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EMERGENT WRITING IN TAIWAN'S GRADE-ONE EFL CLASSES

Fang-Chi Chang
Shu-I Chang
Hsiu-Fen Hsu

ABSTRACT

An ongoing writing project has been implemented in Taiwan's EFL primary classes of more than 100 students for three years since September 2006. This paper reports the writing activities conducted in the first semester of the project between September 2006 and January 2007 along with the findings. The students were engaged in free drawing-writing activities in one week and in the following week selected written products were displayed in class with leveled instruction. The collected written products were analyzed under the guidance of three research questions on these young EFL beginning writers' writing development, beginning writing behaviors, and spelling performance. These young beginning writers explored writing in different forms, including drawing, letter writing, and word writing with the assistance of spelling-strategy instruction. In addition, the three writing behaviors detected in their writing are the application of particular writing principles, the employment of the codes and symbols to express intended messages, and the decoration of drawn-written products.

Key Words: EFL young learners, writing development, beginning writing behavior, early spelling

INTRODUCTION

English as a required subject was integrated into the Grade 5 curriculum in Taiwan in 2000 and then the Grade 3 curriculum in 2006. According to the General Guidelines for Grades 1-9 Curriculum for Elementary and Junior High School Education issued by the Ministry of Education (General Guidelines, 2006), the objectives of English education for primary school students from Grade 3 through Grade 6 are to develop

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listening and speaking skills. Literacy skills, though mentioned, are 'to be integrated at appropriate moments,' which makes literacy skills secondary to the oracy skills.

Paul (2003) pointed out that most Asian government officials pay much more attention to listening and speaking in early EFL education than to reading and writing, which may result in a "serious misperception of the needs of these children and what they are capable of" (p. 83). Paul explained that for ESL children, it is relatively easier for them to pick up spoken English even if they do not learn to read or write. However, EFL children "need to be able to read and write in order to speak beyond a basic level" (p. 83). Hence, the learning of written English could reinforce the learning of spoken English in an EFL context. In other words, the emphasis on spoken English should not take place at the expense of the learning of written English at elementary school level.

A balanced four-language-skill curriculum for EFL learners as early as possible is thus suggested by Paul (2003). Paul stated, "One skill supports another and helps the children look at the same patterns from various angles which is crucial in the process of internalization" (p. 96). An early introduction of a balanced curriculum including four language skills is also put forward by many researchers (e.g., Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004; Hudelson, 1989; Peregoy & Boyle, 1997; Samway, 1992; Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). Peregoy and Boyle (1997), for example, explained that the four language skills have "complex relationships of mutual support. Practice in any one process contributes to the overall reservoir of second language knowledge" (p. 102).

Samway (1992) also noted that learners' writing growth often reflects in their development in oral fluency and therefore if one's writing skill is bettered, one's speaking ability is usually enriched, too. Samway furthermore asserted that writing opportunities should be made available to all children, no matter whether they are English-as-a-Native-Language (ENL) learners, English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) learners or English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) learners and no matter whether their speaking proficiency is of a low, middle or high level.

When the researchers of the current study were contacted to assist in designing the English curriculum of Siang-He[1] Elementary School in 2006, based on our professional knowledge, we had a consensus that writing ought to be incorporated in a four-language-skill balanced curriculum. However, we were not able to locate related literature addressing systematical writing instruction for young beginning EFL learners; we

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could not find documented studies proving the significance of introducing writing to such learners; we also failed to find models of writing instruction for young beginning EFL learners. We then faced a challenge as to how writing could actually be incorporated in the curriculum. Armed with the relevant literature review, we understood the importance to start writing early and decided to start writing activities in the most unthreatening manner, that is, the load of the writing activities should not be demanding and should be manageable by students.

Writing was hence integrated into the Grade One English curriculum with 10 minutes per week scheduled for free writing in September 2006 as a try-out. To date the writing project has been practiced with the same group of students for three years with modifications for each semester and has yielded observable records of young EFL beginning writers' writing behavior and writing development. These findings shed light on the issue of integrating writing into an early EFL curriculum. This paper reports the writing activities conducted during the period from September 2006 to January 2007, the first semester of the writing project, and the findings. The literature reviewed for the theoretical grounding of writing activities and the theoretical basis for examining these EFL writers' written products for an understanding of their beginning writing performance in English is presented in the following section.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing-instruction approaches were found to help ENL young learners' writing development, for example, the language experience approach (Tompkins, 2008) and the interactive writing approach (McCarrier, Pinnell & Fountas, 2000). However, as mentioned, we failed to find literature addressing writing issues in relation to young EFL beginning learners. Beginning ENL young children's writing behaviors and the scaffolding notion of assisting with learning were thus reviewed to provide a base for designing the writing project in an EFL setting for young learners. This section addresses five issues: Broader Definition of Writing, Developmental Writing Stages, Spelling Development, Beginning Writing Behaviors, and the Input-Output Hypothesis.

Broader Definition of Writing

Clay (2001) noted, "When teachers do not expect children to be able

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to write, they do not give them opportunities to write, and therefore they will observe that children do not write" (p. 14). Generally speaking, the definition people have long held for 'writing' could be one major reason keeping adults from expecting children to be possible and capable writers. Scholars pointed out that people need to realize that 'writing' to many young children can be produced in many different forms, including drawing, scribbling, writing letters or words of invented spelling, phonetic spelling, etc., which should all be encouraged as young children advance to or are taught to write conventionally (Clay, 1975; DeFord, 1980; Karnowski, 1986; Linse, 2005; Schickedanz, 1986).

Thus, instead of viewing 'writing' as composing a paragraph or an article, which is what writing generally means to most adults, people need to accept a broader definition of 'writing.' That is, the output written down on paper by 'writers' of different ages and different language proficiency levels can be of various forms, including drawing by emergent writers.

Drawing, employed by young children to explain and embellish their writing (Karnowski, 1986), and writing are both expressive arts and purposeful (Jalongo, 2007). Moreover, as one of the primary ways young children employ to communicate, drawing often serves as a scaffold for writing development (Oken-Wright, 1998). That is, experiment with multiple symbol systems to gradually discover a satisfying written form through drawing. Young children would begin to produce letter-like symbols and eventually make letters of a uniform size. Then, if children are allowed and encouraged to 'invent spelling' at the letter- and/or word-level writing stage, they would develop an early and strong sense of phonemic awareness and letter knowledge for later literacy skills (Aram, 2005; Levin, Both-de Vries, Aram, & Bus, 2005; Martlew & Sorsby, 1995; Molfese, Beswick, Molnar, & Jacobi-Vessels, 2006; Welsch, Sullivan, & Justice, 2003).

A similar notion was proposed by Clay (1993) and Mayer (2007). According to Clay, while children explore writing they will a) attend closely to the features of letters and to learning letters, b) construct 'their own words' letter by letter, c) direct their attention to special features like serial order and space between words, d) work within the order and sequence rules of print, revealing these to themselves while constructing messages, e) break down the task to its smallest segments while at the same time synthesizing them into words and sentences, and f) engage in their own form of segmenting sounds in words in order to write them. The findings of Diamond, Gerde and Powell's (2008) study suggested that activities encouraging children to write were valuable for supporting young

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children's understanding of the alphabetic principle.

Teachers should look at writing in the same way that they look at children drawing or playing with building blocks which provide them with opportunities to explore and experiment (Schickedanz, 1986). Therefore, drawing, scribble writing and invented spelling must be valued and encouraged. This notion should be applicable to EFL learners as well. Wright (1997) asserted that EFL learners with limited English ability could also write, given opportunities. Wright even encouraged EFL children to use drawing during writing in order to supplement ideas and make writing more fun.

