During the DA session, the teacher once had chances to scrutinize Evan's source of difficulty. But the teacher was too eager to promote group interaction so that she failed to interpret the learner's ZPD appropriately.

Providing mediation is a complex work with efforts; it requires the mediator to pay full attention to the interaction. This example illustrated as a counter example for educators who may be interested in applying DA procedures in the classroom. It could also benefit DA research in reporting mediations in a systematic manner to capture the dynamics of learner development.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter aims to use dynamic assessment practice as a way to assess language abilities, intervene in learning, and document learners' growth. Through collaborative dialoguing, it enabled the teacher/mediator to better identify the quality of learners' understanding of Chinese rhetoric structures. The interactionist approach to DA provides the conceptual basis and assessment procedures to give interaction a key role in assessment. The data in this chapter reveals that DA 1) enhances our understanding to identify individual learner's abilities, such as Kai's conceptual changes; and 2) assists the teacher to document and to promote learners' development over time, like the evidence of Ryan's conceptual changes on the "Open the door" approach; and 3) helps learners establish autonomy in regulating one's own learning and agency in constructing Chinese articles with their own perspectives on writing styles; and 4) guides the future mediator/teacher to provide appropriate mediation that is attuned to

learner's ZPD. Most significantly, the notion of prognosis and development of emerging abilities differ DA from non-dynamic means of assessments in terms of its objective and assessing methodology.

CHAPTER 8 – ANALYZING MEDIATION THROUGH GROUP DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT

8.1 Introduction

DA offers a conceptual framework for teaching and assessment according to which the goals of understanding individuals' abilities and promoting their development through mediations. In previous chapter, I discuss the dialogic mediation between the teacher and learner; this current chapter aims to investigate the effectiveness of providing dialogic mediation among learners in group settings. Typically, DA has been criticized for its one-on-one, expert-and-novice format as it is difficult to implement in regular second language classroom with up to twenty learners. The current study wanted to alter this impression of DA by exploring the effectiveness of applying group DA (G-DA) procedures in a second language classroom, and to argue that both G-DA and peer interaction promote the development of whole group ZPD. Two different approaches are explored in G-DA contexts: concurrent G-DA and cumulative G-DA (Poehner, 2009). While the former supports the development of each individual by working within the group's ZPD, the latter attempts to move the group forward through co-constructing ZPDs with individuals.

A microgenetic approach—one in which moment-to-moment changes in the learners' behavior are noted and examined—was used in order to analyze the interaction generated by learners as they worked collaboratively in reading or revising texts. Three subsections are included in this analysis: 1) effects of concurrent G-DA on the development of each individual by working within the group's ZPD; 2) cumulative G-DA movement of the group through co-constructing ZPDs with individuals; and 3) peer-interaction probes into the dynamics of mutual scaffolding as it might facilitate or inhibit the growth of ZPD.

8.2 Concurrent DA

The following exchanges occurred consecutively in the 3rd intervention session. Learners worked in group to analyze the writing pattern of one expository article, *Women can Hold up Half the Sky*. As learners wrote their analysis result on the paper, the teacher provided mediating supports that increased in explicitness with each move. What differed from the individual T-S mediation was that concurrent G-DA aimed to support the development of each individual by working within the group's ZPD. Instead of running the full range of mediating prompts with a single learner before assisting another individual, the teacher focused on improving the group ZPD through asking learners with similar questions at different time.

Excerpt 8.1

- 1 T can you tell me where the main topic is in Women's article?
- 2 A the main topic is this sentence Women can Hold up Half the Sky and its explanation that men and women are equal
- 3 T don't you think this was explaining the meaning of Women can Hold up Half the Sky, or you think it is the main topic
- 4 A (5.0)
- 5 T the meaning of these sentences was explaining the cited words Women can Hold up Half the Sky (.) it tries to give you the definition and tell you that men and women are equal in Chinese society nowadays
- 6 if the first paragraph gives you only the definition then you probably need to think if it still counts as the "Open the door" method
- 7 T why do you think it is Open the door method?
- 8 K because I don't think there are any changes It is an explanation just like the expository text There is one main topic and the author explains the topic There is no changes in here ((point to the third paragraph)) and there is no special meaning in here ((point to the fourth paragraph))
- 9 T Okay. Pay attention to these two paragraphs ((point to the third and fourth paragraph sections)) Look at the words here it explains that people in the past emphasize men over women

In line 1, the teacher asked Anthony to define the rhetoric structure by indicating the placement of its thesis statement. Through building up on Anthony's response, the teacher further asked another learner, Kai to explain his choice of particular rhetorical structure as in line 7. The nature of these two prompts was the same as the teacher aimed to initiating learners' verbalization on the concept. In terms of offering fine-tuned mediations, the teacher increased the explicitness of each move with these learners to construct the group ZPD. In the exchange with Anthony, the teacher implicitly asked him to reconsider the meaning of the sentence that he pointed as the thesis statement. Without gaining Anthony's positive response (i.e. 5 seconds of silence), the teacher gave a more explicit move to explain the meaning of the discussed sentence. The mediations that the teacher provided to Anthony were not directly related to the rhetoric concept; instead they were more of the linguistic explanation. Later in the exchange with Kai, the teacher explicitly pointed out the paragraphs where the thesis statement was requested Kai to look in depth into how the central theme was elaborated (line 9). This mediation to Kai was considered more explicit than the ones to Anthony because it was directly pointed to the rhetoric concept. Although viewing as two distinct interactions, the teacher maintained the group ZPD through building mediations upon each learner's response.

The above two exchanges demonstrated how the teacher engaged and assessed learners in a group DA setting; yet, how the learner benefited from the mediation moves was another issue to consider. The next exchange showed the development of Kai not only received mediations directed to himself but to Anthony as well.

Excerpt 8.2

28 T do you change your decision?

29 K yes

- 30 T why
31 K because this section changes ((point to the fourth paragraph section))
32 This paragraph says that now it is equal, women can hold up the half sky;
and then this section changes ((point to the third paragraph section)) It
describes the culture supposed to be like this, but it is not.

Within the same session, Kai changed his decision of the rhetoric structure from the “Open the door” approach to the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach. In line 31 and 32, he explained clearly from the paragraph structure on where the thesis statement was revealed. Given that these interactions occurred within a group, it was hard to define that Kai’s success in arriving at an appropriate response was directly related to the mediations that the teacher provided. Only assumption we could make from the above exchange was that Kai may have better responsiveness toward the mediations, considering he received three prompts either direct or indirect from the teacher. In regards of Anthony who received two prompts from the teacher, he was unable to verbalize his second thoughts on the rhetoric structure throughout the whole session. However, his inability did not mean he was at the lower level of development if compared with Kai. Again, it may only represent that Anthony was less responsive than Kai in this regard. One crucial point from the above discussion was that when working within the group ZPD, the teacher’s mediation may not only benefit the primary interactant, but the secondary interactants as well. This aspect was important and would be further discussed in the following section on the cumulative G-DA.

8.3 Cumulative DA

In the fourth intervention session, learners were reading the argumentative text, *Beauty Economy should not be Excessive*, before joining the whole group discussion

on its rhetoric structure (i.e. the '*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*' method). During the individual reading time, the teacher provided individual mediation to Ryan as to assist him better analyzing the writing convention. While Ryan was the primary interactant who received teacher's mediation from implicit indication on the content (line 4) to more explicit direction on rhetoric structure (line 8), Carol attended to the dialogic interaction as the secondary interactant.

Excerpt 8.3

- 1 R i think this is the third paragraph section and so this part is the fourth ((Point to the indicated sections))
((Carol changed her gaze to Ryan and nodded))
- 2 R i am not sure about the first and the second paragraph section
- 3 T that's okay we will take a look at it later
- 4 if the author reveal explicitly that he does not like Beauty Economy in
(inaudible voice)
- 5 R huh (.) until now I realize that the author explains explicitly.
- 6 T The title actually told you the author's point (.) do you think where in the article the author told you his main topic?
- 7 R in here ((point to the third section)) the author told us this is not good
- 8 T okay, so he told you the main topic is in the third section. Which writing pattern do you think it is?
- 9 R it's *cheng. Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*
- 10 C Ei::? ((Carol made a sound of questioning))

What's worth noticing in this excerpt was the teacher's mediated supports to one individual learner during the private reading time. In order not to reveal the correct rhetoric structure only to one learner, the teacher had to examine the learner's understanding carefully and offered supports that were just a little beyond learner's current performance. First, the teacher neglected Ryan's first question on dividing paragraph sections in line 3 because Ryan basically did not have too much errors and

it was also the topic prepared for the whole group discussion. Later on, following the guidelines of DA, the teacher first examined the extent on how Ryan understood the author's perspective (line 4). It was an implicit prompt as it helped to clarify whether Ryan had difficulty on the content or the rhetoric structure. Confirming on the exact problem, the teacher's second prompt (line 6) was more explicit as it directed the learner to point out the main topic in the article. Later in line 8, the teacher connected Ryan's current understandings with the previous learned concepts and directed him to use the scientific knowledge (line 9, *Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*). The dynamic procedure of using interaction to examine learner's problem area is one of the fortes of DA. Within the framework of conventional assessment, it is hard to examine learner's performance in this detail as it only accepts one valid answer.

