Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

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Abstract

There is a growing recognition that academic writing is a social-interactive event in which a writer uses linguistic resources to convey ideas and address social relations (Hyland, 2005c). Authorial stance, which refers to the ways that a writer conveys personal attitudes or evaluations towards the subject matter under discussion (Lancaster, 2014), has thus received increasing attention. Previous studies have revealed that novice writers, especially EFL student writers, often encounter difficulties in presenting an effective authorial stance for persuasive argumentation and successful academic writing. Yet few studies have been conducted to explore the possible factors contributing to students' ineffective stance-taking and how to afford their learning. This research addressed the research gap and explored Chinese EFL students' beliefs (including writing beliefs and beliefs about stance), deployment and learning of stance in academic writing by drawing on Dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981) and Sociocognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986).

This research consists of a preparatory study for instrument validation and two main studies. Study One investigated the relationships between student writers' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment and academic writing quality. Data were collected from English-major undergraduates (n = 84) of Year 4 in two medium-ranking universities in northern China. Participants were recruited, as volunteers, to complete two questionnaires for the measurement of their writing beliefs and beliefs about stance and submit a written text. Stance deployment in written texts was measured in terms of diversity and frequencies of various stance types. Results showed that subcategories of different beliefs correlated with the frequencies of various stance types, either positively or negatively. Writing beliefs (transactional writing beliefs) and diversity of stance were found to predict the overall writing quality. Results also showed that students' writing proficiency was a factor affecting reported beliefs, but had little impact on the frequency of different stance types deployed in writing. The findings indicate that the relationships between students' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality are complex.

Study Two was a quasi-experimental intervention study to explore the effects of explicit stance instruction on students' beliefs, stance deployment, and overall writing quality.

The writing intervention was conducted with 46 English-major undergraduates in a medium-ranking university in northern China, who were randomly allocated to two conditions: A treatment group and a comparison group. Data were collected from two questionnaires and a written text, both prior to and immediately after the period of writing intervention. Students in the treatment group received explicit stance instruction that comprised eight weekly sessions; concurrently, students in the comparison group received regular writing instruction according to the university curriculum. Stance deployment was examined both quantitatively by analysing the diversity and frequencies of stance types, as in Study One, and qualitatively by analysing the recurring patterns of various stance types. A multiple-case study was also conducted with four students to obtain in-depth information of the effects of the writing instruction on students' beliefs. Data were collected from semi-structured interviews and writing journals.

Results showed that after the writing intervention, students in the treatment group significantly outperformed those in the comparison group in overall writing quality. Their writing also exhibited substantial changes in the frequencies of many stance types (e.g., *proclaim: pronounce*, *proclaim: endorse*, *entertain*, *attribute*) and improvement in stance patterns in building convincing arguments in academic writing. Although no statistical differences were detected in beliefs, students in the treatment group reported enhanced awareness of stance and changed understanding of writing, compared to the students in the comparison group in the multiple-case study. The findings lend support to the effectiveness of explicit stance instruction in improving students' awareness and knowledge of stance and fostering better stance-takers for effective argumentation and successful academic writing in an EFL context.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Stance in Academic Writing

Over the past decade, academic writing has been recognised as a persuasive endeavour that involves the writer's interaction with source materials and imagined readers (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Hyland, 2005b; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Zou & Hyland, 2020), rather than, as traditionally, an impersonal discourse. This more recent view regards writing as a social-interactive event in which a writer uses linguistic resources to convey ideas and address social relations (Hyland, 2008, 2016). Authorial stance, which refers to the ways that a writer conveys personal attitudes or evaluations toward the subject matter under discussion, has thus stepped into the spotlight (Lancaster, 2014; Wharton, 2012). The role of stance in academic argumentation has received increasing attention in the last decade (e.g., Aull, Bandarage, & Miller, 2017; Cheng & Unsworth, 2016; Hyland & Jiang, 2016; Jiang & Hyland, 2015; Loi, Lim, & Wharton, 2016). Many scholars have argued that the ability to develop a clear and effectual stance is crucial for achieving persuasive argumentation and successful academic writing (Charles, 2006; Crosthwaite, Cheung, & Jiang, 2017; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Wingate, 2012).

The concept of stance can be slippery and elusive (Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Hyland, 2012). From a social-interactive perspective, Wharton (2012) proposed that stance presents writers' evaluative projection of themselves in texts and indicates their relationship and attitudes to the subject matter, as well as their interaction with putative readers. In academic contexts, stance is realised mostly through the linguistic markers a writer adopts in expressing personal position-taking, such as by showing the writer as

standing with the value position through intensifying or concurring tokens (e.g., *indeed*, *greatly*, *as we know*), as standing against it through counter-expectancy markers (e.g., *but*, *however*), as undecided by using modal expressions (e.g., *may*, *could*), or as neutral by using reporting verbs (e.g., *X says*), etc. Through the appropriate use and configuration of such resources, a writer is able to explicitly present his or her viewpoint, critically evaluate opinions of others, claim solidarity with putative readers, and ultimately construct a text that is considered persuasive (Chang, 2012; Lee & Deakin, 2016). According to Hyland (2005a), these stance features, non-propositional in nature, are as important as the propositional content in constructing a convincing argument.

In recent years, stance has been a growing focus in the research of academic writing (e.g., Aull et al., 2017; Cheng & Unsworth, 2016; Crosthwaite et al., 2017; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Hyland, 2012; Hyland & Jiang, 2016; Lancaster, 2014; Loi et al., 2016; Wharton, 2012; Wingate, 2012). Because of its importance in academic contexts, taking an effective stance is further regarded as a crucial academic ability for student writers (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Lancaster, 2016a; Xu & Zhang, 2019; Zhang, 2013; Zhao, 2013). As Wingate (2012) argued, stance expression is increasingly recognised as an important feature of both professional and student academic writing. However, facing the complexity of nuanced stance manipulation, student writers, especially novice L2 student writers, often find it a challenging task to take an effective stance for establishing persuasive argumentation (Hood, 2006; Hyland, 2004a; Sawaki, 2014). Previous studies have revealed that L2 student writing tends to be less strategic in interpersonal positioning and dialogic alignment with construed readers, with features such as single-voiced, subjective without acknowledging alternative views, with an over-reliance on stance markers expressing strong emotions and authorial voice detached from critical evaluation (Hood, 2004; Hyland, 2008, 2012; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Li & Wharton, 2012;

Wu, 2007). The difficulty in stance-taking that student writers have confronted has challenged the quality of their academic writing (Chang, 2012, 2016; Zhang, 2016).

1.2 Confronting Stance Challenge

As student writers increasingly face demands for academic writing, especially in the social sciences that require authorial positioning, the difficulties in stance deployment need to be urgently dealt with. Thus, many scholars have examined possible factors influencing stance-taking by empirically investigating how students with various learning experiences (e.g., Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Aull et al, 2017; Derewianka, 2007; Hyland, 2005, 2012), writing proficiency (e.g., Lancaster, 2014, 2016; Wu, 2006, 2007; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Miller, Mitchell, & Pessoa, 2014; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014), language environments (e.g., Chen, 2010; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Wu, 2006, 2007), and disciplinary contexts (e.g., Hyland, 2004b; Lancaster, 2016a; Li & Wharton, 2012) use stance resources in writing. These studies have shown that stance deployment varies across educational levels, native languages, writing proficiencies, and learning contexts.

However, insufficient attention has been given to the possible influence from psychological or cognitive factors, such as beliefs, which may pose an impact on writing behaviour. Writing can be construed as a socio-culturally situated cognitive practice (Uccelli, Dobbs, & Scott, 2013), from the perspective of Sociocognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986). Thus, a writer's behaviour constantly interacts with internal personal factors, such as preconceived beliefs or attitudes that are formed from existing knowledge and previous learning experience (Martin & White, 2005; Wharton, 2012). Additionally, it has been found that student writers' beliefs about writing have affinities with the way they convey knowledge and integrate information (Mateos & Solé, 2012;

Villalón & Mateos, 2009; White & Bruning, 2005). As Graham, Schwartz, and MacArthur (1993) argued, the beliefs that students possess about writing play an important role in the writing process and determine the eventual shape of the writing outcome. Therefore, scholars have speculated reasonably that the beliefs that student writers possess may influence their corresponding behaviours for stance-taking (e.g., Chang, 2016; Chang & Tsai, 2014), although there are few studies that have been conducted in this field.

There are two beliefs at different levels of specificity potentially worth investigating: beliefs about writing and beliefs about stance. As stated above, previous research has shown that there is a close tie between writing beliefs and writing performance (Baaijen, Galbraith, & de Glopper, 2014; Neely, 2014; Sanders-Reio, Alexander, Reio, & Newman, 2014; White & Bruning, 2005). White and Bruning (2005) also argued that writing beliefs may impact on a writer's engagement during writing, which is expected to influence writer-reader interactions. But there are few studies in an EFL academic context examining the link between writing beliefs and stance-taking practices. From the existing literature in the strand of stance beliefs, it appears that student writers have a relatively immature understanding of stance, especially in terms of its dialogic function (e.g., Chang, 2016; Chang & Tsai, 2014). There is also a need, therefore, for further studies investigating the relationship between beliefs about stance and stance-taking behaviours.

In addition to the above-mentioned factors, many scholars have also attributed student writers' difficulties in stance deployment to the instruction they have received (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Cumming, Lai & Cho, 2016; Cumming et al., 2018; Xie, 2016). For instance, Chang and Schleppegrell (2016) argued that most L2 students are not well-prepared by academic writing instruction, and students usually lack exposure

to resources and materials about stance in the learning context (Biber, 2006; Wharton, 2012). Scholars, thus, have called for explicit instruction on stance in the writing classroom, to ensure L2 writers have a deeper understanding to help them produce better writing with appropriate stances (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011, 2016; Charles, 2006; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Lancaster, 2014; Lee, 2008; Miller et al., 2014). For instance, Crosthwaite and Jiang (2017) recommended that explicit instruction of stance features should be incorporated as an integral part of English for Academic Purposes (hereafter EAP) programmes at the university level. Although there have been frequent calls for instruction, insufficient intervention studies have been carried out to evaluate the effects of explicit stance instruction on student writers' stance awareness, beliefs, and writing performance.

Therefore, an investigation into the relationship between student writers' beliefs and stance practices, and further to evaluate the effects of explicit stance instruction on their writing performance may confront their difficulties associated with stance. It may also contribute to a better understanding of students' stance practices and how to improve their deployment of stance in the academic writing.

1.3 Research Context

1.3.1 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in China

English as a foreign language plays a vital role in education in China; it has been perceived as a necessary foreign language for every Chinese citizen (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002; Teng & Zhang, 2020; Wei, Zhang, & Zhang, 2020). A mastery of the English language is considered a gateway to better educational and employment opportunities, overseas study, and academic development (Woodrow, 2011). Therefore, EFL has been included in school curricula from the primary school all the way to the higher education

in universities. Students are required to pass the college entrance examination, in which English language is one of the three key subjects, to enter university. At the tertiary level, English language is a compulsory course for students of all majors by the *College English Teaching Syllabus* (MoE, 2007), which provides official guidance for curriculum design and evaluation. During the four-year study, university students are required to pass several national tests for English proficiency, such as College English Test Band 4 and 6 (CET4/ CET6); these are criteria for graduation or application for postgraduate programmes (Teng & Zhang, 2016a, 2016b).

English-major students are expected to achieve a higher level of language proficiency than students of other majors in higher education. Based on the *National College English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors* (hereafter the *Syllabus for English Majors*, NACFLT, 2000), the four-year learning of English-major students is divided into the foundation stage (Year 1 and 2) and the advanced stage (Year 3 and 4) (Jin & Fan, 2011). The courses on English language are categorised into various language abilities (i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing) and disciplinary knowledge (e.g., linguistics, literature, translation) to ensure comprehensive language competence. At each stage, English majors' language proficiency is examined with a specified test battery of Test for English Major Band 4 and 8 (TEM4/ TEM8) (Jin & Fan, 2011).