Developmental Writing Stages

Examining ENL young learners' writing, DeFord (1980) depicted 10 developmental writing stages to specify certain writing behavior or performance. They are: 1) scribbling, 2) differentiating between drawing and writing, 3) displaying the concept of directionality in writing, which are the concepts of linearity, uniformity, inner complexity, symmetry, placement, left-to-right motion, and top to bottom directionality, 4) producing letters and letter-like shapes, 5) combining letters with spaces, indicating understanding of units (letters, words, sentences), but maybe not showing letter-sound correspondence, 6) writing known isolated words, developing sound-letter correspondences, 7) writing simple sentences with the use of invented spellings, 8) combining two or more sentences to express complete thoughts, 9) controlling writing mechanics, including punctuation, capitalization and use of upper and lower case letters, and 10) being aware of the form of discourse, such as the genre for stories, information materials, letters, etc.

One thing to be noted is that children's writing development, however, is not linear in progression and the progression might not be the same for all children (Bus et al., 2001; Mayer, 2007). Children who are provided, encouraged and offered scaffolding to write, explore and experiment with writing freely. Writing in the way they want to write increases their motivation and allows them to step forward towards a more advanced stage. Teachers, therefore, need to be supportive and flexible in writing classrooms (Hyland, 2002).

In addition to the above macro features of the writing stages, certain micro features can be found in the development of spelling for the indication of writing development. Development of spelling is reviewed in the following.

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Spelling Development

Researchers (e.g., Henderson & Beers, 1980; Hill, 1999) have identified several stages of spelling development. The terms used to label the stages differ by researchers but the descriptions of the characteristics of children's spelling at stages described are similar. The terms proposed by Hill (1999) are *prephonic spelling*, *semiphonetic spelling*, *phonetic spelling*, *transitional spelling*, and *independent spelling*.

Prephonic spelling, the beginning stage, means the stage at which learners use drawings, symbols, numbers, letter-like symbols, and letters to represent spoken messages. At the second stage, *semiphonetic spelling*, a word may be represented with one letter or two, usually the initial consonant letter and occasionally the final consonant letter. Moreover, letter names are often used to represent a syllable sound, for example *KR* for *CAR* with the letter name of *R* representing *–ar* in *car*.

The third stage, *phonetic spelling*, is when writers have a self-formulated style of spelling, which may not conform to standard spelling. They might invent the spellings phonetically based on the speech sound they perceive or produce, for example, *squing* or *sbring* for *spring*. The production of words learnt by rote recall also increases. At this stage, according to Rosencrans (1998), young spellers may use vowels inaccurately, for example, spelling *bad* as *bed*. At the stage of *transitional spelling*, the fourth stage, young spellers move from heavy reliance on the phonetic strategy towards the use of visual strategies and begin to use common letter patterns. The words they spell look like words (e.g., *happe* for *happy*, *skool* for *school*). Finally, at the fifth stage, *independent spelling*, learners are more proficient using different strategies for spelling rather than relying on phonics as a major strategy.

Young writers apply some principles to accomplish their writing project on paper while experimenting with the symbols and spelling (Clay, 1975). Clay identified some beginning writing behaviors when examining ENL young writers' written products and generalized six principles applied by ENL young writers while they start writing. The following section addresses the beginning writing behaviors.

Beginning Writing Behaviors

Clay (1975) noted that emergent writers carry certain concepts and apply certain principles when they start writing. The concepts are, for example, that a sign carries a message and that the spoken messages can be written

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down. The principles they apply feature their writing according to certain characteristics. For example, some drawing objects or written words appear repeatedly on paper; some letters or symbols are used or combined to create a word-like entry; some entries are of contrastive features.

Clay identified six principles which are applied by young writers when they write. These principles are a) the directional principle (writing from an appropriate starting position, from the top left), b) the recurring principle (repeatedly drawing certain pictures or repeatedly writing certain letters, words or sentences), c) the inventory principle (e.g., making an exhaustive list of all the letters, words or sentences he/she "knows"), d) the generating principles (e.g., generating a line of print using only three signs, such as *EEXSEXSXS*), e) the contrastive principle (e.g., writing *MWMW*; *pq pq pq*; *man woman*; *boy girl*), and f) the abbreviation principle (e.g., writing *SOS*).

Input-Output Hypothesis

In addition to encouragement and support, appropriate instruction should be provided to assist with young writers' writing development. Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis inspired our leveled-instruction practice. The input hypothesis (i+1) basically indicates how to assist with the SL/FL acquisition. The letter i represents a learner's current linguistic competence. Knowing the learner's i, the teacher ought to provide comprehensible input one step beyond (+1) the current language level. Moving toward a higher level then is expected to take place naturally. After the learning takes place, the learner's level advances and the letter i represents the current more advanced level. Therefore, the letter i represents levels of changing proficiency. The learner will thus progress along the process of acquiring the language if i+1 takes place continuously.

Different from Krashen's focus on comprehensible input, Swain (2000) proposed an output hypothesis. Swain recognized that listening proficiency is necessary for learners to process unfamiliar structures in full. She, however, suggested that the effort of composing new utterances, rather than comprehending new utterances, is more likely to require learners to test the L2 syntax and lexis on real listeners, that is, to produce output comprehensible to the audience. The combination of the input hypothesis (for listening and reading) and the output hypothesis (for speaking and writing) yielded a model as follows: providing i+1 input to encourage i+1 output. This rationale was the base for the leveled-instruction practice embedded in the current project.

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Presented above are a broader definition of writing, the characteristics of writing development, spelling development, beginning writing behaviors observed on ENL young learners, and the input-output hypothesis considered for appropriate instruction to facilitate writing development. As the current researchers accepted the suggestions by scholars to value the benefit of drawing that could provide scaffolding for the development of writing, in September 2006 we gave ourselves and the Grade One EFL learners at Siang-He opportunities to experiment with writing, starting with drawing and/or writing, in the language learning process with only one single question in mind: What can we learn from the writing practice implemented in the classes of these young Grade One EFL learners? The following section illustrates the writing project, including the setting, the participants, the method of implementing the writing project, as well as data collection and analysis.

THE WRITING PRACTICE

Setting and Participants

Siang-He Elementary School, located in Chiayi County, is a public school, established in 2003. The school is run similarly to most other public elementary schools, except for its English education. The English instruction starts from Grade One at Siang-He with three periods of 40 minutes each per week. Many other public elementary schools, following the regulation set by the Ministry of Education, start English instruction at Grade Three with two periods of 40 minutes each per week.

Since September 2006, Siang-He has had a yearly-contracted native English-speaking teacher assisting with the English instruction. This teacher knows nothing about Chinese and co-teaches with each of the Mandarin-speaking English teachers for one period in one class per week. According to Ms. Hsu, one of the authors and an English teacher at Siang-He, English was the major language used by both teachers in this co-taught period with Mandarin being used occasionally when instructions and/or explanations could not be easily understood by students. As for the other two periods, both languages were used, again, with Mandarin mostly for explanations and instructions. The native English-speaking teacher, however, was not directly involved in the writing project, but the input stimuli from this teacher in class and on campus could not be ignored.

