

The Use of Rogerian Reflections in Responding to Doctoral Student's Research Paper in One-on-One Writing Conferences

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Abstract

Through a case study approach, the purposes of this study are to investigate how the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in a one-on-one writing conference helps improve the participants' research paper, and how the participants respond to the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences. The data were obtained from five text-based interviews with two doctoral students working on their research paper to be submitted for publication. The findings indicate that the use of Rogerian reflections helps the participants improve their research paper. Rogerian reflections, including pointing to structure, clarifying, expanding, recalling, and summarizing, facilitate interaction in non-threatening, one-on-one writing conferences. Through Rogerian reflections, the participants learn to find their own way to respond to their teachers and make use of the comments in the revision of their papers. Moreover, the participants in one-on-one writing conferences are aware of the respect they receive from their teachers, as a sense of ownership develops. Finally, the participants become confident in their writing since the interaction takes place in a supportive atmosphere. However, the participants mention some difficulties in trying to respond to their teachers' statements as their role switches from passive listeners to reflective thinkers.

Keywords: disciplinary writing, teacher response to student writing, Rogerian reflections, one-on-one writing conference

Introduction

Of the four skills of English, writing is perennially difficult to learn because it requires clear thoughts written in succinct language. As such, students of English often find writing a difficult task to accomplish since they are unable to connect grammar rules with sentence formation. Graduate students at Thai tertiary institutions encounter difficulties and complexities with the academic writing demands placed on them by their institutions. By its nature, academic writing requires a complete, active engagement with the facts and principles of a discipline (Rose, 1985). Furthermore, the academic writing process involves an intimate connection between the ability to write well and the ability to think well (Elder & Paul, 2006, p. 38). The academic writing is also considered a form of thinking essential for the academic success of international students (Arkoudis & Tran, 2007). Hyland (2007) also highlights that as a form of thinking, especially in tertiary literacy, students' ability to sustain arguments and synthesize ideas to write in English for academic purposes is crucial for academic success.

In studies of academic writing in university contexts, disciplinary research writing practices have gained increasing attention in recent years. In a doctoral study, Kiley (2009) indicates that students face a great number of challenges. This is, in part, because the expansion of deep understanding of such notions as theoretical or conceptual frameworks, knowledge of how to develop complex arguments, and mastery of doctoral writing conventions require crossing intellectual thresholds. Socializing into discipline-specific conventions and discourse is essential for doctoral students. To achieve academic excellence at graduate schools, doctoral students are required to fulfill various academic tasks and

requirements, including being able to present research and report findings in the form of conference papers, journal articles, or theses/dissertations. This is one of the most important academic competencies for graduate students in various academic disciplines (Casanave, 2002; Flowerdew, 1999).

While several studies have investigated the types and conventions of disciplinary academic writing tasks from teachers' perspectives (e.g., Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Hyland, 2004), others have examined master's or doctoral students' writing needs, difficulties, and coping strategies (Hsu, 2009; Huang, 2010; Lin & Joe, 2011). Still, a great number of studies interviewed novice scholars who had just completed their doctoral degrees to explore their feelings about writing for publications (Cheng, 2006; Flowerdew, 2000; Li, 2006). However, most of these studies put a great emphasis on native English speaking (NES) or English as a second language (ESL) graduate students in the U.S. Relatively few examined graduate-level academic writing practices in non-Anglophone or English as a foreign language (EFL) settings. Moreover, most studies included only doctoral students and examined their academic writing needs and difficulties (Kuo, 1998, 2001; Lin & Joe, 2010). To the best of my knowledge, no study deals specifically with how Thai doctoral students cope with the challenges of academic writing tasks. Specifically, little effort has been made to investigate how Thai professors respond to Thai doctoral students' writing, and this is the starting point of the current study. It is therefore that this study aims to explore the use of Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences. This study also examines how Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences help develop Thai doctoral students' research papers. As such, this study will shed light on the process of writing development for Thai learners of English and the role of Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences in writing.