As required by the *Syllabus for English Majors*, English-major students at the undergraduate level need to complete academic writing tasks in English, such as course essays, final thesis, because of a greater need to master EAP writing than students in other majors (Xiong & Zou, 2011). Specifically, the final thesis for the Bachelor of Arts (hereafter BA), which students are required to complete in their fourth year to graduate, is expected to be sufficiently persuasive to convince teachers and examiners that the student is worthy of the degree. According to the *Syllabus for English Majors*, students

are required to express their own opinions and innovative thoughts rather than merely reporting or summarizing relevant literature, implying that students need to be able to express their opinions and undertake evaluations appropriate within their academic and disciplinary community (Thompson, 2012). This competence in academic writing is also essential to students' acquiring and conveying scholarly knowledge beyond an undergraduate programme (Cumming et al., 2018; Flowerdew, 2000). Thus, the role of stance-taking has been foregrounded in cultivating students' abilities and skills for academic writing.

1.3.2 Teaching EAP Writing for English Majors

Because of students' need to master academic writing, most universities in China set up compulsory courses on EAP writing for English-major students at the advanced stage (Xu, 2015; Zeng & Li, 2014). In classroom instruction, teachers tend to emphasise the general guidelines of structure or style and formatting conventions in academic writing (Xie, 2016; Xiong & Zou, 2011), while there is little focus on interpersonal issues and how to take stances when building a convincing argument in academic writing (Hyland, 2005b; Xie, 2016). This results in students' lack of a clear understanding of the interpersonal nature of academic argumentation and awareness of the need for stance-taking; and as a result, student writers encounter difficulties in expressing their ideas (Sun, 2004; Xie, 2016).

In the foundation stage of study (Year 1 and 2), students are trained to complete writing tasks in various genres, such as descriptions, narratives, and argumentative essays. These tasks aim to cultivate students' basic language skills with topics related to daily lives, which students can usually complete based on their personal experiences and adequate language proficiency. However, when facing academic writing at the advanced stage,

students need to integrate relevant literature and generate their own rationale with innovative perspectives. It is challenging for them to establish an argument in an interpersonally appropriate way to involve and persuade the reader (Hyland, 2005; Xiong & Zou, 2011). Having had little previous practice experience or EAP instruction, they may feel constrained and frustrated. As Hyland (2005b) claimed, the EAP classroom tends to focus on ideational aspects of writing at the expense of interpersonal aspects which are virtually "central to academic argument", but often considered as an "optional extra" (p. 375). With little instruction in the interpersonal functions of academic writing, students are likely to be ineffective in stance-taking and continue to consider EAP writing as impersonal and faceless (Hyland, 2012).

Situated in this context, EAP writing instruction in China is still in its developing stage and more empirical research is needed for pedagogical improvement (Xu, 2015). Academic writing course design for English major undergraduate students in Chinese universities need to be reflected upon and alternative ways of writing instruction considered to address students' difficulties in academic writing.

1.4 Objectives and Research Questions

The purpose of this research, informed by social-interactive and sociocognitive theoretical perspectives, was to: 1) Investigate the relationships between student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality in an EFL context in China; and 2) implement an intervention for explicit stance instruction and evaluate its effects on students' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality. The two studies are expected to lead to a better understanding of contributing factors to students' stance behaviours and of how to improve students' stance deployment in academic writing in an EFL classroom.

The current research includes three sections. A preparatory study was conducted first to validate two questionnaire instruments for investigating of student writers' beliefs. Firstly, the *Beliefs about Authorial Stance Questionnaire* (BASQ) was developed and validated in light of previous empirical studies to measure students' beliefs about authorial stance in academic writing. The *Writing Beliefs Inventory* (WBI), was borrowed from previous studies to investigate students' beliefs about writing, with its reliability examined in the EFL setting.

Study One investigated the relationships between student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality in the EFL context of China. Data were collected from the two validated questionnaires and written texts from students. Study One aimed to address the overarching research question:

What are the relationships between EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and overall quality of English academic writing?

Six specific research questions are addressed as follows:

1) What is the state of students' writing beliefs and beliefs about stance?

2) What are the relationships between students' writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and writing quality?

3) What are the relationships between students' writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment?

4) What is the relationship between stance deployment and writing quality?

5) Are there any differences between high-scoring and low-scoring students in terms of writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment?

6) What are the predictive abilities of writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment to writing quality?

Study Two was a quasi-experimental intervention study, involving a treatment and a comparison group, to implement explicit stance instruction and evaluate its effects on student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality in the EFL context of China. During the period of intervention, a multiple-case study was conducted to investigate the changes in students' beliefs in-depth. Data in Study Two were collected using mixed methods: Questionnaires, written texts, interviews, and writing journals. The overarching question for Study Two is:

Did the explicit stance instruction have any impact on the treatment group's writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, stance deployment, and overall writing quality, compared with the comparison group?

Three specific research questions are as follows:

1) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in the overall quality of English academic writing after the intervention?

2) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in beliefs about writing and authorial stance after the intervention, both quantitatively and qualitatively?

3) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in stance deployment after the intervention, both quantitatively and qualitatively?

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to make contributions in several areas. Theoretically, this research draws on social-interactive and sociocognitive theories to enrich the current

understanding of student writers' stance-taking practice in academic writing. It is anticipated that by exploring the relationship between beliefs and stance deployment, this research may identify how student writers view stance in an academic setting and the factors that contribute to their deployment of stance. This research is also expected to expand the application of social-interactive and sociocognitive perspectives to a more specific area of second language writing and enhance our understanding of how to improve student writing in general. Specifically, as mentioned above, investigation of the beliefs at two different levels of specificity as possibly influencing stance-taking, will contribute to understanding the influence of cognitive factors on writing behaviours at different levels of focus. Methodologically, it has significance as a new instrument was developed and validated to measure students' beliefs about authorial stance at the tertiary level; it is expected to contribute to future investigation in this field.

Pedagogically, the current research is expected to offer insights into EAP writing instruction for EFL learners at the tertiary level, fostering effective argumentation from the angle of authorial stance. By implementing an explicit instruction for stance in the EAP classroom and evaluating its effects, this study is anticipated to have implications for the feasibility and effectiveness of the intervention in improving the awareness and deployment of stance for Chinese EFL learners. The findings from the writing intervention will provide empirical evidence for how to enhance students' learning of academic writing, especially effective stance-taking for persuasive argumentation. This research may elicit insights on the role and time allocation for teaching stance within the EAP programme, which may contribute to the EAP course design in the context of China.

1.6 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter One presents the rationale, research background and context for the current research on which the research questions and significance of the research are based. Chapter Two provides the conceptualisation of the key notion, *stance*, and social-interactive perspective, together with a systematic review of literature on student writers' deployment of authorial stance. Chapter Three turns the focus to the literature concerning student writers' beliefs and learning of stance in the light of sociocognitive perspective. Decisions for the current research are clarified, based on the insights and research gaps from the review in these two chapters. Chapter Four presents a detailed description of the overall research design. Chapter Five reports the process and results of instrument validation and results of Study One, which investigated the relationships between student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and writing outcomes. Chapter Six reports both quantitative and qualitative results of Study Two investigating the effects of explicit stance instruction on student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and writing quality. Chapter Seven discusses the findings addressing each research question in the broader context of empirical literature and theoretical models. Chapter Eight summarises the major research findings and provides conclusions describing the contributions and implications of the current research, as well as its limitations, and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter Two: Literature Review Part One: Stance Deployment in Student Writing

This chapter provides a review of the theoretical perspectives, analytic models and empirical studies concerning stance deployment in student academic writing. The chapter first presents a review of the key concept of stance, followed by the social-interactive perspectives on writing. These two sections are fundamental to the understanding of stance in the current research. The subsequent section introduces two influential analytic models of stance adopted in empirical investigations. The following section presents a review of empirical studies on the deployment of stance from various perspectives, and is followed by a summary of the chapter.

2.1 Conceptualisation of Stance

Over the last several decades, investigations into writers' use of linguistic features to convey personal attitudes or evaluations have been approached from various perspectives under a range of terms, such as *stance* (Biber & Finegan, 1988, 1989), *evaluation* (Hunston & Thompson, 2000), *hedges* (Hyland, 1998), *epistemic modality* (H.-I. Chen, 2010; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Martin, 1995), *appraisal* (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005; White, 2003), *metadiscourse* (Crismore, 1989; Hyland, 2005a) and *voice* (Ivanič & Camps, 2001; Matsuda, 2001; Matsuda & Tardy, 2007). Initially, the notion of authorial stance was built based upon two aspects of meaning: *evidentiality* (Chafe, 1986; Chafe & Nichols, 1986) and *affect* (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989). Evidentiality refers to the writer's attitude toward the status of knowledge contained in proposition, including reliability, source, manner and appropriateness (Chafe, 1986).

Affect is mainly concerned with the linguistic realisation of writer's feelings, emotions or moods (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989).

Biber and Finegan (1989) defined the concept of *stance* as "the lexical and grammatical expressions of attitudes, feelings, judgments, or commitment concerning the propositional content of a message" (p. 93). Biber and his colleagues later further classified the stance markers into three semantic domains: epistemic, attitude and style (Biber, 2006; Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999): Epistemic domain expresses the writer's comment on the certainty or the degree of likelihood of the proposition (e.g., *certainly*, *perhaps*); attitudinal domain conveys the writer's feelings, emotions and value judgments (e.g., *amazingly*, *important*); style domain is concerned with the manner of conveying the information (e.g., *frankly*, *generally*).

Referring to stance, Hyland (2005c) further addressed interpersonal interactions in academic texts and defined stance as,

> the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgments, opinions and commitments. It is the ways that writers intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement. (p. 176)

In Hyland's definition, stance is concerned with "writer-oriented features" of interaction with a dialogic purpose (Hyland, 2005c, p. 178). This view sees written texts as essentially social and stance as writer's endeavour to construct and negotiate social relations to build convincing discourse (Hyland, 2008c). Hyland (2005c, 2007) further proposed a model and categorised the linguistic markers of stance into four categories: hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self-mentions, which are illustrated in section 2.3.1. Three domains can be noted from the conceptualisation, namely evidentiality,

affect and presence. The first two domains are generally consistent with those in previous studies (Chafe, 1986; Biber, 2006; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989), while presence is concerned with the extent to which the writer projects self into the text, thus taking into account the writer's identity. This domain echoes Ivanič's (1998) concept of "self as author" in the classification of four types of writer's textual identity (i.e., autobiographical self, discoursal self, self as author and possibilities for self-hood), which are associated with the textual features describing a writer's feeling and position in relation to authorities and other writers (Clark & Ivanič, 1997; Ivanič, 1998). Hyland (2002) emphasised that presenting an authorial self is central to the writing process, and is unavoidable for writers when taking positions in relation to their arguments, discipline and anticipated readers. Hyland's definition of stance is more comprehensive and systematic than the previous ones and sets a fundamental paradigm for successive corpus-based studies (e.g., Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Hyland & Jiang, 2016a, 2017; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Yoon & Römer, 2020).

Another approach to stance is situated within systemic functional linguistics in relation to Bakhtin's (1981) Dialogism (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005; White, 2003). From this perspective written texts are fundamentally dialogic in that writers always refer to what has been said or written before, and simultaneously anticipate the responses of presumed readers (White, 2003). Stance is conceptualised as the means for speakers or writers to take intersubjective positions with respect to the various viewpoints or social positionings being referenced by the text (White, 2003). Martin and White (2005) further proposed a typology, called the Appraisal Systems, to account for evaluative languages of stance, which encompasses three systems: *Attitude*, *Engagement* and *Graduation*, which will be further illustrated later in section 2.3.2. The typology offers a dialogic framework in construing and analysing stance, in which the primary concern

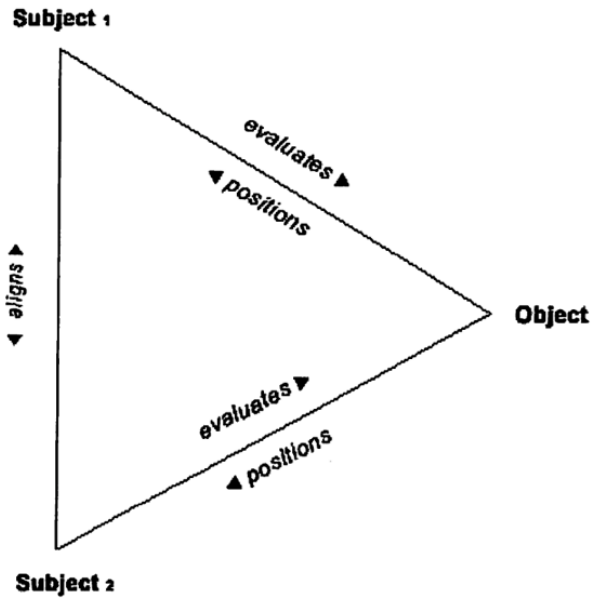
of the stance construct is the dialogic relationship of value positions in the texts, rather than truth value in epistemic dimension (White, 2003).