Although this interaction (and mediation) was directed toward Ryan, from Carol's nonverbal behaviors (line 1 and 10) we could notice that she was attending to the dialogue as the secondary interactant. While Ryan was expressing his thoughts on the rhetoric structure, Carol voluntarily participated in this interaction in line 10 by questioning Ryan's choice. The definition of cumulative G-DA is to examine how the subsequent one-on-one DA interaction builds up the group ZPD. The following excerpt 8.4 demonstrated Carol's interaction with the teacher and Ryan that established the group ZPD.

Excerpt 8.4

- 13 C i think is the Dragon method[
- 14 R [i also thought it is the Dragon method when I read at home
- 15 T okay. that's look at the last paragraph again if you think it is dragon, then it means that the last paragraph is very important
- 16 C because I (.) (inaudible voice)
- 17 i think this is the main topic ((point to the last paragraph)) the last paragraph

- 19 R yes. When I first read at home, I also thought this is the main topic ((point to the last paragraph)) but now I am reading it, the author actually explains here why the situation of Beauty Economy is not good.
- 20 T um
- 21 R because in here ((point to the last paragraph)) the author does not explain why it is not good
- 22 C but
- 23 P ((move his gaze and start looking at Carol's material))
- 24 R here it explains why we want beautiful girls to sell things
- 25 C but I think in Chinese it refers to a problem that we have to face
- 26 this is ((the fourth paragraph)) the author's main topic
- 27 T but the title already tells you the author's perspective ((Beauty economy should not be excessive)) The author does not mean to suggest ways to (inaudible voice)

Carol's statement in line 13 expressed her ideas on the rhetoric structure which made Ryan resonate. Noticing learners' confusion, the teacher thus offered a prompt to ask them to review the concept of the Dragon method and to re-examine the last paragraph in this article. Instead of following the teacher's direction, Ryan and Carol had a short peer interaction (line 16-26) where Ryan assumed the role of mediator to direct Carol to better distinguish the rhetoric structure. In order to convince Carol, Ryan first made it personal to explain how he changed his perspective from the Dragon approach to the *Qi-cheng-zhuan-he* method in line 19. He then explicitly pointed out in line 21 that the last paragraph was not the main topic as it did not correspond with the author's argument. This prompt not only argued against Carol's viewpoint on the Dragon approach, but responded to the teacher's earlier direction as well. However, Carol's reaction in line 22 showed that she was not convinced. Ryan thus indicated directly what he considered as the main topic in line 23. This more explicit support seemed failed as Carol still argued firmly for her stand (line 25- 26). It was at this moment (line 27) the teacher interrupted to offer mediation by

elaborating the author's argument and its relation to the main topic.

One important aspect revealed from this excerpt was Ryan's microgenetic growth in explaining the rhetoric structure to Carol. Receiving the teacher's mediations from Excerpt 8.3, Ryan's availability in elaborating on the concept not only indicated the successfulness of the teacher's prompts, but also showed Ryan's responsiveness to the mediations. Additionally, Ryan pushed the whole group ZPD forward by trying to differentiate the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach from the Dragon approach. This act was crucial as it is a muddy concept that usually confuses Chinese learners.

Although it was unclear to know how Carol benefitted from the whole group ZPD in this short interaction, it was evidently that she transformed her role of secondary interactant to become the primary interactant. Also, while Ryan and Carol were engaging actively in the conversation, the other learner, Pete silently joined the interaction as the secondary interactant through his gestures of attending (line 23, gaze change). In the following excerpt, I present how Pete participated in the interaction formally (as the primary interactant) and to what extent he contributed to the whole group ZPD which assisted Carol's final comprehension.

Excerpt 8.5

- 33 P I also think it is *qi* method i don't think it is Dragon method because it is
clear on the starting point
- 34 T clear on the starting point,
- 35 C ah?
- 36 P because it starts to explain the meaning of Beauty Economy
- 37 T the article with Dragon method usually starts with a story which only
prepares the readers for the main topic. How do you think about this one?
Let's look at the first paragraph

In Excerpt 8.5, Pete joined the conversation with the teacher as the primary interactant while Carol was still attending to the interaction as the secondary interactant (line 35). Following with Pete's gaze changes in the previous excerpt, he declared his choice of rhetoric structure in line 33. He considered the article, 'Beauty Economy should not be Excessive' was written in the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach, which resonated with both Ryan and the teacher's idea. One of the distinctive features between the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach and the Dragon approach Pete mentioned was the clarity in the beginning of the article. As the Dragon approach usually starts with a story or vignette in creating the atmosphere, the "*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*" approach was relatively direct in discussing the main theme at the beginning of the paragraph. In line 37, Pete and the teacher collaboratively established the whole group ZPD by further elaborating on the differential features of these two rhetoric concepts. Compared with Ryan's responses in the Excerpt 8.4, it was obvious to notice that Pete was more sensitive to the mediations than Ryan as he had internalized the concept and explain the rhetoric differences with his own words. Although it was unable to determine whether Pete was at the higher cognitive level than Ryan or even Carol, we might conclude that being a secondary interactant, Pete benefitted from the cumulative DA.

The above subsequent one-on-one DA interactions built up the group ZPD. In regards to Carol who constantly remained as the secondary interactant throughout the whole interactions, her responses in the following excerpt proved that she indeed gained assistance from the cumulative talks that the teacher addressed to other learners.

Excerpt 8.6

- 38 T Do you think it is *qi-cheng-zhuan-he* method?
39 C um.. probably yes (.) because at here ((circle out some paragraphs from her paper)) I also think it is ((use both hands to knock on the table as if she's playing the drum)) in between

After leading the learners to differentiate rhetoric styles between these two approaches, the teacher asked Carol directly about her understanding so far. Carol now was able to recognize the appropriate structure by indicating several paragraphs, but she still had fuzzy concept on the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach (line 39 from her gesture). In the later mediation, Carol revealed the exact source of learning difficulty was from her confusion of the personal opinion/ suggestion that the author added at the end of the article in the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” method. Owing to this, she considered the author's suggestion as the main theme of the article, and thus she misanalysed the article as the Dragon approach. More important, she asked the critical question of whether the main topic always represented as one sentence. This was critical as the main topic usually presented as one single sentence in English rhetoric, but it was not the case in Chinese rhetoric. It indicated that from the subsequent one-on-one DA interactions, Carol gained substantial supports to assist her to think outside of the current article and to distinguish the concepts between two languages.

Vygotsky once said that children's development lie at interacting with the others. Traditional assessments typically do not allow interactions among T-S and S-S, and thus lose an important fashion to understand development. Dynamic assessments instead track learners' cognitive development through interactions. Cumulative DA proved that individual learners would benefit from the interaction or the teacher's mediations even when they were not directed to oneself, like Carol's case. Her performance, as well as other learners in the class, suggested that they were indeed

attentive to the teacher's mediation in explaining the rhetoric concepts.

8.4 Peer interaction: Intersubjectivity

This subsection aims to document the importance of collaborative dialogue as part of the process of second language learning. During the CBI intervention sessions and the procedures of DA, learners interacted with and received mediations not only from the teacher but from the peers as well. Vygotsky (1986) argued that what was needed for learning to occur was the presence of a more knowledgeable person who would help the learner to do something independently. Swain and Lapkin (2002) argued that Vygotsky's ideas have mostly been applied within developmental psychology, the more knowledgeable other—the expert in an expert/novice pair—has typically been conceived of as an adult (i.e. parent, teacher). In recent years, the idea that peer-to-peer interaction may also foster learning has been advanced (i.e. Tudge, 1990; Wells, 2000). This idea has been extended within sociocultural approach in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) by suggesting that in peer-to-peer interaction, peers can be concurrently experts and novices (i.e. Brooks & Swain, 2001; Donato, 1994).