In the next section, a review of the literature on teacher response to student writing, Rogerian reflections as ways of responding to student writing, and the importance of one-on-one writing conference are provided.

Teacher Response to Student Writing

Teacher feedback, oral or written, plays a key role in helping students improve their writing skills because comments create the motive for doing something different in the next draft; thoughtful comments create the motive for revising. Without comments from their teachers or peers, student writers usually revise in a consistently narrow and predictable way. Sommers (1982) has conducted a great deal of research on what constitutes effective responses to student writing. In one study, she examined the responses to student papers from thirty-five different teachers. She found that teachers' comments took students' attention away from their purposes in writing a particular text and focused that attention on the teachers' purpose in commenting. Teachers' comments on student writing reflected the hierarchy of their concerns about students' papers. Sommers (1982) concluded that major issues should be addressed more prominently and at greater length; minor issues should be addressed briefly or not at all. It is more helpful to comment explicitly, substantively, and in detail, two or three important issues than it is partially about many matters. Many skilled readers find the experience of responding to student writing to be one of steadily deciding not to comment on slightly important points. As such, restraints allow teachers to focus their energy on only a few important points and also tend to generate a cleaner and more precise message for students.

Rogierian Reflections as Ways of Responding to Student Writing

Psychologist Carl Rogers (1972) argues that in educational settings, more participation on the part of learners and better communication between faculty and students are desperately needed. In composition classes, teachers need to concentrate on their role as audience members since communication is two-directional. Listening to students provides teachers with a chance to respond to students' writing. In Vygotsky's (1962) *Thought and Language*, composition teachers can accomplish more by responding to students using both means of communication, writing and speaking. Rogers (1972) also suggests the one-on-one setting because the interaction between student and teacher satisfies the student's needs. This kind of response style can provide effective oral feedback, allowing a discussion of possible alternatives for students.

Research indicates that learning groups constitute a powerful pedagogy and that they promote the most effective form of learning—active and experiential. Johnson (1980) points out that teaching and learning do not typically take place within a dyadic relationship between an adult and a child. A student's learning takes place within a network of relationships with peers, and it is these relationships that form the context within which all learning takes place. The interaction between student and teacher promotes active learning and leads to attitude change which consequently brings about motivation, problem solving, skill building, and content mastery. Rogers (1969) suggests this mode of communication be applied in composition classes in order to promote problem solving, skill building and content mastery. He argues that students learn more when teachers are open and not judgmental. In nondirective counselling sessions, Rogers (1972) indicates that clients are more likely to talk if the counselor's response is open and inviting and expressed as often as possible in the form of a statement rather than a direct question. In composition classes, Rogers suggests statements of reflections to be applied in one-on-one writing conferences that include pointing to structure, clarifying, expanding, recalling, and summarizing. In a broader sense, Rogierian reflections can be defined as the technique used by the therapist to repeat or reflect what the client is saying to get the client to articulate his or her feelings. Rogers recommends this as an effective form of nondirective counseling. As such, it can be used as a teaching device in composition classes. By adopting these reflections as ways to respond to student writing, students and teachers can continue the discussion or reach closure.

To conclude, Rogers (1969) believed that the individual could guide, regulate, and control himself, provided only that certain definable conditions existed. Those conditions include one-on-one writing conferences as part of composition classes. Rogers' reflections are believed to be an effective teaching method that reflects teachers' attitudes toward their students.