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Involved in this writing project were 107 EFL Grade One students, aged six and seven, enrolling in Siang-He Elementary School in September 2006, Ms. Hsu, the students' English teacher, and the researchers. A survey was administered to understand the English learning experience of these students. Sixty-seven reported being exposed to English activities in kindergarten for between one year and two. A pretest was given to assess the students' knowledge of letter names, letter shapes, labels of objects in picture (Appendix). Only 14 out of the 105 students taking the pretest got a score in the 60s and 70s out of 100 points; 24 students, 40s and 50s; 30 students, 20s and 30s; 37 students, under 19 points, and some zero. These test results indicated that they had limited alphabetic knowledge of letter names, letter shapes, object labels, etc.

Materials

The materials used for the first semester were a textbook to introduce the alphabet with corresponding objects in pictures, a workbook for practice on the alphabetic principle (including letter names, letter sounds, the relationship between letters and sounds, forming words with the knowledge of letter-sound correspondence), both developed by the authors (see Chang, Chang, & Hsu, 2008 for details), and a song book, *Music World for Children* (Jackson, Ralphs, & Clark, 2002). Each student had copies of all the above materials. In addition, a big book of *Rhyming around the Alphabet* (Cutting, 2003) was accessible to the students in class. The rhymes from the big book were presented to the class on slides for Ms. Hsu to lead the students to recite them.

Writing Activities

As mentioned earlier that drawing provides scaffolding for the development of writing, the writing project started with students' free drawing and/or writing (hereafter drawing-writing or draw-write). We reserved only 10 minutes a week to try out this drawing-writing practice, with the majority of the three-period class time for classroom activities, such as singing, chanting, repeating after the teacher, questioning and answering, recitations, etc., which are no different from the activities conducted in other elementary classes. The 10 minutes at the end of the third period every week was scheduled for these young EFL learners to experiment with writing and for us to explore their drawing-writing performance for further thoughts and plans.

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Nine writing tasks were completed in Semester 1, with two weeks as a cycle (the writing session and the sharing session) for each writing task. In the writing session held in the first week, the students drew-wrote freely; in the sharing session held in the following week, some selected writing samples were shown to the class for leveled instructions. The following is an elaboration of the writing and sharing sessions.

Free drawing-writing

Pre-writing instruction and while-writing assistance. The first writing was conducted on September 27, 2006 after the students had had four weeks of 12 English periods. Ms. Hsu explained the drawing-writing activity in Mandarin and distributed paper for the students to draw-write freely individually based on what they had learned in English classes.

The students were allowed to draw-write freely for Writings 1 to 6 and were given themes to draw-write about for Writings 7 to 9. The themes came from the song book used in class, including *A Happy Birthday Song*, *Hickory Dickory Dock*, and *Four Seasons*. They were told to draw-write freely on the theme. However, if they failed or disliked to write on the suggested theme, they were still allowed to draw-write freely.

While the students drew-wrote, Ms. Hsu circulated to observe and provide needed assistance to the students. The assistance needed mostly was to repeat the earlier instructions to some students. Ms. Hsu would also verbally encourage the students very frequently to think harder during the writing process. Though copying was not allowed, some students were found doing so from the materials which were supposed to have been put away, from neighbors or from print in the environment (e.g., words on the walls, on pencil boxes, on erasers, etc.) 'No copying' was orally repeated by Ms. Hsu but the rule was not strictly followed up. However, the reminder of 'no copying' was not needed later because the students realized that they really could draw-write freely.

Post-writing process on students' writing. The written products collected from each writing task were reviewed and some writing samples were selected for the sharing session in the following week. The aim of the sharing session was to provide examples as models and stimuli for future writing as well as to provide opportunities for the leveled instruction based on Krashen's input hypothesis.

The written products were classified into six categories: a) blank, b) drawing, c) letter writing, d) word writing, e) fragment writing, and f) sentence writing. 'Blank' indicates the written sheet contains only the student's English and/or Chinese name. 'Drawing' means students had

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symbols, drawings and/or numbers on their sheets. 'Letter Writing' means that students scribbled individual letters with/without drawings. The letters and the pictures might or might not be related. For example, one might draw a book and write *Bb* while another might draw a dog and write *Tt*. 'Word Writing' means that on the written sheet, words of either conventional spelling or invented spelling were found, with/without drawings and/or letters. 'Fragment Writing' means that the students produced multiword constructions, such as *how old, how many, big dog, cat in the box*, with/without any of the previous entries. 'Sentence Writing' means that the students wrote complete sentences, with/without any of the previous entries. All the sheets were scanned and several sheets from each category except the 'blank' category were selected for shared-reading, which is to be elaborated in the following. (With hindsight, now we think that the presenters of blank sheets should be complimented for writing their English names.)

Shared-reading with leveled instruction

The selected written sheets were shown on the classroom TV for sharing. Ms. Hsu first complimented the writer's accomplishments and then the leveled instruction was given to encourage the targeted group of writers to progress a step further. The leveled instruction was delivered in the following ways: showing Figure 1a (drawing only) on slides in class, Ms. Hsu a) praised the student on a sharp recall of the drawings from the textbook, b) reviewed the object labels, and c) encouraged the group of students (i.e., drawers) to move a step forward to write some related letters (e.g., the initial letters of the object labels as shown in Figure 1b, which was then displayed in class after Figure 1a).

Showing Figure 1b (the drawing objects with the initial letters of the object label), Ms. Hsu a) praised the accomplishment, b) reviewed the object labels (i.e., apple, candy and cat) and the letters, c) had the class segment the object labels for phonemes to enhance phonological awareness, d) had the class try to orally spell out the object labels to practice letter-sound correspondences, and e) encouraged the group of students (i.e., drawers and writers of word initials) to move a step forward to spell out words as shown in Figure 1c, which would be shared next.

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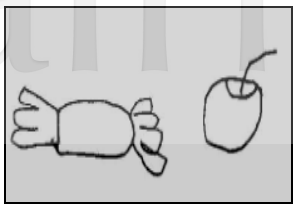
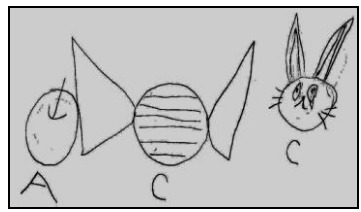
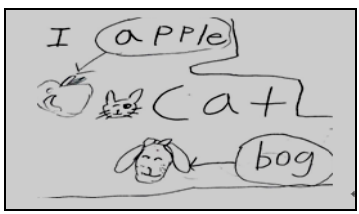


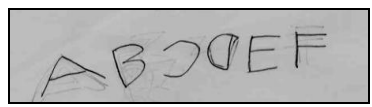
a. Drawings



b. Drawings and initial letters



c. Drawings and words



d. Letters in wrong direction

e. Words without spaces

Figure 1. The Samples for the Leveled Instruction

Showing Figure 1c, Ms. Hsu also encouraged a step forward to put *cat* in the sentence *I like the cat* (The pattern of *I like the* ___ had been orally practiced often in class). Showing Figure 1d, Ms. Hsu gave praise, pointed out the wrong direction of the letter C, and encouraged a step forward, for example, spelling out a word or drawing something to show learning. Showing Figure 1e, Ms. Hsu gave praise and then pointed out the missing spaces between words.

An instruction to help with spelling has to be explained here. While encouraging the students to spell out the word, Ms. Hsu instructed in Mandarin, "If you do not remember all the letters in a word, you can write whatever letters you remember and leave blanks for whatever you do not know. You can draw a line for the part you do not know, for example, you can write down a___or su___(for *apple*, *summer*). Or, if you do know the number of the segments, but you do not know all of the letters for the segments, you can draw as many lines as you know for the segments, for example, you can put d_g, d_ _, s_ _ _(for *dog*, *summer*)." In the section on

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finding, we will present how the students applied this spelling-line strategy.