Similarly from a dialogic and social-interactive perspective, Du Bois (2007) proposed that stance should be understood as creating three acts in one with the following definition:

> Stance is a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field. (p. 163)

Du Bois (2007) also provided a theorised model of stance as a triangle addressing the various elements and interactions in stance-taking, as shown in Figure 2.1. He depicts the three nodes of the triangle as representing the three key entities in the stance act, the first and second subject and the shared stance object. The three sides of the triangle indicate vectors of directed action that organise the stance relations among these entities, comprising the three subsidiary acts of evaluating, positioning and aligning. The stance triangle is a visualised stance-taking act that depicts the interactions that may rise between various entities. Though originally proposed in the context of conversational interaction, the model also illustrates the role of stance in written texts as Bakhtin (1981) argued that all verbal communication, whether written or spoken, is dialogic in nature.

Figure 2.1 The Stance Triangle



Note. From Du Bois, J. W. (2007). The stance triangle. In R. Englebretson (Eds.), *Stancetaking in discourse: Subjectivity, evaluation, interaction* (p. 163). Amsterdam: Benjamins.

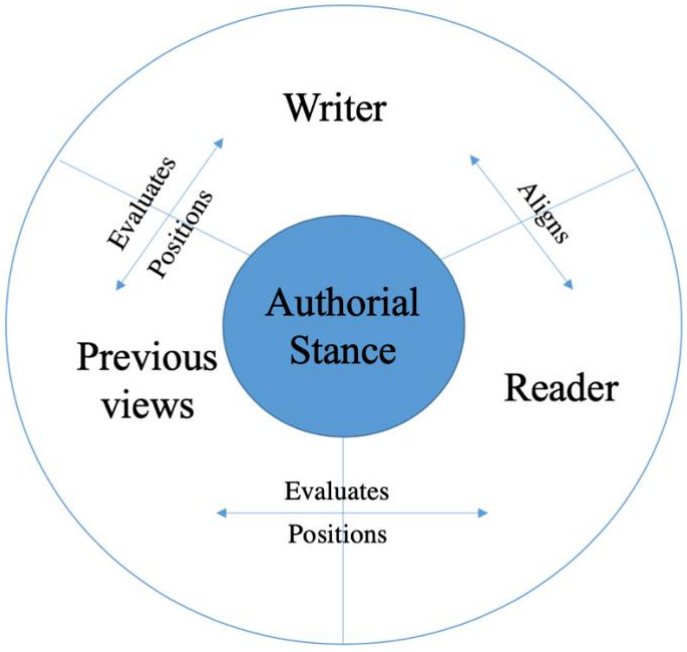
The dialogic conceptualisation of stance provides a basis for understanding interactions in stance-taking practices and a theoretical lens for a number of successive studies. For instance, Wharton (2012) defined stance as "the ways in which authors project themselves into texts, often evaluatively, often to indicate their relationship and attitude to their subject matter and to their readers" (p. 262). She categorised three domains of stance construct: epistemic, attitudinal, and dialogic domains. The dialogic domain is concerned with authors' consideration of the possibility of alternative views, highlighting the dialogic interaction involved in the texts. Sancho Guinda and Hyland (2012) also commented that the nature of stance is "multifaceted and polyphonic", which also echoes with the dialogic perspective (p. 2). Lancaster (2014) defined stance as "the ways that writers project an authorial presence that conveys attitudes and evaluations

while also interacting with the imagined readers, positioning them as aligned or resistant to the views being advanced in the text" (p. 29).

Although stance has been approached using different terms in different contexts, the various conceptualisations essentially relate stance to the writer's attitudes and evaluations of the propositions in the texts. Researchers have increasingly paid attention to the dialogic features involved in the stance construct as they have gradually acknowledged the social-interactive nature of academic writing.

In this research, I use the term *stance* following White (2003), Du Bois (2007), Lancaster (2014) and Wharton (2012) to refer to the ways in which writers convey personal evaluations while positioning them with respect to alternative views and interacting with putative readers. Figure 2.2 presents a model of conceptualised interactions in stance-taking in the context of writing, which is based on Du Bois's (2007) stance triangle.

Figure 2.2 Interactions in Stance-taking in the Written Text



The three divisions represent the three key roles participating in the stance interaction: writer, reader, and previous views. In a single act of stance-taking, the writer evaluates previous views and positions his or her own stand. At the same time, he or she also responds and endeavours to align with readers who are assumed to possess their own evaluations and positions of the referred views.

2.2 Writing as Social Interaction

This research, draws upon a social-interactive perspective on writing, consistent with the conceptualisation of stance as reviewed in the previous section. Writing is viewed as having gradually shifted from a psychological and autonomous product to "a persuasive endeavour" involving interaction between the writer and readers (Hyland, 2005c, p. 173). The social-interactive view has been long embedded in writing. For instance, Lawrence Stern (1883) wrote, "writing, when properly managed, is but a different name for conversation" (cited in Hyland, 2016b). In the last century, Bakhtin (1981, 1986) noticed that the communicative functions of language were neglected in the mainstream linguistics and thus proposed the theory of dialogism which views all utterances as fundamentally dialogic and social interactive. He claimed that language-speech is fundamentally a social event of verbal interaction implemented in utterances (Bakhtin, 1981). This view was also shared by Nystrand (1989) who, in his theorisation of written communication, argued that writers and readers reciprocally negotiate through the medium of text. The social-interactive perspective, as Hyland (2016b) summarised, views writing as an interactive cognitive activity in which writers employ appropriate resources for conveying opinions in the discourse community with a consideration of readers' likely responses. This perspective has provoked considerable academic research into EFL writing, and is the theoretical foundation for the current research. The next

section introduces Bakhtinian dialogism and Nystrand's social-interactive model of writing communication and provides a summary of their theoretical enlightenment.

2.2.1 Bakhtinian Dialogism

The theory of Dialogism was proposed by Bakhtin (1981), a Russian literary critic and philosopher, and has inspired research in the diverse disciplines of social sciences, including psychology, linguistics and education. In the theorisation of dialogism, Bakhtin regarded language as inherently dialogic. As Voloshinov (1986) stated,

> The actual reality of language-speech is not the abstract system of linguistic forms, not the isolated monologic utterance, and not the psychological act of its implementation, but the social event of verbal interaction implemented in an utterance or utterances. (p. 139)

For Bakhtin, dialogical relationships are an universal phenomenon in the context of writing in that the writer is constantly under the influence of, or referring to, what has been said or written before, while simultaneously anticipating the potential responses of readers. As Bakhtin (1981) claimed, all utterances, even those that are ostensibly monologic, exist against a background made up of contradictory points of view and value judgments in other utterances on the same theme, and also "pregnant with responses and objections" (p. 281). It is within this background that one's own discourse is "gradually and slowly wrought out of others' words that have been acknowledged and assimilated" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). All writers, in other words, are constantly involved in a dynamic process of interaction in which they negotiate with various referred voices in the text that reflect shared positions in the specific social and disciplinary community, and simultaneously anticipate possible responses from prospective readers. Bakhtin (1981), therefore, argued that written discourse is half the writer's and "half-someone

else's" (p. 293). The nature of writing through a dialogic lens resonates with the triangular engagement in the conceptualisation of stance. Three key concepts have further informed the theoretical account of stance-taking practice: internal dialogism, heteroglossia, and intertextuality.

2.2.1.1 Internal dialogism

For Bakhtin, dialogism is more than an external compositional form structuring speech, but actually penetrates the entire structure of utterance, including semantic and expressive layers. Bakhtin (1981) proposed two types of "internal dialogism of word" in his notable essay *Discourse in the Novel*. The first is the dialogical relationship between the word and its object. Bakhtin (1981) argued that "the word is shaped in dialogic interaction with an alien word that is already in the object" (p. 279). This type of internal dialogism is further described as follows,

> But no living word relates to its object in a singular way: between the word and its object, between the word and the speaking subject, there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the same object, the same theme, and this is an environment that it is often difficult to penetrate. … The word, directed toward its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgments and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group: and all this may crucially shape discourse, may leave a trace in all its semantic layers, may complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276)

There exists a dialogic relationship between the word and its object. When the speaking subject intends to build an utterance about an object, he or she has to negotiate with many other words about the same object or theme and to make a decision in the environment of value positions. All dialogical interactions, alignments and disalignments, are interwoven into the semantic and expressive layers of the accomplished discourse. As Bakhtin (1986) proposed, an utterance is filled with "dialogic overtones" (p. 92). The shaped utterances then become an active participant in the social dialogue in a broader socio-cultural context. In the act of stance-taking, the writer dialogically negotiates with linguistic resources featuring various value positions in order to announce his or her attitudinal assessment. The authorial voice is shaped within an environment of "alien" or alternative positions construed about the same theme or proposition. The stance choices then leave semantic traces for the dialogic interaction in which the writer engages with various value positions within the socially-constituted communities. These internal dialogues, or "internal dialogism of the word", as Bakhtin (1981) emphasised, have "enormous power to shape style" (p. 279).

The second type of internal dialogism is concerned with a listener's response or "answer" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 280). For Bakhtin, every word is situated in a living dialogue, in which the word is formed in an environment of the already spoken and is simultaneously determined by what has not yet been said but is anticipated. The word is oriented toward listener's response and cannot escape the influence of the anticipated answering word. Bakhtin (1981) further argued that the dialogical relationship between the writer's words and the listener's response constitutes the fundamental basis of rhetorical discourse. As he stated,

> All rhetorical forms, monologic in their compositional structure, are oriented toward the listener and his answer. This orientation toward the

> listener is usually considered the basic constitutive feature of rhetorical discourse. It is highly significant for rhetoric that this relationship toward the concrete listener, taking him into account, is a relationship that enters into the very internal construction of rhetorical discourse. This orientation toward an answer is open, blatant and concrete. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 280)

For this type of internal dialogism, the encountering context is not concerned with the object, but rather with "the subjective beliefs system of the listener" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 282). The written words actually provoke a dialogic interaction with "a specific conceptual horizon" of the listener, as each person has his or her "own language, point of view, conceptual system that to all others is alien" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 282). Then various value positions, or "conceptual horizons", come to interact with one another (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 282). In this living conversation, the writer anticipates an answer and structures the written words in accord with the anticipated answers' orientation. This orientation is toward an active rather than a passive understanding, as in everyday dialogue. As Bakhtin (1981) explained,

> In the actual life of speech, every concrete act of understanding is active: it assimilates the word to be understood into its own conceptual system filled with specific objects and emotional expressions, and is indissolubly merged with the response, with a motivated agreement or disagreement. (p. 282)

The speaker or writer strives to understand on his/her own word within his/her own conceptual system, and then determines the word within the envisaged belief system of the putative listener; thus this type of internal dialogism bears a subjective and

psychological character (Bakhtin, 1981). Informed by the internal dialogism of response, stance-taking practice is dialogic in that the writer construes the value-laden utterances with presumed addressee's responses in mind. The writer adopts stance resources which act to incorporate reader into the text by presenting the writer as assuming, sharing with or challenging them on a particular viewpoint. The negotiation of agreement and disagreement between the writer and the text's putative responses is reflected in the word choices in an "open, blatant and concrete" way (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 280).

2.2.1.2 Heteroglossia

Heteroglossia is a fundamental and dominant concept in the theory of dialogism. The term, coined by Bakhtin in the essay *Discourse in the Novel*, is the translation of the Russian term *raznorecie*, which means the simultaneous use of different kinds of speech or other signs that may belong to partly conflicting spheres (Ivanov, 1999). Bakhtin (1981) claimed that "heteroglossia is the base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance" (p. 428).