Donato (1994) explored the notion of “mutual scaffolding” among L2 learners. In the study, he observed the extent three novice students of French, working collaboratively on a task, could positively influence each other's development in the foreign language learning. With a microgenetic Vygotskian approach, his findings showed that the learners, regardless of their linguistic abilities, were not only able to offer each other scaffolded help but were also able to grow linguistically beyond their own independent performance. For the purpose of current study, I focused on

examining the extent that peer-to-peer interaction promotes mutual scaffolding among learners. I highlighted the importance of peer dialoguing and the use of first language in the students' discourse as powerful tools of semiotic mediation (i.e. Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Di-Camilla & Antón, 1997).

8.4.1 Peer Dialoguing

Excerpt 8. 7

- 1 C it's probably Open the door method (.) Open the door
- 2 R why?
- 3 C because at here ((point to the first paragraph)) the writer explains
- 4 R so (.) I have to understand all ((head nod))
- 5 C yeah, if it is Dragon method, this ((point to the first paragraph)) would become too clear
- 6 R um. ((write things down on his paper))

In this excerpt, Carol was providing other-regulation by instructing or giving a mini-lesson (Guerrero & Villamil, 2000) to Ryan on the differentiation of rhetoric structure for one argumentative text, *'Internet Pornography is Worse than a Tiger.'* Drawing on the understanding of three rhetoric structures, Carol directed Ryan explicitly by pointing out the main argument in the text (line 3). Ryan's response in line 4 was somewhat unclear whether he understood the mediation from Carol or he had other difficulties, such as unable to understand the content. Therefore, Carol provided another mediated support (line 5) to lead Ryan to compare the suggested rhetoric structure (i.e. 'Open the door and see the mountain' approach) with the Dragon approach. Ryan then accepted Carol's suggestion (and ultimately he changed his viewpoint on determining this argumentative text.)

According to Guerrero and Villamil (2000), instructing or giving mini-lessons is

a type of scaffolding mechanism by means of which learners exteriorize their expertise and offer each other knowledge on the concepts. In this interaction, Carol took control and assumed as the role of the researcher/teacher to offer successful mediation to her peer.

The following excerpt showed another example of peer dialoguing between peers, but what's more important was that it also revealed Ryan's cognitive development in applying the rhetoric concept. Received instruction from Carol on the "Open the door approach," Ryan was now able to offer instruction on this particular approach to Pete while reading the Chinese formal letters.

Excerpt 8. 8

- 1 R this is Open the door method (.) because he had already told you what he wanted
- 2 P why? ((look at Ryan))
- 3 R ((move Pete's handout to share)) open the door is (.) the main point is to tell you what you need to do first. Its main theme is to ask you to provide something and here (.) can you see,
- 4 P um
- 5 R ((point to the thesis statement and read from Pete's handout)) *ru guo ni neng ti gong bi gong si yi xie dui jin kou jhong zhong wen shu ji you xing qu ke kao de going si ming dan* (If you can provide the list on whom may be interested in importing foreign books written in Chinese)
- 6 so it means to ask you to introduce some books for importing
- 7 P okay alright,
- 8 I think *you xing qu* (feel interested) is a little bit weird, because *you xing qu* is not direct
- 9 R yes. this is their direct method
- 10 P um

In this excerpt, Ryan was explaining the principles of the "Open the door" approach to Pete (line 3). Remember that Ryan once received assistance from Carol

on this particular approach when they were reading argumentative text. If comparing Ryan's performance in Excerpt 9. 8 and 9.9, the process of cognitive development could be easily observed. He also offered a rather systematic instruction to Pete as he first explained the rhetoric concept of this approach, and then read out the thesis statement in Chinese with brief summary (line 5-6). Yet, Pete agreed halfheartedly as he did not appear to be completely convinced: "I think *you xing qu* (feel interested) is a little bit weird, because *you xing qu* is not direct" (line 8). This remark showed that Pete possessed some concepts of Chinese linguistic and rhetoric features, (but he ultimately accepted Ryan's suggestion). What Ryan responded in line 9 was a crucial comment in scaffold construction; He agreed with Pete first as if he acknowledged the statement Pete made as being 'indirect' in the "Open the door" approach. Yet, he shared his understandings of what was counted as 'direct' in Chinese rhetoric. This verbalization revealed Ryan had internalized the concept of rhetoric structures—the "Open the door" approach represents the direct aspect, instead of the direct statement.

8.4.2 Use of Native Language

To further examine the mutual scaffolding between learners, the next excerpt demonstrated learners resorted to native language (i.e. English) to discuss the concepts in doubt.

Excerpt 8. 9

- 1 R ((laughter)) *zhen shi zhong guo ren xie de* (This is written by real Chinese)
- 2 I think it is the dragon one
- 3 P *wo ye jue de shi dan* (.) *wo bu que ding* (I also think the same but I am not sure)
- 4 R ((softer voice)) we will not if we do the same
- 5 P *wen yi ge jiao shou* (.) *xie yi ge recommendation letter* (.) *yun* (use) bottom

- up?
- 6 (ask one professor for a recommendation letter)
- 7 R we could (.) I agree actually (.) with this situation we might actually do the dragon
- 8 P a little bit (inaudible voice)
- 9 R ((Read out sentences from the letter)) dearest whatever (.) this is. How are you. I found a very good English teaching job at this University, and so hope to apply for the position. But the problem is it requires three recommendations. So I was wondering if I could ask you to write a recommendation letter for me. There is hope that (.)
- 10 P there you go(.) That's right
- 11 R that (.) that's turn around ((flip fingers)) like you said bottom up (.) you're actually thinking we'll do the same (.) but just turn around
- 12 not mean the same::e ((gaze to Pete))
- 13 P yea::h [wo dong ni de yi si (I can understand you)]
- 14 R [probably]

Similar to the peer dialoguing in the first few lines, Ryan was helping Pete to understand the rhetoric concept of the Dragon approach and its application in this English letter that was composed by a native Chinese student. In line 4, Ryan started to talk in English with softer voice as he explained what the rhetoric differences were if English users were asked to write a recommendation letter (i.e. we will not if we do the same). The reason of resorting to native language may be because they were discussing how English users would do when writing a recommendation letter, such as whether to use the bottom up method or to employ other rhetoric skills in making requests. Pete challenged Ryan's assumption and questioned the appropriateness of using bottom up method when asking recommendation letter from a professor. This remark led to Ryan's differentiation of rhetoric differences in Chinese and English in terms of making a request. Also, Ryan's responses assisted Pete to understand the subtle differences in these two languages. Although we were not sure about Pete's understanding at this point, he quickly switched back to Chinese (line 13). The skillful

handling of both languages indicated that the two learners were aware of the connections between one language and the other.

The opportunity to talk and discuss language and writing issues with each other allowed the learners' to consolidate and reorganize knowledge of the L2 in structural and rhetorical aspects and to make this knowledge explicit for each other's benefit (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000, p. 65). Instructional talk supports the process of internalization — the “moving inwards” of joint (intermental) activity to psychological (intramental) activity (Gal'perin, 1967; Stetsenko & Arieviditch, 1997). In collaborative peer interactions, there is an interpsychological effort to achieve intersubjectivity, which is an essential ingredient of work within the ZPD. It signals a state of mutual cognition propitious for the attainment of self-regulation. In the above excerpts, all students “tuned” into the task and making corrections very quickly, as if they were working in an “automatic” collaborative revision mode. It indicated that peer collaboration within the ZPD may lead to advanced practices (Tudge, 1990) and the effect of these practices was as influential as what the teacher mediated.

8.5 Conclusion

DA provides a theoretically grounded framework for interactions which allows teachers to structure their mediations more consistently and to offer moment-to-moment interpretations of learners' needs. As Poehner (2009) argued, the G-DA's contribution to L2 education is that it renders classroom interactions more systematic and more attuned to learners' emergent abilities. Either in the format of concurrent or cumulative G-DA, both re-define the pedagogical idea of dividing learners into groups. Under the framework of DA, learners were gathered as cohesive

units that their cognitive development was collaboratively promoted by the teacher and also through their group members. For example, Kai's growth in the concurrent G-DA case that he not only gained assistance directly from the teacher, but also attended to the mediations offered to Anthony. Through engaging learners within the group ZPD, secondary interactants, like Pete and Carol in the cumulative G-DA case, gained benefits from the teacher's mediations that not directly addressed to them. This notion of working cooperatively with learners in creating ZPD also challenged the traditional role of the teacher of being fairness to address similar questions to each individual—a doubtable conception that assumes every learner work and arrive at the same development level (see Poehner, 2009).