The rationale of the above instruction combines Krashen's input hypothesis and Swain's output hypothesis, which is illustrated below:

$i + 1 \rightarrow i$

The current language level + appropriately advanced comprehensible input → a more advanced language level

drawing + 1 → letter writing

The teacher shows the samples of letter writing (+1 on letter writing) to the drawers (*i*) to facilitate letter production.

letter + 1 → mechanics; word writing

The teacher points out the wrong direction of the letters (+1 on mechanics) to raise awareness of letter formation; the teacher shows the samples of word writing (+1) to letter-writers (*i*) to facilitate word production.

word + 1 → mechanics; fragment writing

The teacher points out the space between words (+1 on mechanics) to raise the awareness of sentence formation; the teacher shows the samples of fragment writing (+1) to word-writers (*i*) to facilitate fragment production.

fragment + 1 → mechanics; sentence writing

The teacher shows samples of sentence writing (the sentence construction as '+1') to fragment-writers (*i*) with instruction to raise more awareness of fragment-writing mechanics (noticing the fragment construction as '+1') and encourage sentence production.

sentence + 1 → mechanics; longer sentence writing

The teacher shows the samples of sentence writing to sentence-writers (*i*) with instruction to raise more awareness of sentence-writing mechanics (+1) (e.g., subject-verb agreement) and encourage longer-sentence production (+1) (e.g., adding an adjective to make *I like apples* into *I like* <u>*red*</u> *apples*)

Because of the time constraints and class size, it was impossible to divide the class into homogeneous groups (e.g., drawers, letter-writers, word-writers, etc.) to apply appropriate *i*+1 instruction. Though the leveled instruction was given to the whole class rather than a targeted group, it was expected that, for example, when Ms. Hsu presented the

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'drawing' sheets and encouraged '+1' production, the students at this level (i.e., the drawers in the class) and below (i.e., the 'blank' sheet producers in class) would be attracted and attend more closely to the instruction addressed to them as the target audience, since the '+1' input was comprehensible to them. Similarly, when Ms. Hsu presented the 'letter' samples and encouraged '+1' production, the students at this level (i.e., letter writers) and below (i.e., drawers) were expected to be attracted and attend more closely to the '+1' instruction prepared for them.

Additionally, the written products became reading materials for revisiting what had been learned and provided models and stimuli for future writing. Moreover, before providing the leveled instruction, Ms. Hsu elicited some responses to what could be viewed on the sample works to practice listening and speaking. For instance, *What do you see? What is this?* (for example, pointing at the drawings in Figure 1a), *What may be the word with an initial d?* (for example, pointing at the letter *d* on a written sheet), etc. Thus it is obvious that the incorporated writing activities provided opportunities for students to practice the four language skills.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Several kinds of data were collected during Semester 1: documents such as semester plans, lesson plans, etc., the results of the pre-test and the post-test (same as the pre-test), the written sheets, the classroom videotapes, and the questionnaires on the students' attitudes towards the writing project.

We started the current writing project with one single question in mind: What can we learn from the writing practice implemented in these young Grade One EFL learners' classes? As time went on, more specific research questions emerged. In this report, we will address the following three research questions to report on the emergent writing of these Grade One EFL students during Semester 1 of the 2006-2007 school year:

1. Did these young EFL beginning writers' written products show any indication of development in writing?
2. Did these young EFL beginning writers' written products demonstrate any beginning writing behaviors?
3. Did these young EFL beginning writers' written products demonstrate any development in spelling?

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Qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to analyze the 925 written sheets collected from the nine writing tasks conducted during Semester 1. According to Larsen-Freeman and Long's (1991) description of the qualitative and quantitative paradigms, the present study was viewed as a focused descriptive study which employed a content analysis strategy to examine the collected written data at the surface level (Sandeloswki, 2000). In examining the written sheets for writing development, we counted the sheets according to the six categories, which are blank, drawing, letter, word, fragment, and sentence. If the number of letter-writers decreased through the nine writing tasks and meanwhile the number of word-writers increased, for example, we might be able to conclude that a number of the students moved one step forward to a more advanced stage of writing, that is, from writing letters only to writing words.

Examining the written sheets for the beginning writing behaviors, we recorded all the observable features, including the page arrangement, the principles applied, the code employed, and other observable features. For the page arrangement, we examined the place on the sheet where a writer put his/her drawing and/or writing (e.g., at the center or closer to the left) and the direction of the writing (e.g., from left or right, from top to bottom); for the codes, examined was the code (e.g., drawing, print) employed to express message on the sheet; for the application of the principles, the principles identified by Clay (1975) were examined. Furthermore, the print was examined for any indications of spelling development.

In examining the written works for the principle application, the following criteria were followed. For example, the first criterion explains that the writer was classified as a directional-principle applier when the print was from left to right, top to bottom. The other criteria can be explained similarly:

1. When the print is put from left to right, top to bottom, the directional principle can be assumed.
2. When five or more different letters, words or sentences are generated on one sheet, the inventory principle can be assumed. (The sheets of the drawing category were excluded from the examination of the inventory-principle-application, because many of the students produced more than five drawing objects on their sheets).
3. When one item is repeated two times in almost the same manner, the recurring principle can be assumed.

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4. When codes are used or combined to make word-like products, the generating principle can be assumed.
5. When print, drawing of contrastive shapes (e.g., pq, ▽△) or words of contrastive semantic meanings (e.g., good vs. bad) are produced, the contrastive principle can be assumed.
6. When recognizable abbreviations are identified, the abbreviation principle can be assumed.

In addition to the principle application, the codes employed to express intended messages were examined. The sheets were classified into four categories: blank sheet, drawing-only sheet (i.e., the sheet displays symbols, drawings, and numbers), print-only sheet, and mix-code sheet.

In examining the spelling development, the following criteria were followed. Two types of spelling, phonetic spelling and transitional spelling, were combined into one type 'the invented spelling' since it is difficult to distinguish between phonetic spelling and transitional spelling. The first criterion, for example, explains that when a sheet displays only symbols, drawings and/or numbers, the writer is regarded as being at the drawing stage. The other criteria explain similarly:

1. When a sheet displays symbols, drawings and/or numbers, the drawing stage.
2. When a letter accompanied by a drawn object happens to be the initial of the object label (e.g., the letter *a* accompanied by a drawing object *apple*), the semiphonetic-initial spelling stage.
3. When two letters accompanied by a drawing object happen to be the initial and the final of the object label (e.g., the letters *bd* accompanied by a drawing object *bed*; the writing *c_t* accompanied by a drawing object *cat*), the semiphonetic-initial-final spelling stage.
4. When a decodable spelt-out word accompanied by a drawing object happens to sound similar to the label of the drawing object (e.g., *het* accompanied with a drawing object *hat*; *otps* accompanied by a drawing object *octopus*) or when the decodable spelt-out word is given in an interpretable context (e.g., sumr given with *spre*, *Fall*, *witre*[2] on the theme *Four Seasons*, which are then viewed as *summer*, *spring*, *fall* and *winter*), the invented spelling stage.

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5. When the spelt-out words are of conventional spelling, the independent spelling stage.