One-On-One Writing Conference

Teacher-student writing conference is viewed as a private conversation between a teacher and a student about the student's writing and writing process (Sperling, 1991, p. 132). The conference is considered beneficial in several ways including a) the effects of writing conferences on the student's writing achievement, learning, independence, and authority; b) effective and ineffective writing conferences; c) interaction during writing conferences; and d) effects of writing conferences on students' self-efficacy. Teacher-student writing conferences are individual, one-on-one teacher-student conversations about the students' writing or writing process. "As students write, teachers often hold short, informal conferences to talk with them about their writing or to help them solve a problem concerning their writing" (Tompkins, 1990, p. 370). For several decades, writing conferences were examined

under different names reflecting their multiple functions including: assisted performance (Vygotsky, 1978), response sessions (Hansen, 1987), face-to-face interaction (Reigstad & McAndrew, 1984), one-to-one teaching (Calkins, 1986), one-to-one interaction (North, 1995; Sperling, 1991), interactive dialogues (Wong, Butler, Ficzero, & Kuperis, 1997), and meaningful contact (Lerner, 2005).

Related studies on one-on-one writing conferences

In this section, the studies on writing conferences in four major categories are provided. These categories include: research on the effects of writing conferences on a student's writing achievement, learning, independence, and authority; research on effective and ineffective writing conferences; and research on interaction during writing conferences.

3.1.1 The effects of writing conferences on a student's writing achievement, learning, independence, and authority

A great number of studies support the use of writing conferences in composition classes because it makes students better writers and improves their habits and attitudes toward learning and revision skills (Bell, 2002; Eickholdt, 2004; Koshik, 2002), independence, and authority. These studies suggest that writing conferences increase students' higher-order and critical thinking skills as well as their learning by providing a social environment in which experts help novices become independent writers (Flynn & King, 1993). Furthermore, writing conferences facilitate students' learning in different ways than traditional methods. First, conferencing provides students with opportunities to observe a real listener who is asking questions and reflecting on writers' texts; they imitate this inquiry strategy when they compose (Mabrito, 2006). Writing conferences also enable hands-on activities in which students' own texts are in hand. Finally, they provide an informal and friendly atmosphere. Writing conferences promote student confidence (Harris, 1995a; Martinez, 2001); independence (Calkins, 1985; Harris, 1995a; Martinez, 2001; McIver & Wolf, 1999; Murray, 1979); and empowerment (Young & Miller, 2004). Studies suggest that students interact with their texts through conferences (McIver & Wolf, 1999) and finally develop a sense of authority and ownership (Martinez, 2001).

3.1.2 Effective and ineffective one-on-one writing conferences

Writing conferences are considered effective when a predictable and focused discussion between teachers and students allows students to generate ideas and solutions for their writing problems. During the conferences, teachers and students exchange their roles back and forth, and they both get an equal chance to talk, ask questions, describe, clarify, and summarize (Anderson, 2000; Calkins, 1986; Lain, 2007). Finally, while conferencing with students, teachers keep in mind that humor is effective and even necessary while criticizing students' work (Graves, 1983). The related studies indicated that in one-on-one writing conferences, students learned more when teachers put more emphasis on the content of the text than grammar (Kaufman, 1998); students did self-evaluations, and conferences were built on students' responses (Walker & Elias, 1987); teachers were friendly and approachable and acted as student-oriented nurturers, listened patiently, and focused on ideas, and there was humor (Kaufman, 1998). In contrast, students performed poorly in conferences where teachers focused too much on mechanics and grammatical mistakes (Oliver, 2001; Oye, 1993); took control and kept the power (Di Pardo, 1992; Fletcher, 1993; Walker & Elias, 1987); pointed out and solved all of the problems (Oye, 1993; Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989); lost patience (Johnson, 1993); asked unrelated questions or too many questions (Di Pardo, 1992; Fletcher, 1993); had low expectations and conducted correction-oriented

conferences (Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989; Wilson-Powers (1999); and did not understand students' purposes or provided complicated suggestions (Nickel, 2001).