Vygotsky defined ZPD as individual improvements on independent problem solving abilities through adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. The results of current study extended the notion by including peer-to-peer interaction in providing scaffoldings in ZPD. For instance, the interactions among Carol, Ryan, and Kai were spontaneous; but at the same time, they were beneficial in providing supports that were just beyond each other's current performance. These undergoing dialogues were usually not allowed in conventional assessments, and frequently went unnoticed in the language classroom. Through the employment of microgenetic approach in data analyzing, it uncovered the process through which independent performance in reading/revising texts was shaped and transformed by social mediation. The close scrutiny of the microgenetic approach was thus vital in making connections between instructional experience and language development—in other words, it created a win-win situation for the educator in instructing and the student in learning. To conclude, the results from group mediated interactions had contributed to a greater understanding of the complex, manifold mechanisms in interactions that

were at play during mediated learners' dialogues, and had brought to light both verbal and nonverbal behaviors that may facilitate or inhibit growth within the ZPD.

CHAPTER 9 - CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

This dissertation explores L2 development as a conceptual process from a Vygotskian dialectical perspective. As described in the literature review chapters, recent research has investigated Vygotsky's educational pedagogies in Concept-Based Instruction (i.e. Negueruela, 2003; Ferreira & Lantolf, 2008; Lapkin, Swain & Knouzi, 2008; Lai, 2010; Prospero, 2012; Kim, 2013) and Dynamic Assessment (i.e. Poehner & Lantolf, 2013; van Compernelle & Williams, 2012, 2013; Poehner, 2008). However, very little work has considered the dialectic unity of integrating CBI with DA in a regular language classroom (Prospero, 2012). This study provides a detailed report on the implementation of CBI and DA to teach Chinese rhetorical concepts in a study abroad context. It follows Vygotsky's conceptualization of ZPD in teaching scientific concepts and in understanding and promoting learner's development (Vygotsky, 1987 & 1989b). To that end, this dissertation contributes to the field of SLA by devising and implementing a theory-grounded enrichment program with advanced L2 Chinese learners.

In this study, mediated supports between the teacher/researcher and the learners were the central components for the process of CBI and DA procedures. According to Elkonin's (1998, p.299) observation that for Vygotsky interaction is "a source of development," I used a microgenetic approach to examine interactions and the ways in which they appeared to facilitate learners' internalization. In addition, the present study builds on the reasoning of Poehner (2008) and provides empirical support for his claims that DA principles can better provide assistance during instruction and is continually attuned to learners' needs. In individual DA, evidence was presented to suggest that DA procedures can effectively track and support learners' cognitive

development; with larger group of learners, this study probes into the effects of concurrent and cumulative approaches to G-DA and also examines peer-to-peer interactions.

Through CBI instruction, the enrichment program aims to promote learners' internalization of theoretical knowledge about Chinese rhetoric so that this knowledge functions as psychological tools with which learners can regulate their writing performance. The following section reviews the evidence on which the preceding claims are based. The research questions that guided this study are presented again and serve to frame the discussion, with particular attention given to how these questions were explored and to how the various findings were interpreted. The discussion then turns to exploring the limitations of the present study and finally offers a set of recommendations for future research in the current landscape of SLA, applied linguistics, and intercultural rhetoric.

9.2 Review of Findings

The overall findings demonstrated that the integration of CBI and DA had a positive impact on learning Chinese rhetoric among L2 advanced Chinese learners. As was described in the first chapter, this study aimed to answer three questions concerning Vygotsky's notion of ZPD and his educational applications in instruction and assessment. The first question dealt with learners' conceptual understanding through the CBI intervention:

In what ways, if any, does CBI affect the development of learners' conceptual understanding of Chinese rhetoric? In particular, did learners gain awareness of the differences between English and Chinese rhetoric? If so, how did CBI enhance learners' understanding of their L2 knowledge and writing ability?

The results from learners' materialization (i.e. learners-created SCOBAs, verbalization data, and learners' writing products) allowed us to study their conceptual development in its formation. By revising the writing style from English deductive style to Chinese “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach, Kai's case provided a holistic profile on his internalization of the concepts. The amounts and quality of the revisions made to the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” and the Open the door approach indicated that most learners responded successfully to the CBI intervention in regards to the notion of Chinese theme, thesis statement, writer's responsibility and reader's involvement.

The second question related to the dialogic mediation that was offered in a dynamic manner during the enrichment program.

To what extent can interactions during DA actually promote learners' development? Specifically, how did the dialogic mediation between the teacher and the learner serve to track and support learners' development? Also, how did the mediated support function in a group-DA context?

Substantial insights into learners' abilities were gained through their interactions with the teacher and their peers. The interactive data revealed that DA helped to 1) identify individual's ability; 2) track and promote learners' development over time; 3) establish learners' autonomy and self-regulated learning; 4) render classroom interaction more systematic and more attuned to learners' needs. In addition, the results from group mediated interaction revealed the possibilities of mutual scaffolding among peer interactions.

The third question was concerned with learners' reflections toward the enrichment program.

How effectively can the insights into learners' abilities gained from CBI and DA be used to develop an enrichment program that tailors instruction to the

individual's abilities and addresses areas in which learners experienced difficulties?

Personal data was collected throughout the enrichment program, which included the bio-data from the biographical and language survey, and the pre-intervention and post-intervention interviews. As discussed in Chapter 6, learners, including Pete and Carol, claimed there were positive effects from learning Chinese rhetoric through the CBI intervention and DA procedures. They started to become aware of the notion of rhetoric while learning the Chinese language; they reported that the Chinese rhetoric styles began to regulate their thinking, especially when they were writing articles. The cognitive changes in learning the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach observed from Evan and Kai also indicated that the program successfully promoted learners’ awareness and understandings of Chinese language and culture through the instruction on rhetoric. Additionally, learners reported some remaining difficulties after participating in the study. For instance, they described their inabilities to select the most appropriate writing style and struggle to differentiate between the “*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach with the Dragon approach. A few learners even requested detailed instruction about the “Open the door” approach as they finally noticed the differences between it and the English deductive writing style.

These claims were valuable as they provided insights about future improvement of the program. Learners’ suggestions were centered on the difficulties and loads of reading and writing tasks, and the format of peer-revision. They recommended that the instruction could integrate not only the concepts of rhetoric style but also the content of the article as the linguistic problems sometimes hinder their selection of the appropriate writing convention. To this end, learners requested more in-class reading and out-of class writing activities to further equip them to better understand how to

write Chinese articles with the appropriate writing style. In regards to the activity of peer-interaction, Ryan suggested the idea of having two learners construct one article together as they could discuss and exchange ideas, and more importantly, learn from each other. Also, Carol indicated her awareness of selecting appropriate writing topics for sharing with peers or in a group context as some topics might be too private for the individual learner.

9.3 Limitations of the Present Study

Regardless of the positive and potential implications of the findings reported in the previous section and data analysis chapters, the current project had some potential weaknesses. The first issue related to the methodology of this study. As participants were recruited and selected based on their language performance, they did not share a common native language. Although most of them were able to communicate fluently in English, there were still limitations for some of the participants at times when they tried to express their thoughts in Chinese or in English as both were an L2 and therefore not the language they primarily use to organize their thinking. There were no limits regarding which language was used for interaction during the intervention sessions. Most of the time, learners selected Chinese as the main venue for communication, but sometimes they would use English for the purpose of negotiation and explanation.

Since learners' verbalization data and their collaborative interactions with the teacher and peers were the major components for data analysis, a microgenetic approach was applied to examine L2 development through a broad transcription analysis. Both utterances and non-verbal behaviors were scrutinized because both are

integral to capture the signs of learner's development. As stated in Chapter 5, the target language used in the transcription is English; but whenever learners or the teacher aimed to emphasize a feature through Chinese, three way of transcription like Chinese characters, pinyin, and English translations was provided. However, it was possible to lose the essential meaning of interactions when translating the utterances from Chinese to English. In addition, learners' responses often appeared as a mixture of Chinese and English, which posed another level of difficulty for analyzing. Due to the scope and the design of the current study, intercoder reliability was not available because of the time constraints on the required training, such as interpretation of learning through transcription, the CBI intervention and DA procedures.

The second concern was the issue of validity on learners' writing performance. Traditionally, a grader was usually included in the L2 study, especially for establishing the validity of learners' outcomes. Through the CBI intervention in this study, learners' growth was examined according to their writing products and the extent to which they transferred Chinese rhetoric concepts into future writing activities. Based on the goal of this study, the instruction on Chinese rhetoric was not to emphasize the concepts of Chinese rhetoric over the other rhetoric styles learners were familiar with; it aimed to assist learners to acquire the awareness of intercultural rhetoric by allowing them to choose the most appropriate writing style that fit with writing purpose. Therefore, no specific Chinese writing style was emphasized and learners' development was only based on how he/she utilized the rhetorical concepts. To this end, another grader was not considered for the design of this study.