The qualitative content analysis strategy was employed to examine the writing performance and select writing samples to exemplify the findings while the quantitative method yielded the numbers of the students whose writing demonstrates certain features, through which the answers of the research questions could be found. The findings are presented and discussed in the following.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study explored the participating young EFL beginning learners' writing development in relation to beginning writing behaviors and spelling development. The written products of these students demonstrated writing development. Five beginning writing behaviors were detected in their written products. They are: a) applying the directional principle, b) applying the inventory principle, c) applying the recurring principle, d) employing multiple codes and symbols to express intended messages, and e) decorating drawn-written products. The students' spelling development was also observed; however, none of them was found to move along through the five developmental spelling stages suggested by Hill (1999). The observed spelling development includes a) developing the knowledge of word initials, b) experimenting with invented spelling, and c) acquiring the spelling-line strategy. These findings are further elaborated in the following under three subheadings: Writing Development, Beginning Writing Behavior, and Spelling Performance.

Writing Development

Some indications of writing development were detected, though no obvious findings were obtained to explain their writing development in terms of DeFord's (1980) 10 writing stages. Most students, however, advanced from leaving the sheet blank to drawing to writing letters to writing words. Table 1 presents the numbers of the sheets classified into the six categories.

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Table 1. Numbers of the Written Products Classified into Six Categories

Writing Task	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
Blank	10	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
Drawing	39	43	18	1	0	8	28	23	12
Letter	23	27	36	30	24	43	45	37	27
Word	19	24	33	56	54	52	29	36	55
Fragment	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sentence	12	4	14	17	27	2	0	2	2
Sheets in total	104	104	102	104	105	105	102	98	101

Note. In total, 107 students were involved in the writing project. However, there were always a few students absent from each writing task. Therefore, the numbers of the sheets collected and examined for each writing task differed.

One thing needs to be noted here. As explained, Writings 1 to 6 were of free drawing-writing. For Writings 7 to 9 respectively, a theme was suggested for drawing-writing, but the students were still allowed to draw-write freely if they failed to write or did not like to write on the suggested theme. However, many of them produced only drawing objects related to the suggested theme. For example, a cake, balloon, gift for *Happy Birthday* (Writing 7), a clock or mouse for *Hickory Dickory Dock* (Writing 8), and a snowman, tree, flower, snowing, or sun for *Four Seasons* (Writing 9). One possible speculation is that, starting from Writing 7, the students were given specific themes to write about, which was new to them; therefore, they resorted to the safest way that they knew to produce their work. As they came to have more experience with this new type of assignment, the number of drawings reduced (see Table 1).

We decided to examine the results of the first six writing tasks for writing development, since they were of the same nature, free drawing-writing. When examining the writing performance of these students in the first six writing tasks, we learned that most of the students advanced from a lower-level to a more advanced level. For example, in Writing 1, the number of drawing-only students (39) is larger than that of letter-writing students (23), which is larger than that of word-writing students (19). However, in Writing 6, conversely, the number of drawing-only students (8) is smaller than that of the letter-writing students (43), which is smaller than that of the word-writing students (52). Therefore, generally speaking, these students did develop through some certain writing stages, from drawing to letter-witting to word-writing.

One more explanation needs to be given for fragment-writing and sentence-writing. *How old* is the only fragment written by the student. As

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to the sentences, *How old are you*, *How are you*, *I am fine*, *I am 7 years old*, *What time is it* are written by most of the sentence-writers. A few of them wrote *Row, row, row your boat* and *Walking, walking, hop, hop, hop, running, running, running, now let's stop* (both expressions are from songs). These expressions were orally practiced and sung in class and sometimes even written on the board or shown on the classroom TV monitor. It is very likely that they printed these from rote memory.

Beginning Writing Behaviors

There are three writing behaviors to be reported: the application of the principles, the employment of the codes and symbols to express intended messages, and the decoration of drawn-written products.

Application of the principles

The students' application of the following principles are reported in this section, including directional, inventory and recurring principles.

The directional principle. The majority of the young writers (98.94%) applied the directional principle when they started writing. They listed their letters and words from left to right and top to bottom, that is, from an appropriate starting position. The directional principle, writing from the top-left position, could be learned through being exposed to both Mandarin and English print.

A few cases with vertical writing patterns are presented below. Three writers (two in Writing 1 and one in Writing 4) wrote letters vertically (Figure 2a); one writer (in Writing 5) spelt out two words vertically (*The Walking* in Figure 2b); two writers (in Writing 5) decorated some drawings with letters and therefore these letters were written vertically (Figure 2c). In Writing 9, two writers wrote their sentences in a vertical direction (Figure 2d). That Chinese is allowed to be written vertically should explain these cases. Generally speaking, except for these above cases, the majority of these young writers understood well the directional principle of page arrangement.

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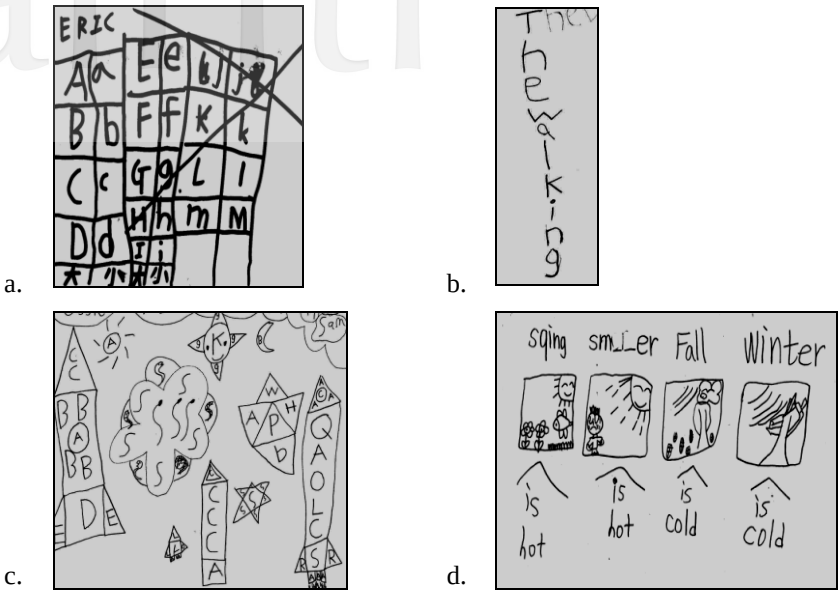

Figure 2. The Direction of Letters, Words and Sentences

While print started at the top-left of the paper, drawings usually appeared at the center with some exceptions that some drawings appeared at the top left corner, leaving the rest of the sheet blank. When the content of the sheet consisted of drawing and print, the drawing was usually at the center and the print stayed close to the drawing. Love, Burns, and Buell (2007) noted, “Their [Young children’s] different approaches to writing and drawing—writing from left to right but drawing in various directions—underscore the importance of children’s regular and active involvement with print” (p.14).

The inventory principle. According to Clay (1975), one type of the inventory-principle structure is to group all the members of a set such as the alphabet (by writing out all the letters in sequence) or the members of a limited set—family, friends, words beginning with a particular letter, words ending similarly, and so on. A small portion of the students applied the inventory principle in writing letters in an alphabetic sequence and words in a list or a table. For letters, the numbers of the students applying the inventory principle in the nine writing tasks are 6, 9, 14, 10, 3, 1, 1, 1, and 6, respectively, out of about 107 students. For words, the numbers of

the students applying the principle are 5, 12, 11, 11, 5, 6, 1, 1, and 4, respectively, out of all the students. Figure 3a presents an example for the letters in sequence and Figure 3b, words beginning with a particular letter.