3.1.3 Interaction during writing conferences

The main topics to which several researchers paid attention included a) differences in terms of the comments provided by a teacher and students; b) the variety of the teacher's interaction with weak or strong students; c) authoritarian roles and dominance of teachers; d) negative interactions between the conference partners; e) effects of students' expertise on the conference talk; f) participants' roles in conferences; g) discourse markers used; h) non-verbal communication and body language; and i) the amount and content of the talk. Based on studies of writing conferences, teachers and students were found to have different focuses and concerns about providing comments and asking questions (Gere & Stevens, 1985). Since students had different viewpoints about the functions of writing conferences, conferences served different purposes for different students (Sperling, 1991). Wong (1997) suggests that two-way conversations during conferences take place when students know a lot about their own topics. Students reflect on their learned more during writing conferences than in written responses or classroom discussions (Heyden, 1996). During conferences, teachers could give each student individual help while also providing specific feedback. Teachers do most of the talking and have authority during conferences (Keebler, 1995; Martinez, 2001; Newkirk, 1989; Sperling, 1990; Thonus, 2002). The most common roles of teachers are managers and editors, and the least common roles are listeners and collaborators (Bell, 2002). Teachers' use of unspoken agendas, interruptions, known-answer questions, and lectures make students passive, while the presence of actual questions, paraphrasing, uptakes, and supportive fillers make students engaged and active during conferences (Barker, 2003). Moreover, teachers communicate differently with less proficient and proficient students. For instance, a) teachers mainly focus on the rules of writing while conferring with less proficient students (Mitchell, 1990); b) the lengths of writing conferences are longer with proficient students (Mitchell, 1990; Pathey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997); c) these students receive more feedback from their teachers (Martinez, 2001; Mitchell, 1990); and d) teachers act as facilitators with proficient students, and they are more authoritative with less proficient students (Martinez, 2001). The gender of the instructors and the status relationships between the instructors and students affected the frequency and functions of discourse markers that have been used (Chiu, 2002). And finally, non-verbal behaviors and body language reflected the functions and types of conferences while also mirroring the displayed roles of the participants in writing conferences (Boudreaux, 1998; Jacob, 1982).

The Current Study

This case study investigated how the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in a one-on-one writing conference helps improve participants' research papers. It also examined how Thai doctoral participants respond to the use of Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences. The underlying framework of the current study was Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences. Based on these objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How do Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences help improve the participants' research paper?
2. How do the participants respond to the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences?

Methodology

Setting and Participants

The current study took place during the second semester of the Doctoral Program in Accounting at Mahasarakham Business School at Mahasarakham University in 2018. The course the researcher taught was English for Academic Purposes. This course provided doctoral students in the program with practical knowledge about writing a research paper. Twenty students with different English proficiency levels were enrolled in the course. Most of them had studied English for almost fifteen years but still struggled with the challenges of academic writing. Two students with considerable experience with academic writing were chosen to participate in this study. During the data collection period, the participants were in their last semester of study working on their research paper to be submitted for publication. Data for this study were obtained from five text-based interviews with the participants. The researcher had an opportunity to meet with them because the participants wrote a research paper to be submitted for publication and asked for comments for improving their paper from the researcher. Nalinee, a pseudonym for the first participant, wrote a research paper on Factors Affecting Human Resource Diversity Orientation Strategy: An Empirical Evidence from Electronic Businesses in Thailand. Malita, the second participant, wrote a paper on Strategic Accounting Practice Process Orientation of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Auto Parts Businesses in Thailand: An Empirical Investigation of Antecedents. With their strong background in English, the two participants still accepted that they faced many problems while writing the paper.

Data Collection

The data were collected from multiple sources including five text-based interviews with each participant and multiple drafts of their writing. Using Rogerian reflections as ways of responding to their research paper, the participants reflected on the teacher's statements pertaining to pointing to structure, clarifying, expanding, recalling and summarizing. In order to elicit information from the participants, the interviews were conducted in Thai. The drafts were read and reread to discover what kind of changes they had made on their revision. The use of multiple sources "allows the researcher to address a wide range of issues, to clarify meaning, to confirm the emerging findings and construct plausible explanations, and to ensure validity or trustworthiness" (Morita, 2002 pp. 54-55).