The notion of heteroglossia is created to denote the stratification of languages. For Bakhtin, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects, but more essentially into multiple social-ideological languages, such as "language of social groups, 'professional' and 'generic' languages, languages of generations and so forth" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 272). These stratified languages do not exist as static invariants, they interact dynamically with each other. Two forces are indispensable in the development and interaction of stratified languages: centripetal and centrifugal. Centripetal forces serve to unify and centralise the verbal-ideological world toward a unitary "national" or "official" language, such as a system of linguistic norms, language unities (e.g., English, French, etc.). Centrifugal forces work to decentralise the unitary language into stratified languages of

social groups. Driven by the two conflicting forces, the stratified languages interact and intersect in an uninterrupted way. The stratification and heteroglossia keep widening and deepening, as long as language is alive, developing, and creating a context, in which either an individual or a social utterance lives and takes shape. As Bakhtin (1981) claimed,

> Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear. The processes of centralization and decentralization, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance; the utterance not only answers the requirements of its own language as an individualized embodiment of a speech act, but it answers the requirements of heteroglossia as well; it is in fact an active participant in such speech diversity. And this active participation of every utterance in living heteroglossia determines the linguistic profile and style of the utterance to no less a degree than its inclusion in any normative-centralizing system of a unitary language. (p. 272)

All utterances stem from the living heteroglossia which lies in "that locus where centripetal and centrifugal forces collide" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 428). The concrete utterance, once it has come into being, becomes an active participant in the speech diversity of heteroglossia, in which it crafts its own profile and style and, simultaneously, accepts the unitary norms. Bakhtin (1981), as a concluding comment in the essay, proposed that "we must deal with the life and behaviour of discourse in a contradictory and multi-languaged world" (p. 275).

When I follow Bakhtin's perspective to view all verbal communication as occurring in a heteroglossic cradle, a different picture of stance-taking practices emerges. When a writer construes an utterance, it has a centripetal force to ensure it conforms to the linguistic norms of the target genre of the unitary language. At the same time it encompasses stance-taking resources through which it interacts with the living heteroglossic environment populated by contradictory viewpoints and establishes the writer's distinct stratum of style and value positions. The two tendencies uninterruptedly intersect to establish the writer's own stance and authorial self, then further adding to the dynamic environment of speech diversity.

2.2.1.3 Intertextuality

Another key notion, which originated from Bakhtinian Dialogism, that informs the current research is intertextuality, which refers to the relationship between a given text and other texts that may have influence on it. The term was coined by Kristeva (1986) in his interpretation of Bakhtin's work. Bakhtin (1986) argued that all utterances are populated and shaped in continuous interaction with others' utterances. All utterances, both spoken and written, are oriented both retrospectively to the previous utterances and prospectively to the anticipated utterances that may come. Therefore, each utterance is "a link in the chain of speech communication of a particular sphere", filled with reverberations of other utterances (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 91). As Bakhtin (1986) stated,

> Our speech, that is, all our utterances (including creative works), is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness and varying degrees of "our-own-ness", varying degrees of awareness and detachment. These words of others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework, and reaccentuate. (p. 89)

Bakhtin (1981, 1986) identified two senses or dimensions of intertextuality, as summarised by Fairclough (1992): The horizontal dimension of intertextuality and the vertical dimension of intertextuality. Horizontal intertextual dimension is the relationship of texts to specific other texts, which is a "dialogical sort between a text and those which precede and follow it in the chain of texts" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 271). Vertical intertextual dimension refers to the relations of a text to conventions which are the contexts constituted by other texts. Building on Bakhtin's work, Fairclough (1992) illustrated the two types of intertextual relations as manifest intertextuality and interdiscursivity. In manifest intertextuality, other texts are explicitly manifested or incorporated on the surface of the text through quotation or paraphrase. Interdiscursivity is the writer's use of discourse conventions drawn from a recognisable genre. Fairclough (1992) pointed out that the notion of intertextuality determines the productivity of texts, and how they can generate new ones by transforming prior texts and restructuring conventions of genres or discourses. Intertextuality thus connects the audience into a network of prior texts as well as a system of options for meaning-making (Hyland, 2016b).

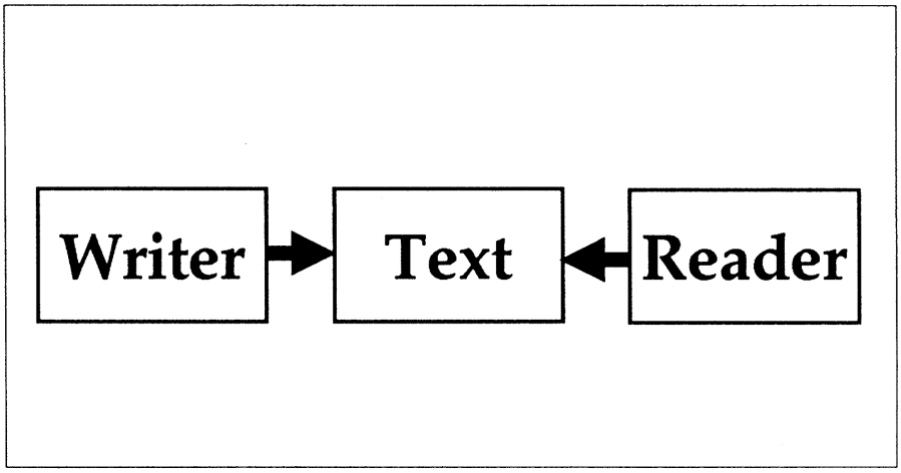
2.2.2 Social-Interactive Model of Writing

Similarly, recognizing the social aspects of written communication, Nystrand (1989) proposed a social-interactive model of writing which highlights the writer's negotiation with readers through the medium of text. Taking a similar stance as the dialogic paradigm, Nystrand's model offers further explanation and guidance for what skilled writers actually do in writing practice.

Nystrand (1989) argued that the process of composing is a matter of elaborating text according to the writer's assumption of the putative readers' knowledge and

expectations, whereas the process of reading is a matter of predicting text according to the reader's assumption of the writer's purpose. The success of a text lies in the writer's capability to fulfil readers' rhetorical demands (Nystrand, 1989). For Nystrand, text is not just the result of translating writer's purpose into words, but "a medium of communication mediating the respective purposes of the writer and reader" (Nystrand, 1989, p. 76), as shown in Figure 2.3. A text, therefore, has "semantic potential", that is, a variety of possible meanings constructed through reciprocal negotiation between writer and reader. In other words, meaning is not directly transmitted from writer to reader, but is created in the social interactions between participants themselves.

Figure 2.3 Social-Interactive Model of Written Communication



Note. From Nystrand, M. (1989). A social-interactive model of writing. *Written Communication, 6*(1), 66-85.

In the process of communication via text, writers and readers may make various "moves" to achieve sequential states of understanding between them. Skilled writers take three essential moves: 1) Initiating, 2) sustaining written discourse, and 3) text elaboration. To gain a reader's attention, a writer first needs to establish a clear topic with appropriate genre, tone and metadiscoursal elements that build a mutual frame of reference for the writer and reader. Once the initial calibration has been established, the writer proceeds

by elaborating the text to contextualise new information and sustain the balance between writer's expression and reader's comprehension in the discourse. Three basic types of text elaboration are available for writers: 1) genre elaborations that clarify the character of the communication; 2) topical elaborations that clarity discourse topics; and 3) local elaborations that clarity discourse comments. Nystrand (1989) summarised these essential moves, or principles, as a reciprocity-based grammar of written text, which include a fundamental axiom and seven corollaries (see Nystrand, 1989, for detailed information).

2.2.3 Summary of Social-Interactive Enlightenment

The theoretical perspective and key notions of Dialogism provide a major account for the interaction in stance-taking in this research. Enlightened by Bakhtin's theory, writer's stance-taking and writing practice can be understood as a dialogic endeavour. The writer is engaged in a living heteroglossia, in which he or she dynamically interacts with referred voices that reflect shared or alien positions in the social and disciplinary community and, at the same time, responds to the putative answers from readers. During the compositional process, the writer internally interacts with alien words about an object or a proposition, as well as with imagined listener's beliefs system. Thus, the produced utterances are complex and multiplanar, reflecting their link to related utterances, unitary norms and envisaged audience's responses. Writers' stance-taking behaviours are the furrowed traces of the triangular dialogic interaction between themselves, prior writers, and prospective audience. As Morris (1994) summarised, the theory of Dialogism depicts the interaction of forces at individual and social level, in which "productive vitality and creativity derive from a continuous dialogic struggle within and between discourses" (p. 73). Nystrand's social-interactive model of writing offers further insights for meaning-making process and clarifies where writer and reader

interact and what writers should do in practice. The model offers practical principles and regularities to writing practice from the writer's perspective. In summary, the social-interactive perspective on writing, especially the dialogic perspective, has paved the theoretical pathway for the current exploration of stance deployment.

2.3 Analytic Models on Stance

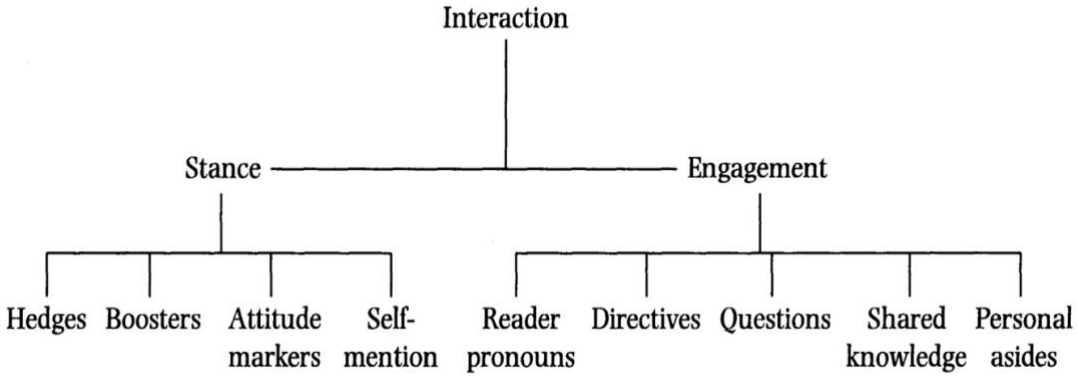
Drawing on the social-interactive perspective, many research studies have investigated the linguistic features contributing to the writer's projection of stance and to dialogic interaction with audience. Two influential typologies of linguistic resources are frequently adopted as analytic models in empirical studies of stance: Hyland's (2005a) Interactional Metadiscourse Model and Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal Systems.

2.3.1 Hyland (2005a): Interactional Metadiscourse Model

The first typology that has been popular in stance investigation is Hyland's (2005a, 2005c) Interactional Metadiscourse Model. Based on an analysis of corpora and insider interviews from various disciplines, Hyland (2005a, 2005c, 2008) proposed a framework of metadiscourse to account for interaction in academic texts. Metadiscourse is defined as "the writer's commentary on his or her unfolding text", functioning as a set of interpersonal options in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter, SFL) (Hyland, 2005a, p. 17). Hyland (2005a) made a distinction between interactive and interactional metadiscourse resources for organisational and evaluative features of interaction (see also Hyland & Tse, 2004). For evaluative features, Hyland (2005c) held a social-interactive position that every instance of evaluation in academic writing is seen as a socially situated interaction in a disciplinary or institutional context. Interactional dimension of metadiscourse concerns "the ways writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on the messages" (Hyland, 2005a, p. 49). Basically, these interactions

are managed by writers in two ways: stance and *engagement*[1]. Stance is writer-oriented textual features of interaction, which, as reviewed in section 2.1, refers to "the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgments, opinions, and commitments" (Hyland, 2005c, p. 176). *Engagement* is concerned with reader alignment where writers "recognizing the presence of their readers" and include them as discourse participants (Hyland, 2005b, p. 176). Figure 2.4 presents the key resources of interactional metadiscourse model.

Figure 2.4 Interactional Metadiscourse Model



Note. From Hyland, K. (2005c). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies, 7*(2), p.173-192.