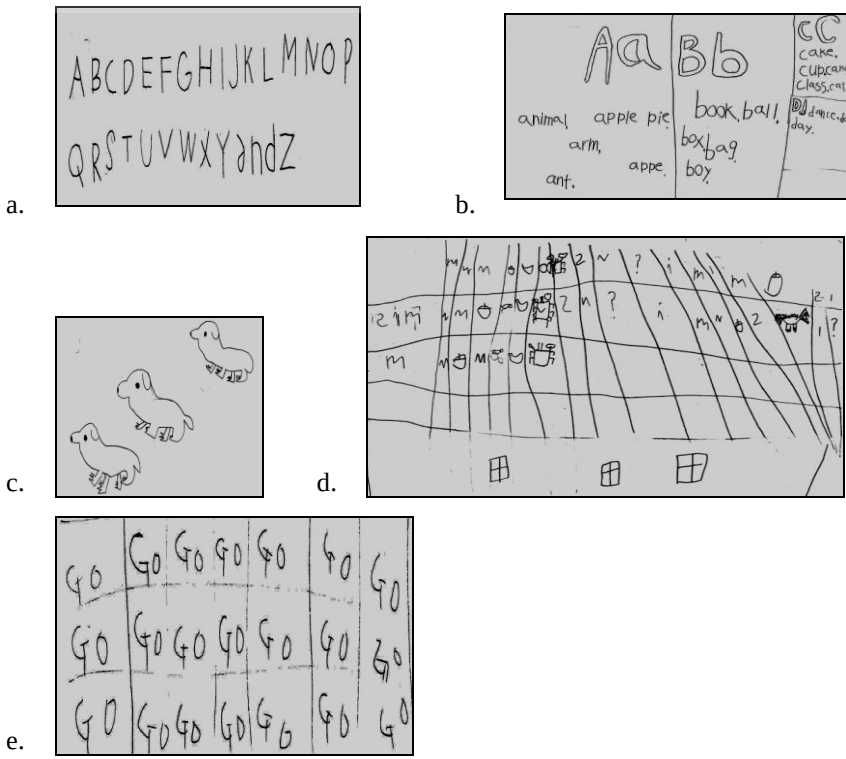

Figure 3. The Samples Demonstrating the Application of the Principles

Though not many of the students applied this principle, the above finding indicates the same beginning writing behavior in two groups of students, both ENL and EFL learners, with different language backgrounds. According to Clay (1975), the inventory principle has some value. A young writer can list all the words he/she can produce without copying (though sometimes these inventories are actually copied lists). They can be proud of themselves, as if they were saying "These are all the words I can write" (Clay, 1975, p. 32). The young writer may be able to systematize those items which he/she can recall and these recallable items

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might have already become part of his/her written repertoire.

The recurring principle. Three students were identified to apply the recurring principle. One student drew three dog-like creatures of almost the same appearance and size (Figure 3c) without anything else on the sheet. The second student repeated drawings, letters and symbols (Figure 3d), and the third student, words (e.g., Figure 3e).

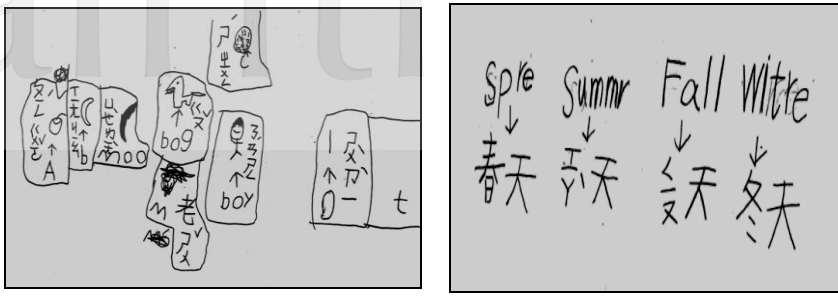
Employing multiple codes and symbols to express intended messages

Table 2 presents the findings on code application. Some students turned in a blank sheet. 'Blank' was also a kind of code conveying the message of 'not ready for producing.' The numbers of the drawing-only students decreased from 39 in Writing 1 to zero in Writing 5 and then increased again and then decreased from Writings 6 to 9. This phenomenon has already been explained, that is, the suggested theme given for Writings 7 to 9 might have posed too great a degree of difficulty for them, which might have made them regress to drawing, thus reducing their print production.

Table 2. Numbers of the Students Employing Different Codes

Writing Task	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
Blank	10	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
Drawing only	39	43	18	1	0	8	28	23	12
Printing only	36	31	65	60	63	43	2	12	8
Mixed codes	19	24	18	43	42	54	72	63	77
Sheets in total	104	104	102	104	105	105	102	98	101

Table 2 also shows that an increasing number of students employed mixed codes (see two examples in Figure 4) to express intended messages. In the work presented in Figure 4a, Student A employed three codes to provide the label of the drawing object: drawing, the initial letter of the label of the drawing object, and the Mandarin phonemic symbols. In Figure 4b, Student B also employed three codes: English words of invented spelling, and both Mandarin characters and Mandarin phonemic symbols together to explain the invented spelling.



a. Drawings, initials, Mandarin characters and phonemic symbols

b. English spelling, Mandarin characters and phonemic symbols

Figure 4. Mixed Codes for Expressing Messages

Student A, for example, drew an apple (the drawing object at the left side of the sheet), wrote the initial letter *A*, and labeled the drawing with Mandarin phonemic symbols which read *apple* in Mandarin. The product on the right side of Student A's sheet is the Arabic numeral, *1* (one), accompanied by the word initial, the letter *O*, and the Mandarin phonemic symbols explaining *This is one in numbers*. This writer provided eight entries of this type on the sheet. As an EFL beginning learner who was not yet able to spell *apple*, *one* and other words and meanwhile as a first grader who was not yet able to write certain Mandarin characters, the writer labeled the drawing object with Mandarin phonemic symbols (which are taught before the writing of Mandarin characters at school) to successfully present the intended message on the sheet. Student B spelt out words of either conventional spelling (i.e., *Fall*) or invented spelling (i.e., *summr*, *witre*, *spre*), with Mandarin characters and phonemic symbols to explain his English spelling.

Employing all possible codes and/or symbols to express the intended message at the beginning stage of writing is considered the nature of early writing. Researchers note that the more complex the task is, the more emergent the form of writing would be used by the child (Burns & Casebergue, 1992; Bus et al., 2001; Greer & Lockman, 1998; Strickland & Morrow, 1991). Additionally, supporting one's writing in a foreign language with knowledge of one's native language might be a very common strategy applied by FL learners (probably especially young learners) to express intended messages. This may also explain why the number of print-only students decreased from 36 in Writing 1 to 8 in Writing 9 (Table 2). That is, they moved from only outputting their limited

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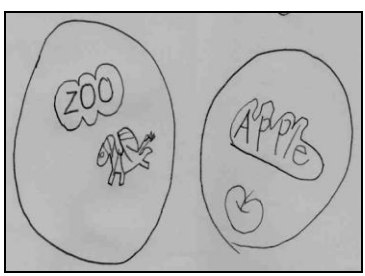
knowledge of print to employing multiple codes and symbols to express more intended complicated messages.