Data Analysis

All the recordings of the five text-based interviews were transcribed immediately and coded for analysis. The text-based interviews conducted in Thai were transcribed into English by the researcher. The analysis focused on the categories and themes that emerged from the data obtained. At the final stage of data analysis, follow-up interviews, which served as a participant checking procedure, were also conducted to confirm and/or clarify the interview findings.

Findings

The study revealed important themes in relation to the two research questions that the researcher addressed.

Question#1: How do Rogerian reflections in a one-on-one writing conference help improve the participants' research paper?

Nalinee

Pointing to structure

The excerpt below demonstrated how the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections with reference to pointing to structure helped shape Nalinee's understanding about how to write an introduction of her research paper. Through the interaction in a one-on-one writing conference, she learned how to announce the topic.

Teacher: Let's talk about the introduction section. You begin by mentioning how globalization has an impact on labor mobility which leads to an increase of diversity of human resource.

Nalinee: Yes. Then, I talked about the definition of human resource.

Teacher: Maybe you need to restructure this part to make it logical. What do you think?

Nalinee: OK. Let me put it this way. The rapid changes due to globalization have an impact on economy, communication, and information technology. They influence labor mobility which brings about diversity of human resource. Therefore, human resource is then identified differently in knowledge, ability and skills. What do you think?

Teacher: I like it. It is clear to me.

Recalling

In the following excerpt, the teacher tried to help Malita write the section of suggestions and recommendations for future research. The teacher's use of recalling helped Malita think of what the findings of her study suggested.

Teacher: This part is about suggestions and recommendations for future research.

Malita: Yes. But what do you mean by suggestions? What should I do about this section?

Teacher: It's about how your findings suggest further practice. You may start by thinking about the findings and how they inform your practice.

Malita: Oh. OK. Let me think of the findings first. They are all about positive and negative effects of the variables that I came up with. Well, I think they suggest two things.

Teacher: Good. Tell me what they are and how they inform your practice.

Malita: There are two recommendations for managerial contributions. Firstly, the results suggest that firms should provide accounting system effectiveness and accounting ethical orientation to enhance great strategic accounting practice process orientation for Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) Auto Parts Businesses in Thailand. Secondly, firms should pay close attention to the application of strategic accounting practice process capability stated by the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and accounting standard."

Teacher: Good. I like it.

Summarizing

The excerpt below illustrated how the teacher's use of summarizing helped Malita understand how to write an informative abstract. Through the interaction in a one-on-one writing conference, Malita learned to summarize her study and structure her abstract. She responded to the teacher's statements and began to understand what was needed to include in her abstract.

Malita: I find this part very difficult to write because it needs to be short and concise. I wrote this part many times, but I am still not happy with it.

Teacher: Yes. I agree. This part needs to be short but informative.

Malita: Please tell me what I should do with this section.

Teacher: I think you can start by telling me briefly what the whole study is about. Just focus on the main points.

Malita: Let me put it this way. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Auto Parts Businesses are considered important for generating national revenue in Thailand.

Teacher: Yes. What's next?

Malita: The industry is facing export competition with foreign countries, especially those ASEAN countries.

Teacher: What are the purposes of your study?

Malita: There is one purpose here. I want to examine the effects of antecedents on strategic accounting practice process orientation of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Auto Parts Businesses in Thailand.

Teacher: Good. Tell me how you collected data for your study.

Malita: I collected data by mailed survey from 106 Auto Parts Businesses in Thailand.

Teacher: How did you analyze the data collected?

Malita: I used correlation and multiple regression to analyze data.

Teacher: And your findings are ...

Malita: I found that accounting system effectiveness, accounting ethical orientation and stakeholder expectation had a positive effect on strategic accounting practice process orientation.

Teacher: Good job. Now, you know how to put all information in your abstract.