9.3 Directions for Future Research

In a recent study Lantolf (2011) suggested four fruitful areas for future SCT-L2

research. The possible research lines he proposed are as follows:

1. Implement dynamic assessment within group-wide ZPDs.
2. Apply Slobin's (2003) thinking-for-speaking framework, especially the speech-gesture synchronization defined by McNeil (2005).
3. Extend the scope of CBI beyond grammar and into fields such as pragmatics, figurative language and the interface between language and culture (i.e. languaculture).
4. Reconstruct the role of educational praxis in developmental processes.

In the following I would like to discuss the connections between Lantolf's research lines and this study, along with potential directions for future research.

In the current research, dynamic assessment has been employed as the major tool for diagnosing learners' cognitive development. Assistance from the mediator/teacher in both one-on-one and group ZPD contexts was organized and delivered under the guidelines of the Adapted Mediation Scale (Appendix C). The mediator's intent of using more scripted prompts was to see how immediately learners reached the correct response, so the assistance would be more explicit and directive from the outset. As discussed in Poehner and van Compernelle (2011), more flexible frames in providing DA procedures, such as the collaborative and cooperative frames, could help examine learners' process of working through the task and also what kinds of support that learners' called upon. For instance, in Poehner and van Compernelle's study, it was argued that by simply observing the learner's response to a prompt, it was possible to ascertain whether the learner was stretching to do more. When the learner voices confusion or does some other nonverbal behaviors like silence, it may represent the extra time needed for making new connections. This dynamicity was required for mediators to negotiate and support if the DA procedures were applied in either collaborative or cooperative interactional frames.

Future projects could consider implementing DA procedures in a flexible dialogical format and allowing learners to establish a development phase while interacting with the mediator so that their struggles and developmental process could be observed and assisted. In addition, based on the discussion of implementing DA procedures in a group setting from Chapter 8, future research could focus on examining the constraints and guidelines for implementing flexible interactive frames in not only one-to-one but group contexts as well. Furthermore, the peer interaction that happened within G-DA sessions also provides useful insights on how learners mediate each other within ZPD. Most of the dialogues appeared in peer interaction were free talks, so asking to what extent their interaction could be applied in either collaborative or cooperative interactional frames as Poehner and van Compernelle (2011) suggested will be an interesting issue for future analysis. Finally, it is recommended that future studies adopt a broader scope, such as over a longer period of time, or having an experimental group to further compare the effects and to provide useful insights for both researchers and practitioners.

In addition to the inclusion of DA in individual and group ZPD contexts, this study considers a microgenetic approach to analyze collaborative interactions. Characterized as a ‘very short-term longitudinal study’ (Wertsch, 1985, p.55), microgenetic analysis enables researchers to observe the moment-to-moment revolutionary shifts that lead to development and independent mental functioning. Vygotsky (1987) proposed that thought and language form a dialectical unity in which language structures thinking as much as it is structured by thinking since thought is externalized in social and private speech (or in writing). McNeil has extended Vygotsky’s theory to include gesture as a key component of thinking (e.g. McNeil, 1992, 2005). In his revised theory, McNeill goes beyond how gestures reveal thought

in a dynamic (or dialectical) perspective to look at ‘how gestures fuel thought and speech’ (2005, p. 3). Due to the scope of the present study, learners’ utterances along with non-verbal behaviors such as hesitation, nodding and other gestures were analyzed to study their thoughts and development. Future direction could possibly follow the framework of McNeil’s theory, ‘Growth Point’ to analyze how speech and gesture synchronize to represent and depict thoughts simultaneously.

Another Vygotskian’s educational application implemented in this enrichment program is Concept-based instruction. Unlike many previous L2 studies on CBI, the current research integrates both Gal’perin and Davydov’s approach for organizing principles and concepts; learners were first given with the pre-designed SCOPA, and then they were also allowed to create and revise their own materializations throughout the enrichment program. The benefit of allowing freedom in the highly structured nature of CBI is to leave adequate room for adaptability on the part of both teachers and learners. Participants were able to learn the rhetoric concepts; meanwhile, the concepts allowed learners to think through them (i.e. verbal thinking) and were also the very content of thinking. This result aligns well with Newman and Holzman’s distinction between *tool-for-result* and *tool-and-result* methodologies (1993). Tools-for-results are the tools that are constructed with a specific purpose and functionality in mind — the goal of the tool meets the reason for doing something. On the other hand, tools-and-results are tools that are constructed and used as part of the results. The tool maker’s tools are tools but they are also the results of tool making. A core tenet of Vygotskian theory is that individuals use tools to transform their environment and, in the process, are themselves transformed. From this perspective, Newman and Holzman content that only a tool-and-result approach can fully realize human development as a transformative, revolutionary activity.

Although engaging learners in the creation of their own symbolic tools opens the door to developmental trajectories, the formal introduction on the concepts (i.e. the use of teacher-made SCOBAs) is still important for identifying key principles and guidelines. The current research focuses on the instruction of Chinese rhetoric styles and how the internalization of rhetoric concepts leads to understandings of Chinese language, culture and society; these concepts are difficult to understand if they are not been introduced systematically. Without the teacher's formal introduction and the use of pre-designed SCOBAs, it is possible that learners would be left undirected in their own searching process and also fail to transform their development. This research thus argues the implementation of teacher-made SCOBAs and students' own-created materialization informs the Vygotsky-based instructional program, CBI, not only in pedagogical aspects but also the theoretical grounds.

With regard to the concepts presented through the CBI intervention, this research contributes to the current CBI literature by extending the range of applications beyond discrete points of grammar. Three major rhetoric concepts are explored within this study; future direction could focus on expanding the rhetoric concepts with other Chinese topic such as topic chains in Chinese discourse (W. Li, 2004) and topic-prominence vs. subject prominence in L2 acquisition (Jin, 1994). A concept map of this scientific knowledge is needed to be established for advanced Chinese language instruction.

Vygotsky argued for the unity of theory/research and practice to the extent that practice rather than the laboratory is where theory is to be judged (Vygotsky, 2004, p 304). Lantolf (2011) also advocated Vygotsky's claim of educational praxis over Piagetian perspectives that pedagogical practice is the relevant research that not only is informed by, but also informs, the theory. He stated that the crucial feature of praxis

in contemporary understanding is the dialectic unity of consciousness (i.e. knowledge or theory) and action that results in the creation of an object. The present study offers a contribution to Sociocultural Theory by implementing two important Vygotskian pedagogies in a regular L2 classroom within a study abroad context. Important implications of praxis for instructed second language development are explored. First, this project indicates the effectiveness of implementing DA procedures with scripted prompts in both individual and group contexts. Second, this research considers an alternative approach to SCOPA design that allows learners to use the teacher-made flow-chart and to create their own materializations. The results inform the relative effectiveness of various approaches to SCOPA construction on L2 learning, such as a flow-chart containing a fair amount of verbal information (Negueruela, 2003), a highly imagistic schema (Yanez Prieto, 2008) , and a self-created clay model that entails tactile activity (Serrano-Lopez & Poehner, 2008). Third, a particular attractive area in this regard is the gestures L2 learners use while engaging in DA procedures and SCOPA construction; it creates and provides the useable images of concept formation and potential pedagogical values that will shed light on the theory of SLA.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Informed consent form for social science research



Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research

The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Project: Developing writing competence in Chinese as a second language through Concept-Based Instruction and Dynamic Assessment

Principal Investigator: Yu-Ting Kao
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1. **Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to help develop your abilities to write in Chinese in socially appropriate ways through a teaching method called *concept-based instruction*. Learning to write another language is about much more than learning new vocabulary and grammar— it also entails the ability to understand the connection behind new vocabulary and grammar that reflects knowledge of the writing conventions of the target language. Through the use of an interactive form of teaching and assessing, the sessions are designed to enhance your Chinese writing competence and provide better insight into your abilities, including those that still require support, by providing assistance from the researcher/teacher while you take the test.
2. **Procedures to be followed:** You will be asked to participate in six (6) video and audio-recorded teaching sessions with a researcher/teacher. The focus is on

learning concepts relevant to Chinese rhetoric styles and its application in various genres. During teaching sessions, you will participate in a number of tasks in collaboration with peers and the researcher that are similar to activities you regularly do in the classroom, including explicit instruction and discussion about the concepts, and writing tasks. All of these tasks are designed to help you become a more capable speaker of Chinese in academic field.

