

**LEARNING TO TEACH WRITING IN A TESL
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

Peter Joseph Pereira



**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Education
University of Malaya in Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in Education**

2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A Special and Sincere Thanksgiving to the Lord

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the following:

My supervisors, Prof. Dr. Hyacinth Gaudart and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Moses Samuel for their painstaking care and concern.

The management of Universiti Teknologi MARA for the study leave and scholarship.

The participants of this study, the lecturer, mentors and the five teacher trainees for their cooperation.

My colleagues at UiTM, Bernadette, Carol, Juridah, Chai and Adabiah for their support in many ways.

My wife, Corrine and daughter, Nicole for the love, encouragement and understanding.

Dedicated
to
My Parents
Arthur & Mildred Pereira

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the manner in which five teacher trainees (all ex-teachers) attempted to implement ideas obtained from a course on teaching ESL writing, conducted at the University of Malaya under the B.Ed. (TESL) programme. The lecturer of the ESL writing course focussed on four areas: language-focussed activities; genre-based approach; process writing and error correction. In order to see changes made to teaching strategies, I first investigated the past teaching practices of these five teacher trainees in ESL writing classes. I then described the instruction in teaching ESL writing and the five teacher trainees' responses to it. Finally, I looked at the manner in which ideas suggested were implemented during the simulated teaching and teaching practice components of the programme. Data were collected through a questionnaire, observation of lectures and classroom lessons and through interviews. The research focuses on how the various theoretical concepts were interpreted and on how materials and classroom practices were developed and used in the classroom. The research argues that traditional approaches still dominated much of the five teacher trainees' practices in the classroom and looks at critical pedagogy as a means to improve ESL writing in Malaysian classrooms.

Pembelajaran Pengajaran Penulisan Bagi Program Pendidikan Guru TESL

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ini dijalankan bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana lima orang guru pelatih (yang juga, merupakan bekas guru) cuba melaksanakan ide-ide yang diperolehi hasil dari kursus pengajaran penulisan ESL yang dijalankan oleh Universiti Malaya di bawah program B.Ed. (TESL). Pensyarah kursus penulisan ESL memberi tumpuan di dalam empat bidang: aktiviti penumpuan bahasa; pendekatan berdasarkan 'genre'; penulisan proses dan pembetulan kesilapan. Di dalam usaha melihat perubahan dilakukan ke atas strategi pengajaran, saya, pada peringkat awal, mengkaji bagaimana kelima-lima guru pelatih menjalankan pengajaran penulisan ESL di dalam kelas mereka sebelum ini. Kemudian, saya menjelaskan arahan di dalam syarahan pengajaran penulisan ESL dan tindak balas kelima-lima guru ini terhadap arahan tersebut. Akhir sekali, saya mengkaji bagaimana ide-ide yang dicadangkan dilaksanakan semasa pengajaran mikro dan amali pengajaran program tersebut. Data bagi penyelidikan ini diperolehi dari soal-selidik, pemerhatian ke atas syarahan dan cara pengajaran di kelas serta beberapa sesi temuduga. Penyelidikan ini memberi tumpuan bagaimana beberapa konsep teori diinterpretasikan dan bagaimana bahan pengajaran dan latihan di kelas dibentuk serta digunakan di dalam kelas. Saya berpendapat bahawa pendekatan secara tradisional masih kuat mempengaruhi cara kelima-lima guru pelatih mengajar di kelas. Selain itu, saya juga berpendapat bahawa pedagogi kritikan merupakan satu cara yang mampu mempertingkatkan mutu penulisan ESL di dalam bilik darjah di Malaysia.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
The Rationale for the Study	1
The Statement of the Problem	3
Research Questions	4
Theoretical Framework of the Study	5
Significance of the Study	9
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	11
Change and the Resistance to Change	11
The Need to Provide Immediate, Practical, Tangible Help	16
Criticisms of the Prescriptive Approach to Teacher Change	18
The Reflective Approach to Teacher Change	20
Issues in the Teaching of ESL Writing	23