Decorating drawn-written products

Clay (1975) reported that young writers might turn letters around, decorate them and evolve new signs as they explore the limits within which a sign can vary. This writing behavior observed in ENL children was also observed in these EFL children. The work presented in Figure 5a shows words decorated with frames. The work in Figure 5b and Figure 5c, respectively, shows letters and words as used to decorate drawings. The producer of Figure 5b said in a chat during the break that he had made a cage to block the dragon so that the dragon would not be able to come out. It is interesting to observe this beginning writing behavior from these EFL writers, though only one student decorated his words and four students decorated their drawings with print.

a.



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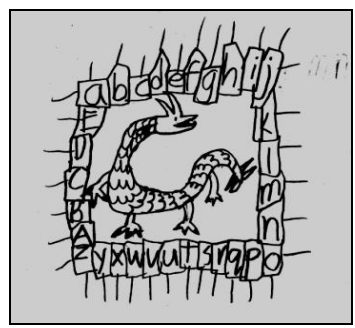

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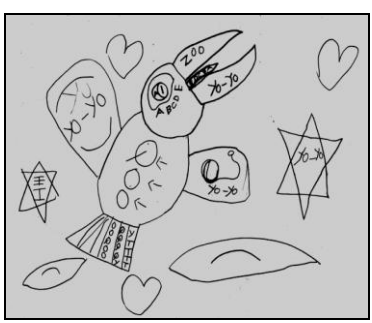

Figure 5. The Samples of Decorating Drawn-written Products

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Spelling Performance

An abundance of data was found to represent the four spelling stages. They are the drawing stage (producing symbols, drawing, and/or numbers), the semiphonetic spelling stage (giving initials, initials and finals), the invented spelling stage, and the independent spelling stage (spelling conventionally). However, no single writer was found moving along through the four developmental spelling stages. Some students went through Stage 1, Stage 2 and then reached Stage 4, omitting Stage 3; some of them went through Stage 2 and Stage 4, and some of them, Stage 1, Stage 2, and Stage 3. Instead of addressing the development of spelling, this section thus reports the findings indicating these young writers' developing knowledge of word initials, experimenting with invented spelling, and acquiring the spelling-line strategy briefly mentioned earlier.

Developing the knowledge of word initials

These young writers revealed their developing knowledge of word initials by accompanying their drawing objects with the initial letters of the object labels, for example, the letter *Aa* accompanying the drawing of *apple*. Out of these 107 writers, 1, 2, 3, 0, 6, 8, 28, 44, and 47 writers (Table 3) in nine writing tasks, respectively, drew objects accompanied by initial letters. Some samples are given in Figure 6. In Writing 1, only one writer wrote a single initial letter in both capital and lower case next to his drawing (Figure 6a); in Writing 9, 47 writers labeled their drawing objects with initials and many of them produced many objects accompanied by corresponding initials (Figure 6b). This finding indicates the acquisition of vocabulary items (object labels used in the vocabulary for listening and speaking) and the development in the use of phonics skills. They were then able to segment a word for the initial segment, match the initial segment with the corresponding letter, and write the letter successfully.

Table 3. Numbers of the Writers Producing Initials and Words of Types

Writing Task	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
Word initial	1	2	3	0	6	8	28	44	47
Letter writing	24	21	38	13	30	51	12	17	3
Invented spelling	1	1	0	0	0	2	6	9	21
Conventional spelling	19	27	33	42	38	48	20	38	39
Sheets in total	104	104	102	104	105	105	102	98	101

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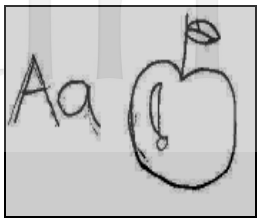
a. 

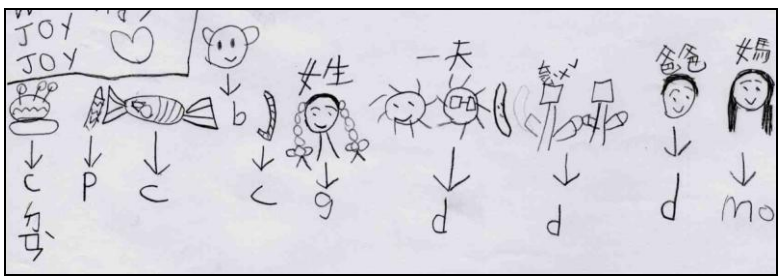
b. 

Figure 6. The Samples of the Word Initials of Drawing Objects

Experimenting with invented spelling

Letters and conventionally spelt words appeared on the sheets through the nine writing tasks while words of invented spelling emerged gradually. As mentioned, 'no copying' was announced as a rule but was not strictly implemented in the first few writing tasks. Therefore, many conventionally spelt words which were not expected to be in their lexicon (e.g., *inches*, *platinum*; probably copied from rulers and erasers) were found in the products from the very beginning. In addition, some conventionally spelt words (e.g., *apple*, *egg*, *yo-yo*, *dog*, *cat*, and especially, *apple*) were highly repeated throughout the nine writing tasks. Out of the 107 writers, 19, 27, 33, 42, 38, 48, 20, 38, and 39 writers (Table 3) in the nine writing tasks, respectively, produced from one single to more than 20 conventionally spelt words. It was not possible in this study to conclude the point at which conventionally spelt words or the alphabet letters emerged during the course of the progress of the students from Writing 1 to Writing 9.

The students not only wrote conventionally spelt words but also frequently printed letters of the alphabet in alphabetic sequence on the sheets. Some of the students printed either all or half of the alphabet letters while most of them printed only the first three or five letters (i.e., from *Aa* to *Ee*). The numbers of letter-writers in the nine writing tasks were 24, 21, 38, 13, 30, 51, 12, 17 and 3, respectively (Table 3). Generally speaking,

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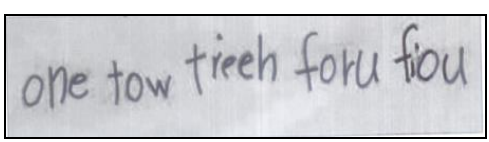
the number decreased, and on the contrary, the number of writers of invented-words climbed up, from one writer in Writing 1 to 21 writers in Writing 9. These findings together indicate that these writers progressed from producing letters or conventionally spelt words by copying or rote memory to trying out invented spelling, applying their developing phonics skills.

Some samples of invented spelling are given. For example, *spre*, *squing*, *sinpin* for *spring*, *summr*, *sumr*, *sumrn* for *summer*, *foll* for *fall*, *witer*, *witre*, *wintr* for *winter*, *het* for *hat*, *pancil* for *pencil*, *brthday*, *bathday* for *birthday*, *caek* for *cake*, *apl*, *appl* for *apple*, *treeh* for *three*, etc. The following is another spelling example. The spelt out numbers presented in Figure 7, produced by the same writer, read *one*, *two*, *three*, *four*, *five*, *six*, *seven*, *eight* and *nine*. *One* and *six* are correctly spelt; the shapes of the other spelt out words resemble the shapes of the correctly spelt words. This seems to indicate that the writer was writing by rote memory; that is, he tried to produce the words based on his memory of the shapes of the words. This spelling strategy is probably an implementation of the 'visual strategies' noted by Hill (1999). Besides, this writer could also possibly rely on his memory of the word pronunciation and his knowledge of letter-sound correspondences when producing the words in Figure 7.

a. 

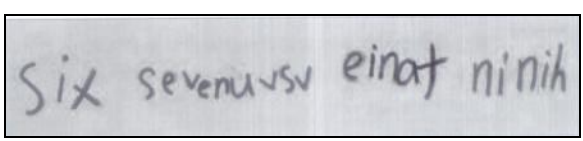
b. 