3. **Benefits:** The benefits to you include learning more about Chinese rhetorics and potentially improving your writing abilities. The benefits to society include learning more about how languages are learned and the role of instruction and assessment in second language education. Additional benefits include the potential to inform language learning materials developers.
4. **Duration/Time:** You will be asked to participate in six (6) sessions with the researcher at your convenience over the course of not more than six (6) weeks. Each session will last approximately 1 hour to 1 hour and half, for a total of 6 to 8 hours if you complete the study.
5. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Your participation in this research is confidential. The videotapes will be stored and secured in password-protected digital files. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, video clips, screen shots, and/or written transcripts may be employed to exemplify how dynamic assessment works. Other forms of data (e.g., participants' writing samples) collected during the study will also be stored in electronic (scanned) password-protected files and archived for future research projects, educational, and/or training purposes. Your name and any other personally identifiable information will never be used. Instead, pseudonyms will be used when referring to specific participants. Only the Principle Investigator, Yu-Ting Kao, and her advisor, Dr. Matthew Poehner will have access to the recordings.

Please indicate below whether or not you agree that segments (clips) of the recordings made of your participation may be used for the following purposes:

Clips may be used for **conference presentations**: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Clips may be used for **publications**: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Clips may be used for **educational/teaching purposes**: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Clips may be used for **training purposes**: ☐ YES ☐ NO

6. **Data Archiving for Future Use:** Normally, video and audio files will be destroyed five (5) years after your participation in this study. However, video and audio files can be valuable resources for research, educational, and training purposes. Please indicate whether or not you agree to allow the researcher to archive video and audio files of your participation in this research for future research, educational, and/or training purposes in the field of second language learning and teaching. In all cases, your data will remain password-protected and confidential.

Video/audio files may be archived **for future research**: ____ YES ____ NO

Video/audio files may be archived for **educational purposes**: ____ YES ____ NO

Video/audio files may be archived for **training purposes**: ____ YES ____ NO

7. **Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact the researcher, Yu-Ting Kao (yxk5085@psu.edu; +886-921-916-421) or her advisor, Matthew Poehner (mep158@psu.edu) with questions, complaints or concerns about this research.

8. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to participate in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer or participate in any activities you do not want to participate in. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.

9. **Compensation:** You will receive financial compensation for your time in the amount of \$100 (NTD) per session, for a maximum total of \$800 if you complete the study. You will receive compensation in cash at the end of the session. You will be compensated only for the sessions you attend.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Participant Signature

Date

Person Obtaining Consent

Date

Appendix B: Biographical and Language Survey

1. Name
2. Age
3. Occupation (or previous working experience)
4. In which MTC class you currently enrolled?
5. What is your place of birth? How long did you live there?
6. What is your native language (first language)?
7. What is your motivation in learning Chinese? Why you choose Taiwan to learn Chinese?
8. Why have you participated in this project?
9. What are your expectations for this project?
10. Please describe your experience of studying Chinese/other languages up to this point. Please include as many details as possible, e.g. your approach to learning the language, the role of the teacher, aspects you consider important for learning a language, etc.
11. Have you lived/studied/traveled abroad? Where? When? For what length of time?
12. Do you have any stories about language learning, living or studying abroad, or interacting with speakers of other languages which you would like to relate here? Please give as many details as possible.

Appendix C: Mediation scale

➤ Mediation Scale from Aljaafreh & Lantolf (1994:471)

0	Tutor asks the learner to read, find the errors, and correct them independently, prior to the tutorial.
1	Construction of a “collaborative frame” prompted by the presence of the tutor as a potential dialogic partner.
2	Prompted or focused reading of the sentence that contains the error by the learner or the tutor.
3	Tutor indicates that something may be wrong in a segment (e.g., sentence, clause, line) — “Is there anything wrong in this sentence?”
4	Tutor rejects unsuccessful attempts at recognizing the error.
5	Tutor narrows down the location of the error (e.g., tutor repeats or points to the specific segment which contains the error).
6	Tutor indicates the nature of the error, but does not identify the error (e.g., “There is something wrong with the tense marking here”).
7	Tutor identifies the error (“You can’t use an auxiliary here”).
8	Tutor rejects learner’s unsuccessful attempts at correcting error
9	Tutor provides clues to help the learner arrive at the correct form (e.g., “It is not really past but some thing that is still going on”).
10	Tutor provides the correct form.
11	Tutor provides some explanation for use of the correct form.
12	Tutor provides examples of the correct pattern when other forms of help fail to produce an appropriate responsive action.

➤ Adapted Mediation Scale

1. The learner is able to explain the writing pattern with specific examples.²
2. The learner is able to notice the writing pattern, but can’t indicate specific examples.

² Level 1 to 5 indicates the learner’s capability in applying the concept of Chinese rhetoric to reading and writing tasks.

- i. Tutor provides clues to help the learner to identify examples.³
 - ii. Tutor provides some explanation (i.e. literal meaning) of the examples.
 - iii. Tutor explains the organization of the text with specific examples.

- 3. The learner is able to understand the organization of the text, but can't relate to any writing patterns.
 - i. Tutor reviews the three writing patterns with the learner by using SCOBAs (i.e. prompt the learner to explain his/her SCOA if necessary).
 - ii. Tutor narrows down a section of the text that implies the writing pattern (i.e. tutor points to the specific section).
 - iii. Tutor indicates the writing pattern to the learner, but does not identify examples.
 - iv. Tutor provides clues to help the learner to identify examples.
 - v. Tutor provides some explanation (i.e. literal meaning) of the examples.
 - vi. Tutor explains the organization of the text with specific examples.

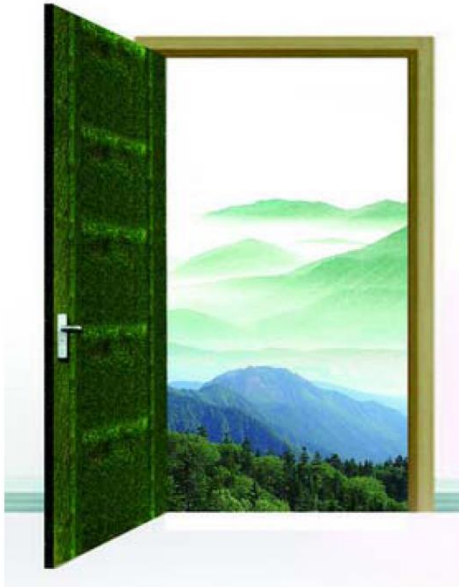
- 4. The learner is able to understand the text at the sentence level, but can't recognize the general organization of the text
 - i. Tutor reviews the three writing patterns with the learner by using SCOBAs (i.e. prompt the learner to explain his/her SCOA if necessary).
 - ii. Tutor narrows down a section of the text that implies the writing pattern (i.e. tutor points to the specific section).
 - iii. Tutor indicates the writing pattern to the learner.

- 5. The learner is struggling with the word meaning or grammatical structure.
 - i. The tutor prompts the learner to explain his/her understanding of the word/phrase.
 - ii. The tutor provides clues (i.e. associated meanings, similar phrases the learner learned earlier) to initial the learner's responses.
 - iii. The tutor provides explanation to the target word or structure.

³ The tutor's mediation scale indicates prompts from implicit to explicit

Writing pattern 1

“Open the door and see the mountain”

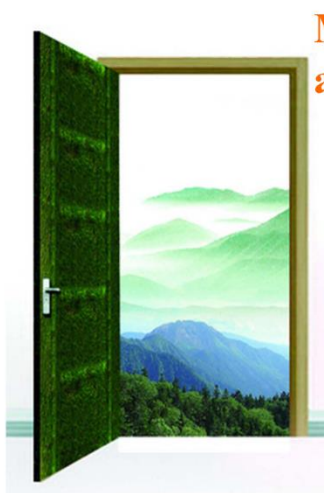


開
門
見
山

1

Writing pattern 1

“Open the door and see the mountain”



**Main
argument**



Topic introduction

Example 1

Example 2

Conclusion

2

*“Open the door
and see the
mountain”
approach*



1. The central theme (the ‘mountain’) of an article is clearly stated in the opening paragraph
2. The most similar rhetoric pattern as to **Anglo-American rhetoric**
3. Under the influence of Western education (i.e. English instruction), it is becoming a popular approach used in **Chinese academic writing**
4. State your thesis statement directly in 1st paragraph; support your arguments in 2nd and 3rd paragraphs; and restate and summarize thesis statement in 4th paragraph

3

<i>Qi</i>	起	Start
<i>Cheng</i>	承	Continue
<i>Zhuan</i>	轉	Turn
<i>He</i>	合	Conclude