Malita: Thank you.

Clarifying

The excerpt below illustrated Nalinee's attempt to clarify the key term of her study. At first, she thought that this term was generally known among her audience. However, when asked for clarification for the term "human resource diversity orientation strategy," she tried to make it clearer to the teacher.

Teacher: In the literature review section, you mentioned a disciplinary term "human resource diversity orientation strategy."

Nalinee: Yes. It is the key term of this study. Do you find something wrong about this part?

Teacher: I wonder if you can make it clearer to your audience what this term means.

Nalinee: Ah, yes. I should not take for granted that my audience know this term.

Teacher: Tell me how you are going to clarify this term in your paper.

Nalinee: I would define the term "human resource diversity orientation strategy" as the potential of a firm in managing the difference of employees. It involves the facets of capability, knowledge and skill to integrate these competencies to be the potential of the firm through learning process, participation in organizations, and development of communication among several groups within an organization for the creation of a competitive advantage.

Question #2: How do the participants respond to the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in a one-on-one writing conference?

Respect from teacher

Nalinee and Malita reflected that that through the interaction with the teacher in one-on-one writing conferences they developed a sense of respect from the teacher. They began to feel that the teacher, while responding to their research paper, tried not to change the ideas they put in their paper:

“I felt very good about talking to the teacher in one-on-one writing conferences because I got a feeling that the teacher respected me. She tried to help me reflect my thinking about my writing. She tried to help me improve my paper. She didn't ask me to do this and that but talked to me about her impression of what she saw in my paper.”

Ownership of writing

Nalinee and Malita mentioned that with respect from the teacher they got a feeling that the papers were theirs. They would make a decision on their own how they would use the comments to improve their paper. The teacher put them in the role of the owners of the paper.

“In another course with another professor, I felt that I would do anything the teacher told me to do about my paper because he knew the best about the topic. He knew what's right or wrong. So, what I did when I met with another professor was sit silently and try to understand what he wanted me to do about my paper. But this time was different. The teacher talked to me as if I were knowledgeable about the topic. The teacher made me feel that I knew a lot about the contents and she put her comments as observations. If I agreed with her comments, I would just use them to improve the quality of my paper. If I had my own answers, I just explained them to her. She tried to understand my explanations.”

Confidence in writing

Nalinee and Malita acknowledged that after the conferences with the teacher they became confident about their writing. The way the teacher responded to their paper was nondirective and nonjudgmental. The comments as observations from the teacher during the conferences were beneficial for their revision and they became confident about their revising process.

“During the conferences, there were no comments like, “What's this? I don't get it. Why don't you do this instead? The teacher didn't pass a judgment on my paper. What she did was encourage you to take a closer look at my paper, try to make it clear to the readers, and use the comments for the revision of my paper. Without the negative comments, I felt that my paper was good enough. I felt confident about my writing and I made use of the comments she gave to improve my paper.”

Supportive atmosphere

Nalinee and Malita mentioned that while talking with the teacher in one-on-one writing conferences they had no stress. Talking the way professional writers do put them at ease.

“I think the most useful thing about talking in one-on-one writing conferences with the teacher was the supportive atmosphere. There were no negative comments. The way the teacher responded to my paper was more like an observation than a directive comment. There were no questions that put you at difficult situations. I responded to the teacher freely. The talk encouraged me to reflect my thoughts on the paper. I

began to learn to negotiate my meaning with the teacher in a non-threatening atmosphere.”