In the model, *engagement* includes five main categories of linguistic features: *Reader pronouns*, *personal asides*, *appeals to shared knowledge*, *directives*, and *questions*. Reader pronouns mainly involve the use of second-person pronouns (e.g., *you*). Personal asides are the writer's additional comments inserted into a statement. Appeals to shared knowledge are explicit linguistic markers with which readers are asked to recognise something as accepted (e.g., *of course*, *obviously*). Directives usually involve the presence of imperatives (e.g., *consider*, *note*) or modals of obligation (e.g., *must*, *should*)

[1] The term "*engagement*" related to Hyland's model is italicised hereafter, to distinguish from Martin and White's engagement system introduced later.

to instruct the reader to see things in a certain way or perform an action. Stance features, which are the focus of the current research, consists of four categories: *hedges*, *boosters*, *attitude markers*, and *self-mention*. The definition and examples of each stance category are briefly summarised as follows:

> 1) *Hedges*: Devices that indicate the writer's decision to withhold complete commitment to a proposition, implying that a statement is based on plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge and opening a discursive space for interpretations. (e.g., *possible, might, perhaps*)
>
> 2) *Boosters*: Devices which allow writers to express certainty in what they say and to mark involvement with the topic and solidarity with their audience. (e.g., *clearly, obviously, demonstrate*)
>
> 3) *Attitude markers*: Devices which indicate the writer's affective, rather than epistemic, attitude to proposition, conveying surprise, agreement, importance, frustration, and so on, rather than commitment. (e.g., *unfortunately, remarkable, interesting*)
>
> 4) *Self-mentions:* The use of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives to present propositional, affective and interpersonal information. (e.g., *I, we, our*)
>
> (Hyland, 2005c, pp. 178–181)

Hyland's (2005a, 2005c) model of interactional metadiscourse has been adopted in a number of corpus-based investigations on authorial stance in both expert and student writings in various contexts (e.g., Aull et al., 2017; Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Ho & Li, 2018; Hyland & Jiang, 2016b, 2016a, 2017, 2018; Jiang & Hyland, 2015; Lee & Deakin, 2016; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Yoon & Römer, 2020).

However, as Hyland (2005c), himself, noticed, although stance features could be easily quantified with automated concordance tools, the corpus approach is not able to present how these features are organised and clustered in the text. The model, therefore, may be limited in presenting nuanced differences in qualitative assessment of stance deployment. Stock and Eik-Nes (2016) also noted that an overemphasis on linguistic features risks the omission of content-related features that may be relevant in stance-taking. Furthermore, as Hyland (2005a) noted, metadiscourse "refers only to relations which are internal to the discourse" (p. 38), it may be better to restrict it to linguistic units describing language or text, not the world outside the text (Ho & Li, 2018). Metadiscourse, therefore, may be not suitable for interpreting the social interaction between the writer and expected readers.

2.3.2 Martin and White (2005): Appraisal Systems

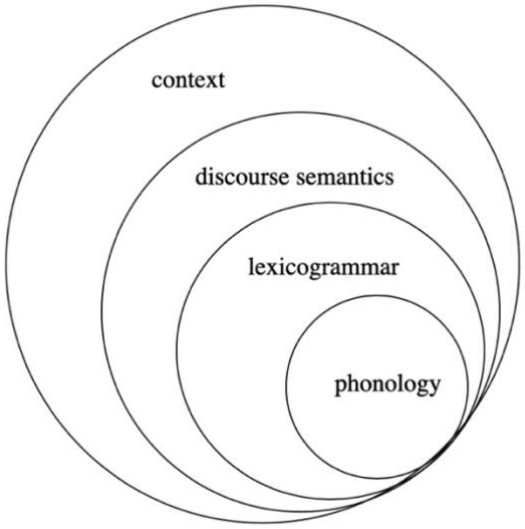
Another typology that is frequently adopted in stance investigation is Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal Systems, especially one of its three systems: Engagement system.

2.3.2.1 SFL background

Martin and White's (2005) approach to stance is proposed in a top-down manner within the SFL paradigm of Halliday and his colleagues (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). SFL regards language as a social semiotic system fundamentally about meaning making (Byrnes, 2009). Three modes of meaning, also called metafunctions, operate simultaneously in all utterances, namely, the ideational, the textual and the interpersonal (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Ideational meaning is concerned with construing experience and ideas, corresponding to the propositional content or information about reality. Interpersonal meaning is concerned with the negotiation of social relations and interaction. Textual meaning is about

information flow or organisation, that is, the ways in which ideational and interpersonal meanings are distributed in waves of semiosis. SFL views language as a stratified system involving multiple cycles of coding at different levels of abstraction, including phonology, lexicogrammar, discourse semantics and context, as shown in Figure 2.5. The framework of Appraisal is located as an interpersonal system at the level of discourse semantics.

Figure 2.5 The Stratified Model of Language and Context

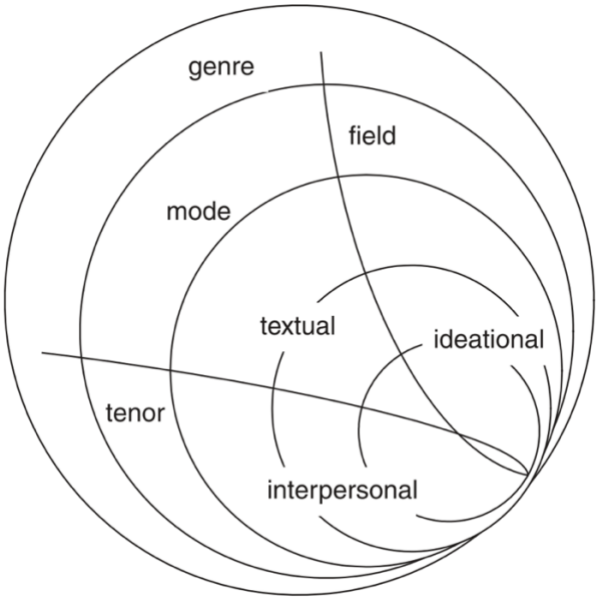


Note. From Martin, J. R. (2014). Evolving systemic functional linguistics: Beyond the clause. *Functional Linguistics, 1*(3), 1-24.

In addition to the internal language functions, the three metafunctions are also projected onto social context, called *register* and, within a broader cultural context, termed *genre* (Martin, 1992a). Register is a more abstract level of analysis than discourse semantics; it is comprised of three categories of social context: *field*, *mode* and *tenor* (Halliday, 1994; Martin, 1992a). Field is concerned with the subject matter and corresponds to the ideational domain of meaning. Mode refers to the channelling of communication and is related to the textual meaning of information flow. Tenor, which is most relevant to interpersonal meaning, is concerned with the social relationships of people participating.

Martin and White (2005) identified power and solidarity as two key tenor variables, from the vertical and horizontal dimensions of interpersonal relations, which the appraisal resources and patterns are expected to construe in the social context. The unfolding of appraisal prosodies, as seen from the cultural perspective, further contribute to the negotiation with readers in the broader context of genre; it can be interpreted as a system of goal-oriented social processes (Martin, 1992b). Figure 2.6 presents an outline of the metafunctional organisation of language and context.

Figure 2.6 Metafunctions in Language and Context



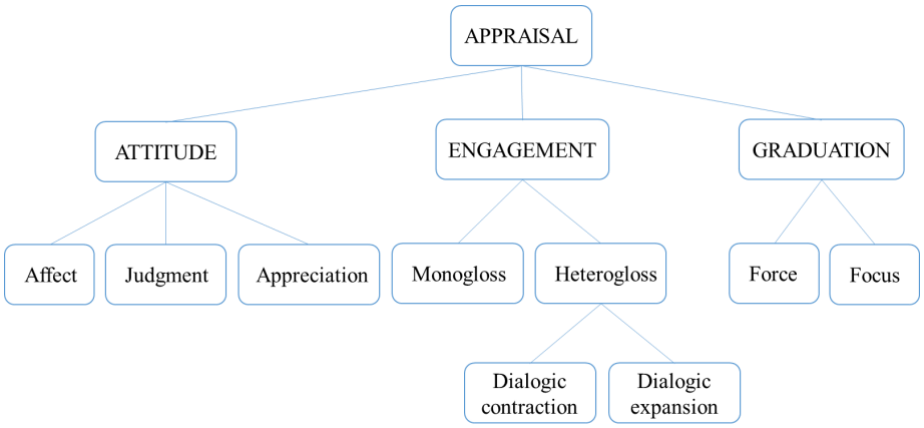
Note. From Martin, J. R., & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English* (p. 32). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Based on the premise of SFL realm and concepts, the Appraisal systems, proposed to model evaluative uses of language "by which writers adopt particular value positions or stances", negotiate these positionings with either actual or potential respondents (White, 2015). The appraisal resources include "the semantic resources used to negotiate emotions, judgments and valuations, alongside resources for amplifying and engaging with these evaluations" (Martin, 2000, p. 145).

2.3.2.2 Appraisal Systems

Situated in SFL, as briefly mentioned in section 2.1, the framework of Appraisal encompasses three systems: Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation, to account for the linguistic resources in construing interpersonal meaning. The systems are concerned with "the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned" (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 25). Figure 2.7 presents the three systems of Appraisal and their key subsystems. The Attitude system, concerned with the writer's feelings and emotions, including emotional reactions, judgments of behaviour and evaluation of things (Martin & White, 2005), can be further divided into three subsystems, *affect*, *judgment* and *appreciation* (see Martin 2000; White, 2003, 2015, for a detailed description). Attitude can be positive or negative and can be seen as a cline, with the canonical linguistic realisation for Attitude being adjectival (e.g., *sad, stunning, pleasant, full of surprise*).

Figure 2.7 The Appraisal Systems

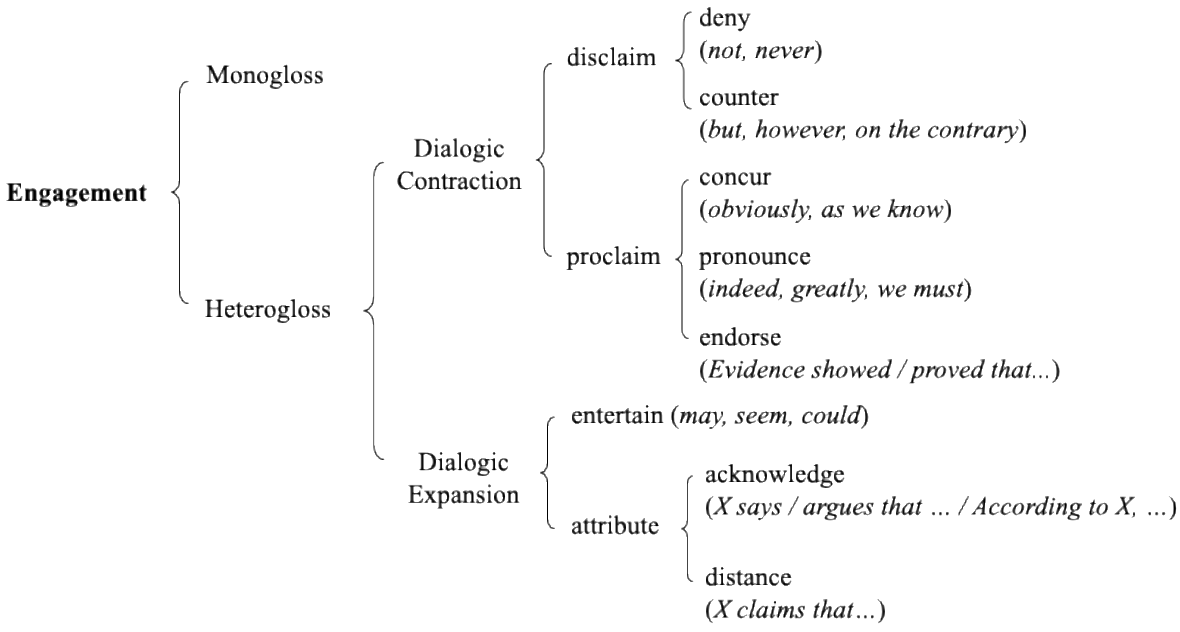


Note. Modified from Martin and White (2005).