Language Focussed Activities	23
The Genre-Based Approach	27
Criticisms of the Genre-Based Approach	30
The Process Writing Approach	32
Criticisms of the Process Approach	33
The Treatment of Errors	34
The Choice of Topic	36
Future Directions	37
Concluding Discussion of Chapter	37

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	39
The Site and the Subjects	
The Research Design	42
Data Collection Techniques	43
Questionnaire	43
Case Studies	45
Interviews	45
Classroom Observation	48
Document Analysis	50
Data Analysis	50
Research Question One	51
Research Question Two	52
Research Question Three	52

Triangulation	53
CHAPTER FOUR: PAST TEACHING EXPERIENCES	55
Depat	57
Techniques Used by Depat to Teach Writing	58
Problems Faced by Depat When Teaching Writing	59
Chee Leng	60
Techniques Used by Chee Leng to Teach Writing	61
Problems Faced by Chee Leng When Teaching Writing	61
Laura	62
Techniques Used by Laura to Teach Writing	63
Problems Faced by Laura When Teaching Writing	64
Amreet	65
Techniques Used by Amreet to Teach Writing	65
Problems Faced by Amreet When Teaching Writing	67
Siti	68
Techniques Used by Siti to Teach Writing	68
Problems Faced by Siti When Teaching Writing	70
Concluding Discussion of Chapter	70
CHAPTER FIVE: INSTRUCTION ON THE TEACHING OF WRITING	73
Background and Philosophy of the Lecturer of the Teaching of Writing Course	73
Introduction to the Course	76

Objectives of the Course	79
Language-Focussed Activities	81
Mutual Dictation: An Ideal Interactive Technique for Students Weak in English	82
Word Order Exercise	84
Reformulation	86
Memory Game	87
Concluding Discussion on Language-Focussed activities	88
Responses of the Five Teacher Trainees to Language-Focussed Activities	91
Genre-Based Approach to the Teaching of Writing	92
Teaching of Narrative Writing	95
Guidelines for Teaching the Narrative	99
Improving the Narrative	100
Teaching of Descriptive Writing	104
Teaching the Genre - Argument	109
Comparison of Language-Focussed and Genre-Based Teaching of Writing	113
Responses of the Five Teacher Trainees to Genre-Based Approach	114
Process Writing	117
Processes of Learning	117
Basic Principles of the Process Approach to Writing	119
Process Writing in Action - One Scenario	120
Problems of Using Process Writing in Malaysian Classrooms	121

Process Writing in Action: An Adaptation for Malaysian Schools	122
Responses of the Five Teacher Trainees to Process Writing	125
Techniques of Giving Feedback and Correction	127
Responses of the Five Teacher Trainees to Techniques of Giving Feedback and Correction	139
Concluding Discussion of Chapter	140
CHAPTER SIX: SIMULATED TEACHING	142
The Role of the Mentor and the Nature of Simulated Teaching	143
Depat's Lesson	145
Analysis of the Lesson	155
Chee Leng's Lesson	157
Analysis of the Lesson	162
Laura's Lesson	164
Analysis of the Lesson	170
Amreet's Lesson	171
Analysis of the Lesson	176
Siti's Lesson	177
Analysis of the Lesson	180
Concluding Discussion of Chapter	181
CHAPTER SEVEN: TEACHING PRACTICE	183
The Genre-Based Approach	184
The Use of Mind Maps	185

The Choice of Topics	197
Problems with Materials Selected	198
Catering to Mixed Ability	212
Language-Focussed Activities	213
Process Writing	215
Questioning Techniques	215
Group Work	216
Error Correction	218
Concluding Discussion of Chapter	219
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS	222
An Explanation of What Happened Drawing from Theories of Teacher Change	235
The Importance of the Choice of Topics	236
Recommendations	238
Limitations of the Study	240
Suggestions for Further Study	240
REFERENCES	241
APPENDIX A: Research Schedule	250
APPENDIX B: Questionnaire	251
APPENDIX C: Guide for Interviewing Teacher Trainees Before Starting the Teaching of Writing Course	257
APPENDIX D: Guide for Interviewing Teacher Trainees During the Teaching of Writing Course	259
APPENDIX E: Guide for Interviewing Lecturer	260
APPENDIX F: Guide for Interviews During Simulated Teaching	262