4

“*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach

Main argument		Topic introduction	<i>Qi</i>
		Example 1	<i>Cheng</i>
	★	Example 2	<i>Zhuan</i>
		Conclusion	<i>He</i>

5

“*Qi-cheng-zhuan-he*” approach

1. The most common taught writing pattern for native Chinese
2. The turn (轉) feature present “**a new aspect on the topic**”
3. It was originally adopted from **classical Chinese poetry** and now can be seen in various Chinese genres.
4. Introduce your theme indirectly in 1st paragraph; support your theme with stories or examples in 2nd paragraph; elaborate your theme with counter examples in 3rd paragraph; and summarize or provide possible solution in 4th paragraph

6

Dragon approach



畫
龍
點
睛

7

Dragon approach



8

Dragon approach



9

Dragon approach



**Main
argument**

Topic introduction

Example 1

Example 2



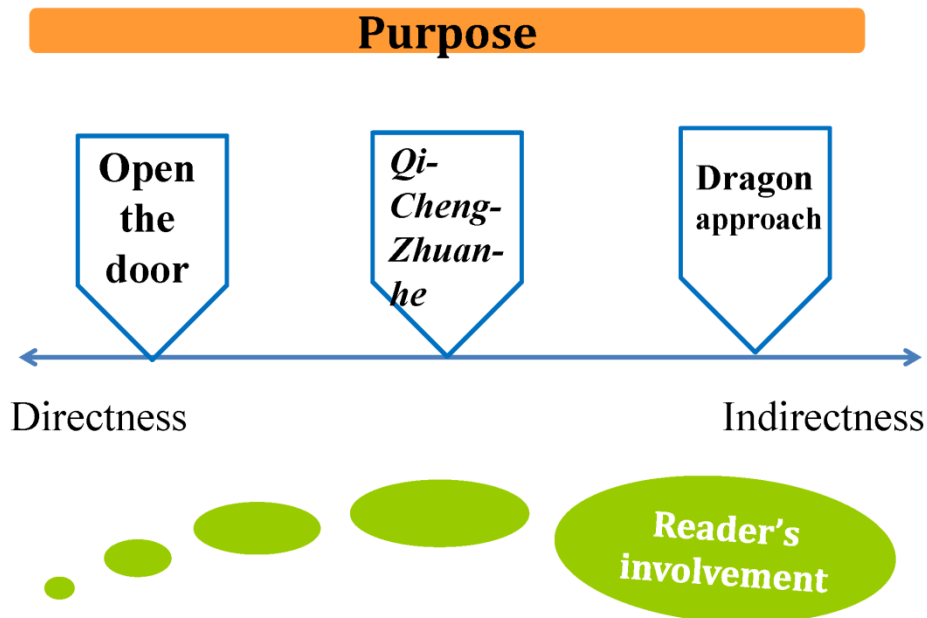
Conclusion

10

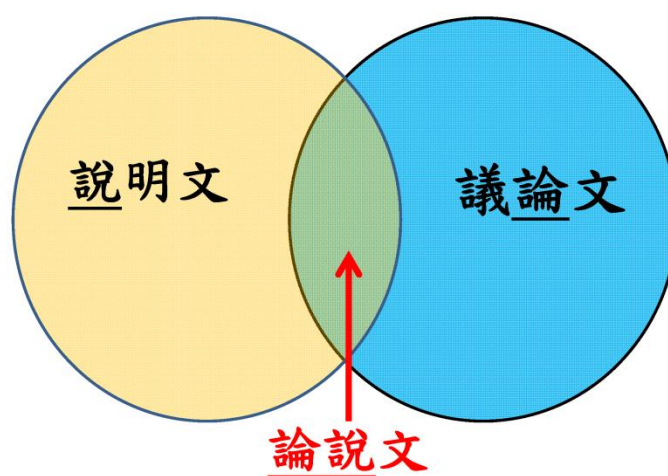
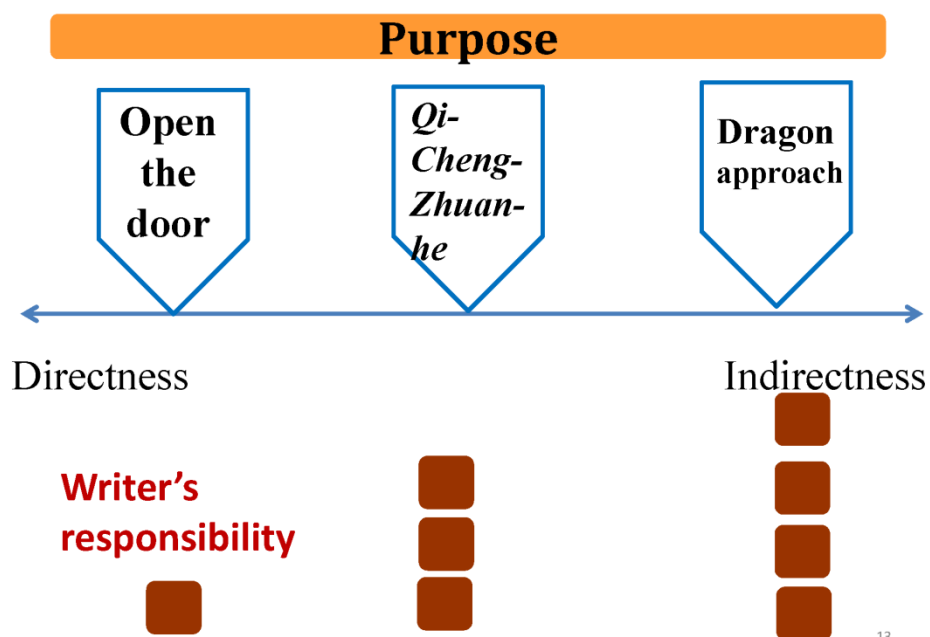
Dragon approach

1. Subdivision of the “起承轉合” pattern
2. The writer elaborates a topic in several paragraphs, the main idea is finally stated at the end of the essay.
3. Raise reader's attention to the topic in 1st paragraph; direct attention to the main argument you are about to give in 2nd paragraph; narrow down the supporting arguments in 3rd paragraph; and point out your argument strongly by the end
4. It is often used by most accomplished Chinese writers

11

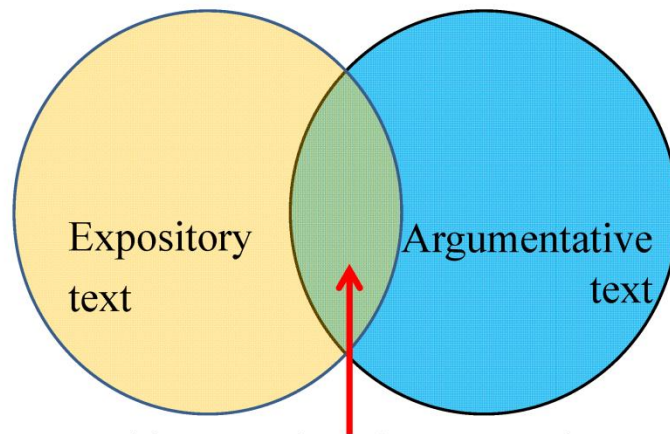


12



說明的說明文或純粹議論的議論文，都不常見。通常是說明中有議論，議論中有說明，至於比例的輕重，視作者對題目的立意來決定。

14



Chinese version of Argumentative text

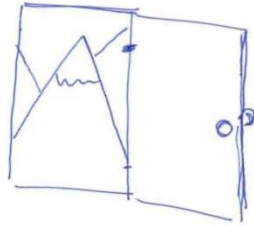
- Chinese argumentative text (lun shuo wen; 論說文) is a combination of argumentative text and expository text; in other words, it contains the characteristics of explanation and establishment of arguments through sayings, stories, and evidence.