The Engagement system is informed by Bakhtin's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia. The system represents the linguistic resources writers can use to construe intersubjective positioning in a dialogue in which they may present themselves as

acknowledging, challenging or endorsing previous views or embracing possible alternative evaluations (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005; White, 2003). As reviewed earlier, the dialogic perspective regards every text as dialogic, crafted out of multiple voices that the writer has explicitly cited or implicitly responded to while expecting readers' responses. The Engagement system groups together "all those locutions which provide the means for the authorial voice to position itself with respect to, and hence to engage with, the other voices and alternative positions construed as being in play in the current communicative context" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 94). In the system, utterances can be classified into monogloss and heterogloss. Figure 2.8 presents an overview of the Engagement system with representative linguistic markers.

Figure 2.8 The Engagement System



Note. Modified from Martin and White (2005).

Monogloss, or single-voiced utterance, refers to the utterance when the writer makes no overt reference to other viewpoints and barely assert the proposition as a fact, thus ignoring the dialogic possibilities (e.g., *Different cultures have caused many conflicts.*). Heterogloss, or multi-voiced utterance, overtly incorporates other voices or

acknowledges potentially different viewpoints (e.g., *Sociologists claim that different cultures have caused many conflicts.*). Within the heteroglossic scope, utterances can be valued on a cline and further divided into dialogic contraction and expansion according to the interpersonal functionality of available resources. The difference between the two heteroglossic orientations lies in the degree to which the engagement options are used to reduce the dialogic possibilities (contraction) or are more open for dialogic positions and alternative voices (expansion).

Dialogic contraction includes two categories: *disclaim* and *proclaim*. The utterance of *disclaim* either directly rejects dialogic alternatives (*disclaim: deny*) or presents the current proposition "as replacing or supplanting" a contrary position (*disclaim: counter*) (Martin & White, 2005, p. 120). The formulations under *proclaim* act to narrow down the dialogic space by "representing the proposition as highly warrantable" through overt alignment with putative audience (*proclaim: concur*), emphasis of an external voice (*proclaim: endorse*) or explicit authorial interpolation (*proclaim: pronounce*) (Martin & White, 2005, p. 98). Typical linguistic resources working to contract dialogic space include denials (e.g., *not, never*), adversative or counter-expectancy markers (e.g., *but, however, on the contrary*), intensifying adverbs or formulations (e.g., *indeed, greatly, we must*), and concurring formulations (e.g., *obviously, as we know*), among others. Dialogic expansion consists of two categories: *entertain* and *attribute.* The utterance of *entertain* opens up the dialogic space by indicating the authorial position is one of a number of possible positions. The formulation of *attribute* disassociates the proposition from the authorial voice by attributing it to external sources through either maintaining neutrality (*acknowledge*) or distancing. Resources for expanding dialogic spaces are typically represented via modal expressions (e.g., *may, could, possible*), appearance-

based verbs (e.g., *seem*), mental or reporting verbs (e.g., *I think, X says/argues*), and adverbial adjuncts (e.g., *according to*).

Drawing on Hunston and Thompson's (2000) overview, Martin and White (2005) further explained the distinction between Attitude and Engagement systems as opinions about entities and opinions about propositions. The former, attitudinal and involving positive and negative feelings, tends to be realised lexically. Whereas the latter, opinions about propositions, is canonically epistemic and tends to be realised grammatically.

The third system, the Graduation system is concerned with the degree of an evaluation, encompassing two subsystems, *focus* and *force*. *Focus* is concerned with the adjustment of strength of boundaries for non-gradable resources (e.g., *sort of, kind of*), in which phenomena are scaled according to "the degree to which they match some supposed core or exemplary instance of a semantic category" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 137), whereas *force* has to do with the degree of intensity or amount. Within the force subsystem, the up- or down-scaling of qualities or processes is termed *intensification* (e.g., *very, relatively, extremely*), while the assessment of amount, is referred to as *quantification* (e.g., *many*, *a few*). Martin and White (2005) further argued that graduation is actually an inherent feature of both Attitude and Engagement systems for adjusting the degree of an evaluation of entities or propositions.

The Appraisal Systems are frequently used in the investigations of stance features (e.g., Derewianka, 2007; Hood, 2004; Lancaster, 2014; Miller et al., 2014; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014). Among the two major aspects of stance, due to the increasing attention paid to the dialogic functionality of written texts, as Gray and Biber (2012) pointed out, epistemic meanings are regarded as more important than the attitudinal meanings in an academic context. Situated in this context, the Engagement system is appraised and

frequently adopted by virtue of its power to elucidate nuanced features in writer-reader interactions and distinguish effective and less effective dialogic negotiations in argumentation (e.g., Derewianka, 2007; Hood, 2010; Lancaster, 2014, 2016a; Miller et al., 2014; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014; Tang, 2009; Wu, 2007). Additionally, its pedagogical potential has also been noticed (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Cheng & Unsworth, 2016; Coffin et al., 2012; Humphrey & MacNaught, 2016; Jou, 2016; Lee, 2008, 2010). Therefore, the Engagement system provides a potential analytic model for the current research for an examination of stance deployment and writing instruction.

2.4 Empirical Research on Stance Deployment in Student Writing

Research on stance deployment in students' writing in the existing literature has been largely focused on how students use stance resources in writing. These studies have shown that stance deployment varies across learning experiences (i.e., advanced vs freshman; novice vs. expert), writing proficiency (i.e., high-rated vs. low-rated; successful vs. less successful), language environment (i.e., L1 vs L2), and disciplinary contexts (i.e., soft science vs. hard science). Most have reported that students do not use stance markers effectively to take interpersonal positions. Selected studies of citation practices were also reviewed to enhance understanding of the involvement of external sources in stance deployment.

2.4.1 Advanced vs. Less Advanced

A number of studies has been conducted to explore the use of stance resources in student writing of various learning levels (e.g., Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Aull et al, 2017; Derewianka, 2007). It is often found that student writing is more dialogically expansive at more advanced learning levels. For instance, Derewianka (2007), in an appraisal analysis of four history texts written by students of various levels from secondary school

to tertiary education, found that texts produced by more advanced students were more dialogically expansive. Aull and Lancaster (2014) used corpus methods to compare stance expressions in essays written by first-year undergraduates with the writing of upper-level (third- and fourth-year) undergraduates and published scholarly writing. First-year students, compared with more advanced peers and expert academic writers, were found to underuse hedges, code glosses, concessions and contrast expression, while overusing boosters and adversative connectors without concessions. Aull and Lancaster (2014) concluded that student writers may follow a developmental trajectory of stance features from hedges and boosters, code glosses, to adversative and contrast connectors.

Similar research, comparing the use of stance resources between student and expert writing (e.g., Aull et al., 2017; Hyland, 2005b, 2012), indicates that student writing includes a greater amount of monoglossic formulations, or bare assertions, than expert writing. Additionally, students tend to deploy assertive stance tokens that entail strong authorial commitments and emotions, while professional writers make tentative claims to show mitigation and establish reader solidarity. For instance, Hyland (2012) conducted a corpus-based study comparing published research articles with project reports written by final year Hong Kong undergraduates in eight disciplines. He reported that stance markers in student reports, although quite common, were fewer than in the research articles and included more boosters, fewer hedges and reader references than authors of published articles. Hyland, thus, supposed that novice and professional writers may differ notably in their understandings of academic conventions related to stance. In his series of studies on the student-expert comparison, Hyland also found many other stance-related features in student writing. For instance, students tend to be reluctant to use stance markers like first-person pronouns (Hyland, 2002), reader references, and directives (Hyland, 2008a), and they use more attitude markers (Hyland,

2016c). They often present one-sided and subjective opinion, without acknowledging alternative viewpoints (Hood, 2004; Hyland, 2006), and avoid explicitly connecting themselves with a particular evaluation (Hyland, 2008b).

2.4.2 High-rated vs. Low-rated

Previous studies, investigating the use of stance resources in high- and low-rated student essays to explore the influence of writing proficiency on stance deployment (e.g., Lancaster, 2014, 2016a; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Wu, 2006, 2007), show that high-rated essays tend to be more heteroglossic with more stance markers, particularly dialogically expansive markers, and a more variety of linguistic options for stance, than low-rated essays. For instance, Wu (2007) compared the negotiation of dialogic space in high-rated (scoring A, A-) and low-rated (scoring C, D+) geography essays from first year students in Singapore, drawing on the Engagement system. The results showed that high-rated scripts involved more instances of heteroglossic clauses, especially in a dialogically expansive manner by involving the markers of entertain. In terms of contractive options, high-rated scripts included more counter markers and endorse options for external sources, while low-rated scripts used more pronounce options to establish the validity of a proposition. Using the same methods, Wu (2006) found that high-rated student essays set up a stronger contrastive position using various stance resources in problematizing issues in argumentation, which were more effective compared with low-rated essays. She thus called for raising of student writers' awareness of how better to manage dialogic space to establish an appropriate stance for effective argumentation.

Lee and Deakin (2016), drawing on the interactional metadiscourse model, investigated the stance differences in successful and less successful essays, with marginally different

qualities (A- vs. B-graded), written by Chinese ESL university students. They reported that successful essays contained more instances of hedges than less-successful essays, while there were no significant differences in other interactional resources or overall employment of stance. Lee and Deakin, when comparing these ESL essays with successful essays written by L1 English university students at a comparable level, found that successful ESL essays closely resembled L1 essays in the use of interactional resources. Unlike L1 writers, both ESL groups showed resistance to establishing an authorial presence in their texts and preferred "an impersonal and detached writing style" (Lee & Deakin, 2016, p. 31).

Differences have also been detected in the qualitative patterns or configurations of stance resources in student writing with various grades. For instance, Ryshina-Pankova (2014), drew on the Engagement system to examine the successful and less successful course-related blogs from student writers, reported that the sample text of successful blogs presented a "wave-like fashion" (p. 295) in alternatively incorporating contractive and expansive stance resources, to unfold ideas in an intersubjective dialogue; in less successful blogs there was an inadequate balance between these resources. Around the same time, Miller and his colleagues (2014) similarly drew on the Engagement framework to investigate the differences, between high-graded and low-graded student essays from a college-level history course, in the patterns of stance resources used to contract or expand dialogic space while establishing an argument. They found that although both high- and low-graded essays made use of certain stance resources for rhetorical moves, the high-graded ones purposefully and strategically built an argument that was consistent, with better integrated and interpreted source texts, into the development of argument. Miller and his colleagues supported Ryshina-Pankova's (2014) opinion by advocating that, not only the presence or absence, but also the nuanced

configuration of stance resources is important for effective argumentation. They further asserted that the variations in the use of stance resources in student writing were more salient in Engagement than in Attitude, suggesting that high-rated and low-rated students are differentiated mostly in the epistemic and dialogic domains of stance deployment.

Combining corpus-based analysis with qualitative text analysis, Lancaster (2014, 2016a) compared the stance deployment in high- and low-graded papers written by upper-level college students. Consistent with Wu (2007), Lancaster (2014) found that high-graded papers were marked by high commitment through countering markers and critical distance through evidentialise resources, such as references and citations. While low-graded papers were less committed and critically distant in a subjective way, such as using personalise markers (e.g., *I feel*). From the detailed text analysis accompanied with instructor commentaries, Lancaster reported that the interpersonal investment in the argument from a high-graded sample text was built through an interaction between contrastive stance markers and those reflecting dialogic openness, together with resources of Graduation bolstering the level of commitment. The heteroglossic diversity and cumulative effect of these resources gave an impression of "critical thinking" to instructors (2014, p. 48); these patterns, however, were less evident in low-graded papers. Based on these findings, Lancaster (2016a) further compared high-graded and low-graded student papers from two different course contexts. The results showed that high-graded papers in both courses included a greater amount of stance features, with more hedges, boosters and disclaim markers, through which they projected greater contrastiveness, critical distance, and positive alignment with disciplinary concepts than corresponding low-graded papers. Lancaster thus concluded that this shared array of stance qualities, which he referred to as a "novice academic stance", are valued in argumentative tasks across disciplines (Lancaster, 2014, p. 51).