Figure 7. The Shapes of the Spelt out Words

As mentioned earlier, at the stage of phonetic spelling, young spellers may use vowels inaccurately (Rosencrans, 1998). For ENL children, misspelling a vowel letter in the middle of a word (e.g., *het* for *hat)*, the immature knowledge of letter-sound correspondences might explain it. For EFL learners, there might exist another reason, that is, accuracy in pronunciation. For example, for a learner to spell *hat* as *het* may indicate

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that the speller's pronunciation of the vowel in *hat* is inappropriate. Therefore, pronunciation performance plays a role in spelling performance for EFL learners.

No data representing a syllable sound with a letter name (e.g., car spelt as KR; another feature in Stage 2) was found. Some students, however, spelt *birthday* as *brthday*, *summer* as *sumr* and *winter* as *wintr*. Spellings of this type exemplify the use of letter sound to represent a spelling pattern; that is, the students represented the spelling patterns *-ir-* in *birthday* and *-er* in *summer* and *winter* with the letter *r* because the letter sound of *r* is similar to the syllable sound of *ir* and *er*.

Acquiring a spelling-line strategy

In the sharing session on Writing 7, the students were given instruction on a spelling-line strategy. This strategy was applied by one writer in Writing 8 and by 13 writers in Writing 9 (e.g., c_o_k, b_y, and c_t in Figure 8 for *clock*, *boy* and *cat*). Since then, the spelling-line strategy has been employed by many writers in the following years.

Spelling *cat* as c_t is similar to spelling it as 'ct,' that is, writing the initial and final consonant letters of *cat*, an example of Hill's (1999) semiphonetic spelling. The strategy taught by Ms. Hsu might speed up the development of spelling; that is, the strategy might help the students move forwards from Hill's semiphonetic stage (the second stage, writing the initial and the final of a word) to the phonetic stage (the third stage), developing awareness of the necessity for there to be vowel letter(s) in a word.

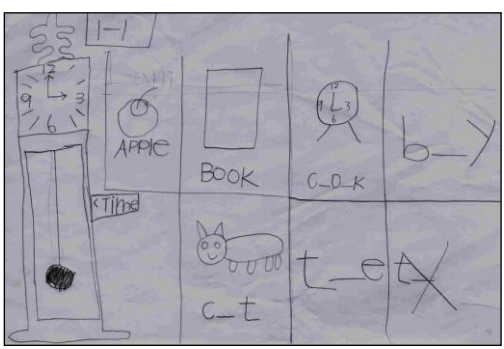

Figure 8. The Samples for the Spelling-line Strategy

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CONCLUSION

The writing project implemented in three elementary EFL classes with 107 students started with one question: What can we learn from the writing practice implemented in these young Grade One EFL learners' classes? More specific research questions emerged when data were collected and analyzed, which led us to focus on three aspects to explore the writing development of these students, beginning writing behavior, and spelling performance.

Most students developed from leaving the sheet blank to drawing to writing letters randomly to writing the initial letters of the names of the drawing objects to writing words. Three beginning writing behaviors were observed in these students. They applied the principles of directionality, inventory and recurring, employed multiple codes and systems to express intended messages, and decorated drawn-written products. These behaviors tally with those observed in ENL emergent writers. As to spelling performance, they gradually developed knowledge of word initials, experimented with invented spelling, and acquired a spelling-line strategy. The first two spelling performances are reported as two of the developmental spelling stages identified from the performance of ENL young writers.

At the beginning of this report we quoted from Clay (2001) that "When teachers do not expect children to be able to write, they do not give them opportunities to write, and therefore they will observe that children do not write" (p. 14) and offered a broader definition of writing. The researchers and the elementary English teacher in the current project also held the same definition of writing and challenged the habitual practice of language instruction in young EFL beginning learners' classes to integrate writing into the curriculum. These young EFL students were given opportunities with expectations and assistance to write and draw, scribble, copy, invent and write letters, words, and/or sentences, which should reciprocally facilitate the other language skills, especially reading skills.

"Writing instruction is better suited than any other kind of language instruction to operating at the students' current level of proficiency without holding other students back" (Leki, 2005, p. 87). In speaking or reading classes, the students of lower proficiency levels may have a difficult time catching up and thus may hold other students back. However, in writing classes, students at lower levels of proficiency use writing to generate target language output at their own pace, without holding anyone back and their output usually reflects each individual's best performance.

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Two points are to be brought up at the end of the paper. The first one is that this paper reports only the weekly 10-minute writing project and the students' achievements from their participation. We cannot deny the contribution of the input stimuli from other class time and even off-class opportunities, neither can we measure the contribution of the writing component to the whole language learning. The second point is that as there were no control groups for contrastive analyses, we, of course, cannot conclude the significance of the writing instruction treatment. Many factors have a role in the findings obtained in this study. For example, the learners' progress in writing might simply reflect what they had been instructed traditionally in other English class time instead of what they had learned in the weekly 10-minute writing project.

However, because of the study, visible evidence for success in encouraging learning development was found as reported here, which adds to the pool of knowledge of early writing practice in an elementary EFL setting. More studies are still needed to further explore issues related to early EFL writing. We hope that what has been reported in this paper sheds light on integrating writing into early EFL curricula for a balanced program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An early version of this paper was presented at the 26th International Conference on English Teaching and Learning in the R.O.C. held at National Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan (May 2009) and included in the non-reviewed proceedings. With the permission from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, the early version was revised to a great extent to become the current paper. We would like to thank the audience for their suggestions. The two anonymous TJTESOL reviewers provided many insightful and constructive comments, for which we are grateful. All remaining errors are ours.

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NOTES

1. Siang-He is the real name of the school, used by the permission of the school authority.
2. The writer failed to spell out the syllable-ending nasal in spring and winter. Whether this failure is because the writer did not perceive the nasals or the writer did perceive them but failed to produce them orally or neither is unknown. Treiman et al. study (1995) on ENL children reported that children's representation of CVCC syllables (with C and V representing consonant and vowel respectively, for example, *went*) reflects phonetic input. They explained that when a postvocalic segment is very short (as with nasals; e.g. *went*) children consider them to contain only three phonemes (and therefore spell *went* as *wet)*. Though *spring* and *winter* are not of the CVCC syllable structure, this 'very short' explanation is borrowed to explain this writer's failure in spelling out the nasals. The spellings of *spre* and *witre* are thus regarded as phonetic spellings.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Fang-Chi Chang, Department of Foreign Languages, National Chiayi University, Chiayi, Taiwan
E-mail address: engivy@mail.ncyu.edu.tw

Shu-I Chang, Department of Foreign Languages, National Chiayi University, Chiayi, Taiwan
E-mail address: sic@mail.ncyu.edu.tw

Hsiu-Fen Hsu, Siang-he Elementary School, Chiayi, Taiwan
E-mail address: ceritafen@yahoo.com.tw

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APPENDIX

The Pretest (a portion of the test)

A. Listen and circle the letter.

1. z b M 2. a h P 3. Q i L

B. Listen and write the uppercase and the lowercase of the letter you heard.

1. uppercase ____ lowercase ____ 2. uppercase ____ lowercase ____

C. Draw a line to match the letters.

H	I	A	B	F	J
A	f	h	I	j	b

D. Listen and label the picture with 1, 2, 3, 4, according to the order you hear it.

____ ____ ____ ____

E. Match the picture and the word for the picture name.

pig hat apple ball rabbit