15

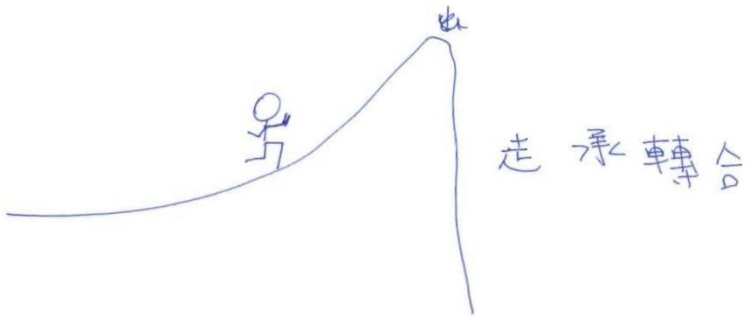
Appendix E: Learner-created SCOBAs

- 開門見山

Kai's SCOBAs



-



門見山

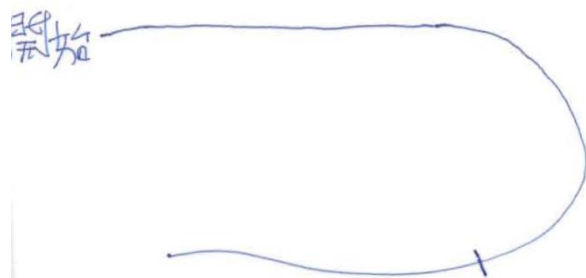
主提

列子

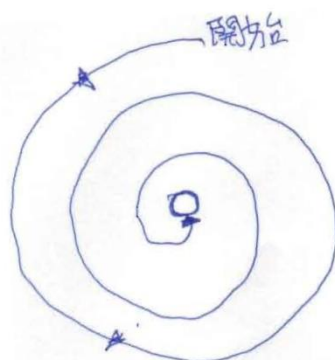
列子

Evan's SCOBA

起承轉合



畫龍點睛



山見門所

Anthony's SCOBA



合轉承起



睛點龍畫

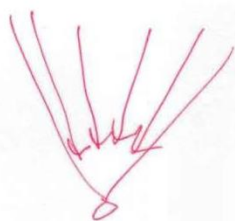




山見月門

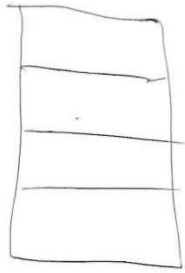


合轉承起



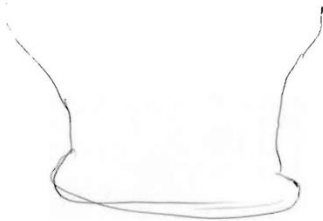
晴點龍畫

1.

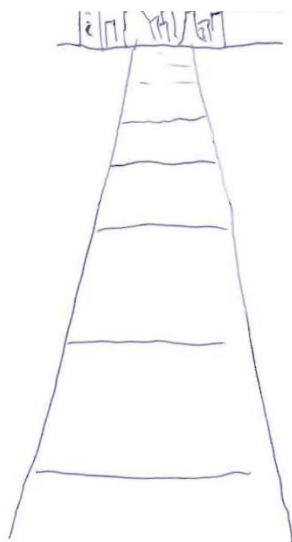


Carol's SCOBA

3.



畫龍點睛

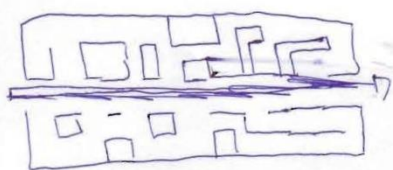


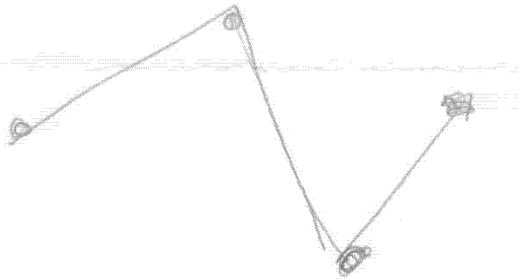
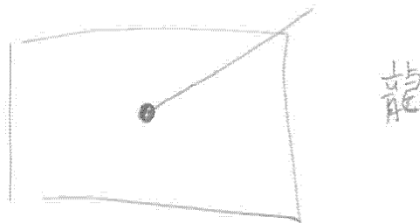
Pete's SCOB

起承轉合



開門見山





Appendix F: Transcription convention

Sequencing

[Onset of overlapping speech
]	End of overlapping speech
=	Latching (i.e., no gap between utterances)

Timed intervals

(.)	Micropause (less than 0.2 sec)
(2.0)	Timed pause (longer than 0.2 sec)

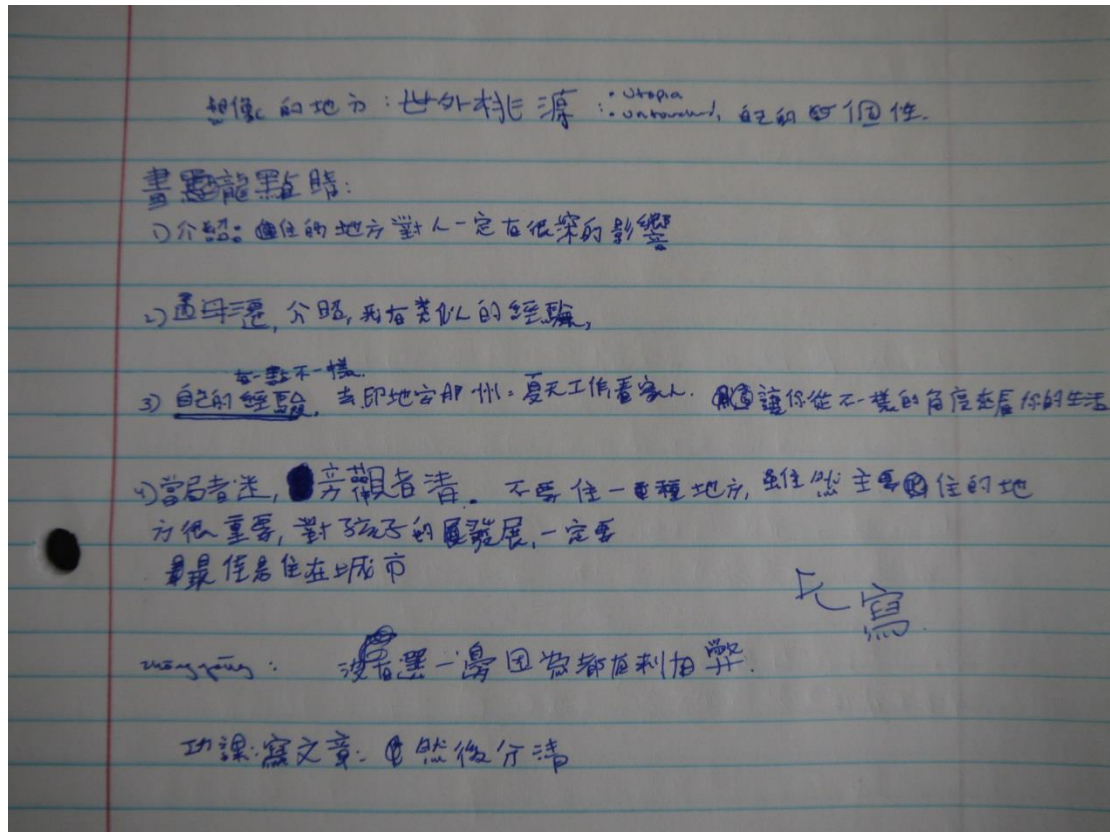
Speech delivery

<u>word</u>	Underlined words (or parts of words) indicates stress
::	Sound lengthening. Multiple colons indicate more prolongation
.	Falling intonation
,	Slightly rising/continuing intonation
?	Rising intonation (not necessarily a question)

Transcriber's doubts and comments

()	Empty parentheses indicate inaudible speech
(())	Transcriber's notes, comments, descriptions.

Appendix G: Kai's Outline on Near-Transferring Writing Task



CURRICULUM VITAE

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Ph.D. Curriculum & Instruction, Pennsylvania State University, 2014

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- Kao. Y.-T., *Assessing the potential: Alternative assessment in Chinese language classroom*, Annual Conference of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language, pp. 469-477, Dec., 2013, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
- Kao. Y.-T., *Above-potential growth: Qualitative assessment to Chinese academic writing skills*, American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages, Nov., 2013, Orlando, FL, USA.
- Kao. Y.-T., *Teaching Chinese rhetoric: A case study of an advanced Chinese learner in the U.S*, Annual Conference of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language, pp.723-730, Dec., 2012, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Kao. Y.-T., *Microgenetic development in Chinese rhetorical style: A case study of an intermediate-advanced Chinese learner*, XIXth Annual Meeting of the Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning, Oct. 2012, Provo, Utah, USA.
- Kao. Y.-T., *Exploring Chinese writing instruction and assessment in University level courses*. Writing Education Across Borders, Sep. 30- Oct.1, 2011, PA, USA.
- Kao, Y.-T., *Self-regulated strategy development revisited: Approaches to teach writing strategies to ELLs in EFL context*, The Eighteenth International Symposium and Book Affair on English Teaching, Nov. 14-16, 2009, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Kao, Y.-T., *Self-regulated strategy development revisited: Approaches and classroom implications to teach writing strategies to L2 learners*. Maryland Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Feb. 28, 2009, Baltimore, MD, USA.