2.4.3 L2 vs. L1

Another strand of research, comparing the use of stance resources by L2 and L1 English student writers (e.g., Chen, 2010; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Lee & Deakin, 2016), shows that L2 student writers tend to use stronger or more contractive stance resources to express strong commitment, while comparable L1 native writers prefer to use more expansive resources or hedges. For instance, Hyland and Milton (1997), investigating the lexical items for hedging or boosting commitment in the English writing by Cantonese-speaking learners and British learners of similar age and educational level, reported that L2 writers used a more limited range of lexical items and tended to draw on stronger commitments than British learners. Hyland and Milton suggested that the acquisition of epistemic modality, which might be affected by the diversity and functions of language forms, as well as cultural differences about appropriate use of modality, could be difficult for L2 writers. Chen (2010), in comparing the use of epistemic modality in the writing of Chinese students at the college level with comparable texts from the British National Corpus (BNC), similarly found that Chinese students used less instances of epistemic modality and overused strong assertions than the BNC texts.

Closely related to this strand of research, Li and Wharton (2012) conducted a cross-contextual study of metadiscouse in academic essays of two groups of students, final-year L1 Mandarin undergraduate students studying either in China or in the UK. Students studying in China tended to employ more collective engagement markers to make strong claims (e.g., *we*, *should*, *must*), while students in the UK context mostly used self-mention (e.g., *I, my*). Additionally, students in the context of China used hedges and boosters in equal proportion, whereas students in the UK used more hedges than boosters. Li and Wharton (2012) suggested that these contextual differences might

be attributed to the guidance students received, and thus academic writing should be seen as "a locally situated practice" (p. 353).

2.4.4 Disciplinary Differences

Studies on stance deployment have also examined disciplinary differences in student writing (e.g., Hyland, 2004b; Lancaster, 2016a; Yoon & Römer, 2020). Research of cross-disciplinary study has suggested that stance-taking is discipline-specific (Hyland, 2007). Compared with writing in hard sciences, academic writing in soft sciences relies more heavily on the writer's interpretative ability and writing skills, which manifests a stronger need for writers to establish authorial stance (Hyland, 2004a; Pho, 2013). For instance, Charles (2006), in comparing theses, detected that claims in the field of soft science (e.g., politics) were made with greater writer visibility, than hard science (e.g. materials science). Therefore, it can be expected that L2 student writers in social sciences have a greater challenge in presenting an appropriate authorial stance.

Recently, Yoon and Römer (2020), in a cross-disciplinary corpus-based study investigating the use of metadiscourse markers in advanced level student writing from sixteen disciplines, detected notable differences across disciplines, and that disciplines in the same academic division (e.g., philosophy and linguistics in humanities) were not necessarily similar in terms of metadiscourse usage. Yoon and Römer (2020) thus questioned the usefulness of disciplinary reference for academic practice and proposed a need to focus on patterns of language use. In comparing the use of hedges and boosters in student writing, in their study, with those in Hyland's (2005c) and Aull and Lancaster's (2014) study, they further suggested that a decrease in the use of boosters might indicate increased academic writing proficiency. Yoon and Römer (2020) concluded that writers' stance and engagement are complex and may not be fully

captured by measuring quantities of linguistic markers and that their quanlitative use within text should be included.

2.4.5 Student Citation Practices

Another perspective to enhance understanding of students' stance deployment is the examination of student writers' citation practices. As reviewed earlier, a key dimension in the notion of stance involves the interaction between the writer and external voices (see section 2.1). From the social-interactive perspective, refering to external sources enables the writer to interact dialogically with alternative views, and to ground, or justify, authorial position-taking contributing to academic persuasion. The connection between stance and reference to source materials has been explored in the field of citation practices, especially concerning the use of reporting verbs (e.g., Davis, 2013; Mansourizadeh & Ahmad, 2011; Sawaki, 2014; Thompson & Ye, 1991; Wette, 2018).

This strand of research has revealed that it has been a challenge for students to write from sources. In many circumstances, students attribute to external sources in an authorial detached manner, or through uncited generalization, with little critical evaluation. For instance, Kwon, Staples and Partridge (2018), in examining the use of reporting verbs in literature review writing by first-year L2 undergraduate students, found that students relied heavily on self-referential verbs (e.g., *I think / feel / know*) or uncited generalization (e.g. *many people think*), which may reduce the writer's credibility. Kwon et al. (2018) thus argued that students should be provided with pedagogical strategies to help them use more varied reporting verbs and understand the rhetorical function and impact of these resources. In another recent study, Lee, Hitchcock, and Casal (2018) investigated the citation practices in L2 undergraduate students' sourced-based writing from a first-year writing course. The researchers took

multiple analytical angles examining surface forms, rhetorical functions, and writer stance from citation practices which indicated that L2 students primarily used sources for attribution function; they prefered to take a non-commital stance by distancing themeselves from external sources, rather than taking a positive or negative position. The researchers argued that this non-commital stance might lead to writing that seems overly deferential and lacking critical evaluation of source materials. Xie (2016) identified similar signs in Chinese masters' thesis literature reviews that students prefered to take a neutral position when referring to other voices. He argued that this might be due to students' lack of knowledge about the nature and function of academic writing as well as their self-perceived peripheral status in academic discipline.

Scholars thus advocate pedagogical approaches for improving students' reference for external sources. For instance, Cumming et al. (2016), in a review study, postulated that student writers experience difficulties with the complex process of writing from sources and that their performance is affected by prior knowledge, cultural background, writing tasks, and instruction. Later, Cumming and his colleagues (2018) suggested that direct instruction, in which establishing an authorial voice in relation to external voices should be included, is beneficial in helping students learn to write academic essays from sources.

2.4.6 Summary of Research Gaps

From the review of various research perspectives, it is notable that student writers, especially L2 learners and learners with less advanced writing proficiency, have a relatively weak control of stance. A number of stance features have been detected, among which the most common are the overuse of undialogised utterances and the underuse of dialogically expansive stances or hedges as well as overuse of boosters and detached authorial persona. These features are usually regarded as less strategic in

interpersonal positioning and ineffective in a dialogic alignment with construed readers (Hood, 2004; Hyland, 2012; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Li & Wharton, 2012; Miller et al., 2014; Wu, 2007). The ineffectiveness of stance is an urgent problem to be solved, as there is an increasing demand for students to be successful academic writers, especially in the social sciences disciplines that call for authorial establishment.

Based on this review of the relevant literature, there are three key research gaps in the empirical studies on stance deployment in student writing. Firstly, although a range of studies has been conducted on students' academic writing, most focus on course essays, with few examining theses at the undergraduate level. As Charles (2006) argued, this genre is somewhat neglected but is of vital importance for learners' academic achievement. Secondly, there is a gap in the research investigating qualitative patterns of stance. As many researchers have argued (e.g., Miller et al, 2014; Lancaster, 2014; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014; Yoon & Römer, 2020), measuring the quantity of stance markers is inadequate for research into academic writing practices. More studies are needed to examine the qualitative patterns of stance deployment to enhance pedagogical practice. The third gap is that, while studies focused specifically on the writing of Chinese students have drawn mostly on the model of interactional metadiscourse (e.g., Chen, 2010; Hyland, 2012; Li & Wharton, 2012), there are few studies from a dialogic perspective (e.g., Xie, 2016). A dialogic perspective may be more appropriate for depicting the stance patterns through detailed text analysis.

Although much attention has been paid to various factors influencing student writers' stance practices, such as writing proficiency, educational levels, language environments, and disciplinary and learning contexts, there has been limited empirical investigation into the possible psychological or cognitive factors, such as beliefs about writing and stance, which might enhance an understanding of students' stance practices.

Additionally, although a clear voice for explicit instruction of stance is frequently heard, few studies have been conducted to evaluate its effects on stance improvement. These two aspects will be further reviewed in next chapter.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter opened with an introduction of the evolution of the concept of stance and the socio-interactive perspective as the theoretical foundation for construing stance. Two influential analytic models on stance were then presented, followed by a review of key literature on stance deployment in student writing from various perspectives. From the review, several research gaps have been proposed which the current research endeavours to fill. It has been noted that insufficient attention has been given to stance deployment in undergraduate theses, and appraisal studies in the Chinese context. Additionally, in spite of a large number of quantitative studies, there have been few qualitative investigations into the patterns of stance which, it has been argued, are an important aspect in revealing nuanced usage of stance. The next chapter reviews the sociocognitive theoretical perspective, literature of beliefs about writing and stance, and previous pedagogical efforts for improving student stance performance, to offer further insights and guidance for the current research.

Chapter Three: Literature Review Part II: Beliefs and Learning of Stance

The literature reviewed in the previous chapter has identified the difficulties in stance deployment in student writing and argued for more pedagogical attention to this aspect. The current research was informed by the sociocognitive perspective and cognitive models of writing process to investigate student writers' beliefs and effects of learning in order to better understand their stance practices. This chapter first provides a brief introduction to the sociocognitive theoretical perspective. The following section presents cognitive models of writing, in relation to which writing beliefs and beliefs about stance are then introduced with relevant empirical studies. The subsequent section presents a review of empirical studies on the instruction of stance to student writers. Based on the literature that has been reviewed, the decision for the current research is presented and justified. The chapter concludes with a summary.

3.1 Sociocognitive Theory

Sociocognitive theory, proposed by Bandura (1986, 1989), has established the inseparable relationship between human beliefs, behaviours and context (Nishino & Atkinson, 2015; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014). The theory states that learners act as agents for themselves as well as their environment, in which they "draw on their knowledge and cognitive and behavioural skills to produce desired results" (Bandura, 1989, p. 1181). According to the theory, learners have a causal relationship to their own actions within a system of "triadic reciprocity", in which "behaviour, cognitive, and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other" (Bandura, 1986, p. 18). The term reciprocity refers to "the mutual action between causal

factors" (Bandura, 1986, p. 23). The production and regulation of a complex behaviour is guided by preconceived beliefs and conceptions that are formed on the basis of pre-existing knowledge gained through learning and practice experiences (Bandura, 1989).

According to the theory, people acquire knowledge through enactive and vicarious learning (Bandura, 1986). Enactive learning is achieved by doing, while vicarious learning by observing. Bandura (1986) argued that virtually all learning could occur vicariously by observing people's behaviour and corresponding consequences. Vicarious learning, either deliberately or inadvertently, is influenced by various personal, social and environmental factors. By observing the positive and negative outcomes of different actions, learners can learn what types of action are appropriate and suitable in the given situations (Bandura, 1999). In the process of learning, Bandura (1989) emphasised that cognitive guidance is critical before the skills have been perfected, and that a higher-level of vicarious learning is achieved through abstract modelling, through which learners can extract the same underlying rules governing various judgments or actions. With the extracted rules, they are able to judge, generate and regulate behaviour patterns to "fit the prototype" (Bandura, 1999, p. 25). The outcomes of vicarious learning further affect motivational factors through two cognitive mechanisms, outcome expectations and perceived self-efficacy. Outcome expectations serve as either a positive or negative incentive for behaviours, while perceived self-efficacy may encourage learners' effort in completing the task.

Sociocognitive theory is widely adopted in the investigations of people's behaviour, including second language writing and learning (e.g., Chandrasegaran, 2013; Nishino & Atkinson, 2015; Teng & Zhang, 2016b, 2020; Uccelli et al., 2013). From this perspective, writing can be understood as socio-culturally situated cognitive practices (Uccelli et al., 2013). A writer's mind, body, and the social environment function inseparably in the act

of writing (Nishino & Atkinson, 2015). In the process of text production, a writer's action constantly interacts with internal personal factors, such as preconceived beliefs or attitudes that are formed from existing knowledge and previous learning experience, as well as social and environmental factors such as task requirement, external texts, or disciplinary conventions (Martin & White, 2005; Wharton, 2012). The sociocognitive lens on learning further implies that learner writers could learn from observing and analysing written texts from professional writers, through which they are able to acquire the underlying rules for subsequent judgment and innovative generation, of their writing behaviours.

As the sociocognitive perspective establishes the importance of beliefs in learning and behaviour, the current study investigates the influence that beliefs impose, specifically, on students' stance-taking behaviours in writing and, consequently, provide insights for the planning of stance instruction.