APPENDIX G: Guide of Interviewing Teacher Trainees During Teaching Practice	263
APPENDIX H: Guide for Observing Lectures	264
APPENDIX I: Guide for Observing Classrooms	265
APPENDIX J: Contact Summary Form	266
APPENDIX K: Language-Focussed Activities	267
APPENDIX L: Linking Words and Phrases	281
APPENDIX M: Exercise on Punctuation	282
APPENDIX N: Exercise on Argument	283
APPENDIX O: Appraisal of Teaching Form	285
APPENDIX P: KBSM Topics	287

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 1	Summary of Teacher Trainees' Background and Techniques Before Entering the B.Ed. (TESL) Programme	72
Table 2	Chart Used to Review Language Focussed Writing Activities	89
Table 3	Two Categories of Genre	94
Table 4	Main Features of Lessons Presented During Simulated Teaching	145
Table 5	Techniques Used by Depat to Teach Writing Before and After the Writing Course	223
Table 6	Techniques Used by Chee Leng to Teach Writing Before and After the Writing Course	224
Table 7	Techniques Used by Laura to Teach Writing Before and After the Writing Course	225
Table 8	Techniques Used by Amreet to Teach Writing Before and After the Writing Course	226
Table 9	Techniques Used by Siti to Teach Writing Before and After the Writing Course	227

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
Figure 1	Structure of B.Ed. (TESL) Programme in Relation to Teaching ESL Writing	41
Figure 2	Research Design	42
Figure 3	Mind Map	105
Figure 4	Development of Mind Map	106
Figure 5	Picture Given by Mr. Lopez to Help Teach the Genre for Descriptive Writing	108
Figure 6	Mind Map on Advantages and Disadvantages of Watching Television	110
Figure 7	Development of Mind Map on the Advantages and Disadvantages of Television	112
Figure 8	Example of a Student's Essay	132
Figure 9	Example of a Dialogue With Student	133
Figure 10	Example of a Student's Essay	135
Figure 11	Reformulated Version	136
Figure 12	Corrected Version With Procedure on How to Use It	138
Figure 13	Depat's First Handout	147
Figure 14	Depat's Second Handout	149
Figure 15	Depat's Transparency Display	150
Figure 16	Depat's Third Handout	152
Figure 17	Depat's Fourth Handout	152
Figure 18	Depat's Fifth Handout	154
Figure 19	Chee Leng's Handout	161

	Page	
Figure 20	Mind Map Created by Laura	165
Figure 21	Laura's Transparency Display	166
Figure 22	Laura's First Handout	168
Figure 23	Laura's Second Handout	169
Figure 24	Amreet's First Handout	173
Figure 25	Amreet's Second Handout	175
Figure 26	Siti's First Handout	179
Figure 27	Mind Map Constructed by Chee Leng	188
Figure 28	Mind Maps Created by Amreet	189
Figure 29	Siti's Picture Series	190
Figure 30	Mind Map Created by Laura	196
Figure 31	Siti's Handout	200
Figure 32	Chee Leng's Handout	204
Figure 33	Laura's Handout	208
Figure 34	Depat's Model	210
Figure 35	Model Depicting Concerns of Different Teachers after the Course	230

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UPSR	Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (Assessment test for national primary schools held at the end of primary level)
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (Malaysian Certificate of Education)
STPM	Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran (Higher School Certificate)
KBSM	Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah (Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools)
UM	University of Malaya
UITM	Universiti Teknologi MARA
RELC	Regional Language Centre, Singapore