Discussion

The findings of the current study indicate that the participants benefit from the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in responding to their research paper. Through Rogerian's statements, including pointing to structure, recalling, summarizing, and clarifying, the participants learn to take a closer look at their paper and think of ways to respond to the teacher through reflective thinking. Consistent with previous findings, writing conferences increase students' higher-order and critical thinking skills as well as their learning by providing a social environment for the expert to help the novice become an independent writer (Flynn & King, 1993). During the conferences, teachers and students exchange their roles back and forth, and they both have equal chances to talk, ask questions, describe, clarify, and summarize (Anderson, 2000; Calkins, 1986; Lain, 2007). In addition, the issues concerning the interaction between students and teachers in one-on-one writing conferences need to be addressed here. The two participants gain respect from the teacher. They take ownership of their paper. In writing, opportunities for ownership occur when topics call for students to explore their experiences and opinions, or to elaborate on their point of view (Applebee, 1991, p. 554). According to Bright (1995), allowing students to have ownership in writing encourages students to write with "less difficulty and more confidence" (p. 3). Moreover, conferences help students to interact with their texts (McIver & Wolf, 1999) and experience the feeling of authority and ownership (Martinez, 2001; Steward, 1991). Receiving nonjudgmental comments from the teacher, students become confident in their writing (Harris, 1995a; Martinez, 2001); independence (Calkins, 1985; Harris, 1995a; Martinez, 2001; McIver & Wolf, 1999; Murray, 1979); and empowerment (Young & Miller, 2004). Finally, students acknowledge the supportive atmosphere that emerges in one-on-one writing conferences.

However, the participants voiced their opinions about how difficult it was to respond to the teacher's statements due to several reasons. For example, Nalinee and Malita mentioned that this kind of response style put them in the position of being owners of the paper. Through the one-on-one interaction at the one-on-one writing conferences, they began to think of effective ways to respond to the teacher's statements, which they found quite difficult to undertake. Moreover, they mentioned that this kind of response style, as suggested by Carl Rogers requires reflective thinking from the writer. Instead of sitting quietly in front of the teacher and listening to the teacher's comments, they learned to negotiate their meanings with the teacher, and they found that it was such a tedious task. Since Nalinee and Malinee were quite used to receiving feedback in the traditional way, which was the student coming with the paper and listening to what the teacher said about their paper, they had no control over their paper and they were not given opportunities to talk about their paper from their points of view. Additionally, what most Thai teachers did while giving feedback was point out all the grammatical errors and mechanical problems. Rogerian reflections switched their mode of communication with the teacher from monologue to dialogue. In other words, they learned to have a conversation with the teacher the way professional writers were supposed to do. These difficulties raised by the participants support the goal of the 21st century classroom, in which the students need to be prepared to become productive members of their future workplace.

Conclusions

Through a case study approach, the purposes of this study are to investigate how the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences helps improve the participants' research papers, and how the participants respond to the teacher's use of Rogerian reflections in one-on-one writing conferences. The data were obtained from five text-based interviews with two doctoral students working on a research paper to be submitted for publication. The findings indicate that the use of Rogerian reflections helps the participants improve their research papers. Rogerian reflections, which include pointing to structure, clarifying, expanding, recalling and summarizing, facilitate interaction in non-threatening, one-on-one writing conferences. Through Rogerian reflections, the participants learn to find their own way to respond to teachers and make use of the comments in the revision of their papers. Moreover, the participants in one-on-one writing conferences are aware of the sense of respect they receive from their teachers, as a sense of ownership of their research paper develops. Finally, the participants become confident in their writing since the interaction takes place in a supportive atmosphere.

Limitations of the study

Although the study yields important findings pertaining to teachers' response to student writing in Thai contexts, some limitations need to be addressed. Since Rogerian reflections include specific statements concerning pointing to structure, clarifying, expanding, recalling and summarizing, during one-on-one writing conferences, the participants find it difficult to give immediate responses to teachers since they are not used to this kind of response style. They suggested that it would be better if they were given some time to go over the paper and start responding to their teachers' statements. To solve this problem, a training session is recommended so that the participants can become familiar with this kind of response style. Moreover, the participants' research papers are quite lengthy; it is impossible for a researcher to point out all of the problematic parts of the papers. In this study, the researcher simply shows the salient parts that need to be addressed as supporting evidence in the current study.

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