3.2 Cognitive Models of Writing Process

Cognitive models of writing process also contribute to an understanding of beliefs about writing. The cognitive approach essentially sees writing as a process of problem-solving requiring writers' cognitive and intellectual resources (Hyland, 2016b). This section presents a review of three cognitive models of writing process that lay the foundation for an in-depth understanding of the relationship between beliefs and writing.

3.2.1 Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987): Developmental Models of Writing

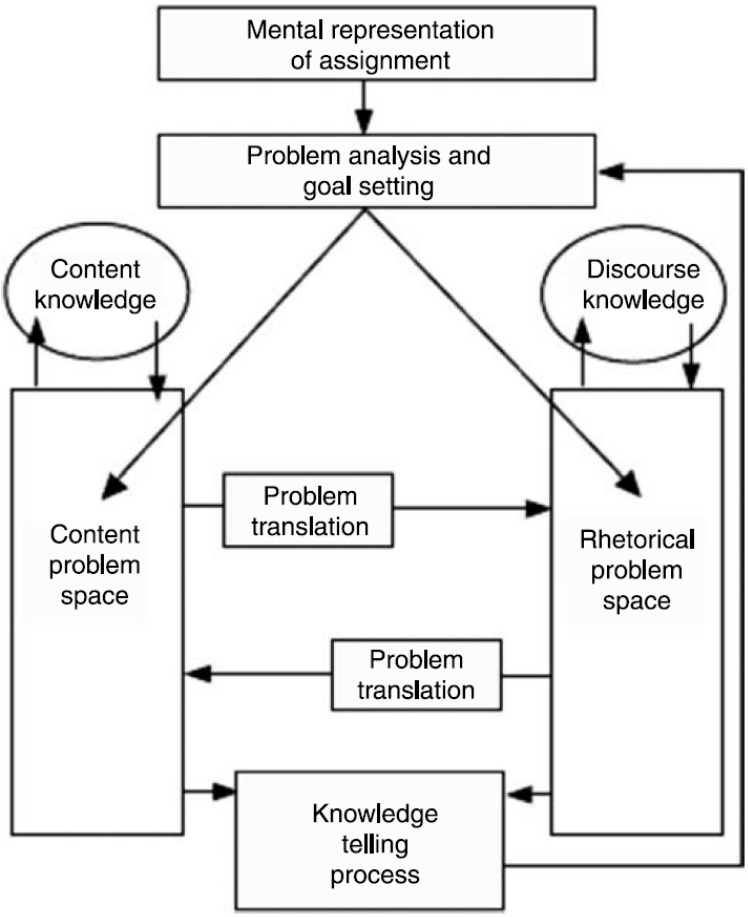
Systematic research from the cognitive perspective on writing process began when Hayes and Flower (1980, 1981) proposed the cognitive model of writing process. The model describes the writing process and suggests that it is influenced by the task and

writers' long-term memory; it became a "catalyst" for subsequent cognitive approaches to writing process (MacArthur & Graham, 2015, p. 26). Built on Flower and Hayes's (1981) work, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) proposed two models of the writing process, knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming, to characterise the essential cognitive differences between novice and skilled writers. Firstly, the knowledge-telling model addresses the novice writers' account of the writing process, which writing is treated as a process of retrieving content from memory and translating it directly into written words. The resulting text reflects the structure of ideas in the writer's long-term memory, modified only to meet the genre requirements. By contrast, the model of knowledge-transforming depicts how skilled writers proceed in the writing tasks. Writing is developed according to rhetorical goals and involves the writer's active transformation of content to meet the goals. The resulting text is therefore tailored to conform to the rhetorical goals during the writers' active incorporation of their ideas into written words. Figure 3.1 presents the model of knowledge-transforming.

Bereiter and Schadamalia (1987) depicted the knowledge-transforming model as a two-way problem-solving process, encompassing two different kinds of problem spaces: The content problem space deals with the problems of content knowledge; the rhetorical problem space is concerned with the problems of achieving rhetorical goals, specifically tied to text production. The two problem spaces interact in both directions in which output from one space serves as input to the other. This two-way interaction lays the foundation for the writer's reflective thinking to develop a more elaborate representation of knowledge according to rhetorical goals, leading further to the development of writer's own understanding (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). Another feature to be noted is that knowledge-telling is also embedded in the modelling of knowledge-transforming,

but it acts only as the step responsible for translating the output of problem-solving into words.

Figure 3.1 The Model of Knowledge-Transforming



Note. From Bereiter, C., & Schadamalia, M. (1987). *The psychology of written composition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bereiter and Scadamalia's (1987) two models of writing provide psychological insights for the complex writing processes and pave the way for successive conceptualisations of writing and cognitive models. The models elaborate the distinction between novice and expert writers' views on writing process and further help to explain the difficulties experienced by novice writers. However, as Hyland (2016b) argued, the models do not provide a detailed explanation about the cognitive transition between novice and skilled

writers, nor do they explain whether the processes are the same for all learners at different levels in different contexts.

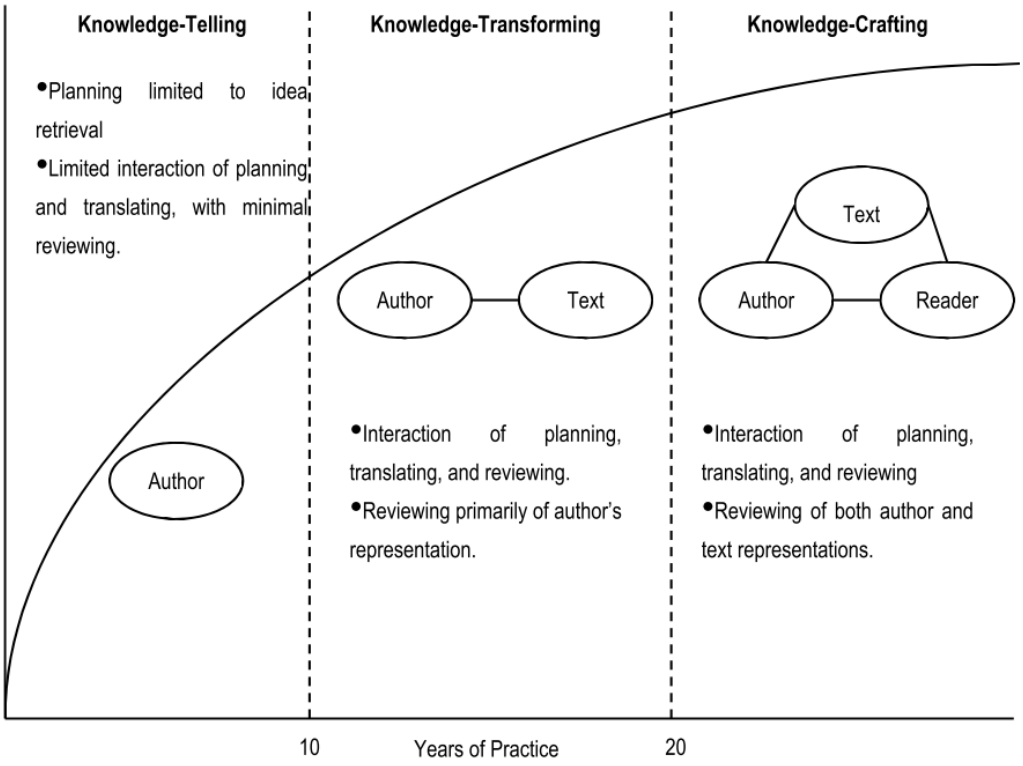
3.2.2 Kellogg (2008): Three-Stage Model of Writing Development

Building on Bereiter and Scardamalia's two models of knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming, Kellogg (2008) proposed a three-stage model of writing development, presented in Figure 3.2, by adding a third stage called knowledge crafting to further involve expert writing. The model describes cognitive development of writing skills from the number of perspectives or representations of writing. As indicated in the figure, knowledge tellers only have their own perspective and typically retrieve and record what they know about the topic. Knowledge transformers take two perspectives into account, their own representation of ideas and the text itself. At this stage, rather than only retrieving knowledge as in the previous stage, writing becomes a process of "actively constituting knowledge representations in long-term memory", in which interactions among planning, translating and reviewing are evident (Kellogg, 2008, p. 7). At the final stage, knowledge crafters consider three perspectives: their own representation of ideas, the text itself; and the reader's interpretation of the text. Writers at this stage are able to think and interpret the text from the reader's perspective; they tailor their writing according to imagined readers whose expectations influence their selection and presentation of content knowledge.

In this model, the three stages are not discrete, but on a continuum. For instance, writers at the knowledge-telling stage may have awareness of putative readers, but, constrained by working memory system or executive attention, they may not have sufficient executive control over their writing. Kellogg (2008) estimated that it takes writers approximately ten years to master each of the first two stages. Only professional writers,

who write extensively, are able to reach the third stage and usually not before adulthood and in limited genres. As the current research focused on undergraduate students, who were around the age of twenty, it is likely that they were in the first two stages.

Figure 3.2 Three-Stage Model of Writing Development



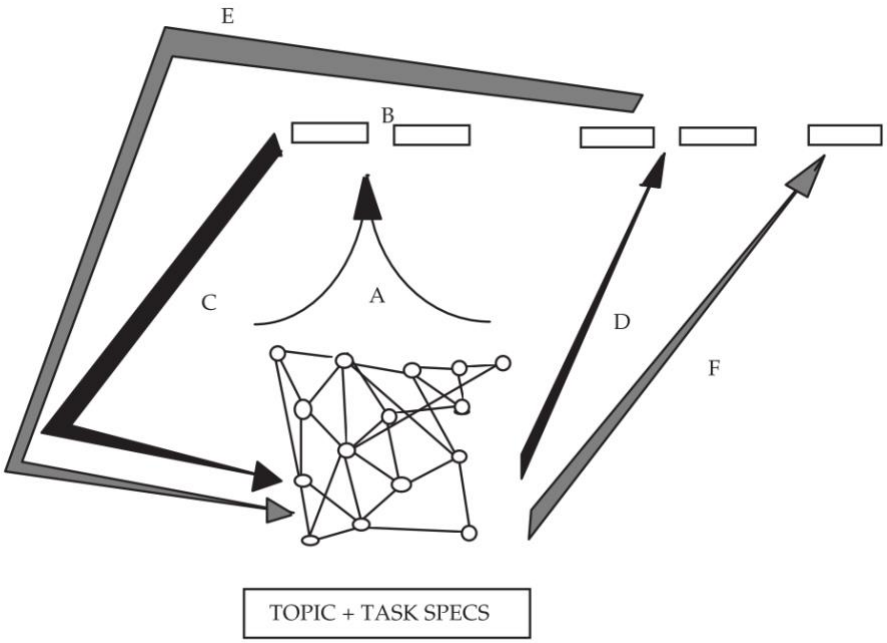
Note. From Kellogg, R. T. (2008). Training writing skills: A cognitive developmental perspective. *Journal of Writing Research, 1*(1), 1-26.

3.2.3 Galbraith (1999, 2009): The Dual-Process Model of Writing

Galbraith (1999, 2009), after an extensive review of previous models, proposed a dual-process model of writing. He argued that two different kinds of processes are involved in effective writing: knowledge-retrieval process and knowledge-constituting process. The knowledge-retrieval process draws on the explicit retrieval or manipulation of knowledge from long-term memory. This process operates on existing knowledge and may lead to reorganisation of content in order to satisfy the rhetorical goals; this is

similar to the two classical models proposed by Bereiter and Scadamalia (1987). The knowledge-constituting process uses an implicit representation of knowledge, involving synthesis of content rather than mere retrieval, as presented in Figure 3.3. This process is likely to happen when writers have already tailored their thoughts explicitly according to external goals, in the course of which they may generate novel understanding.

Figure 3.3 The Knowledge-Constituting Model



Note. TOPIC + TASK SPECS: topic and task specification. A: the process that message turns into written utterance. B: the utterance written down. C and E: feedback connection. D and F: resulting utterance. From Galbraith, D. (1999). Writing as a knowledge-constituting process. In M. Torrance & D. Galbraith (Eds.), *Knowing what to write* (pp. 139-160). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

The central network represents the writer's implicit organisation of disposition, in which all the units are interconnected in a stable state. With external input (i.e., topic and task specifications) the units within the network are activated. Eventually when the network settles down and back to a stable state, the pattern of activation represents the writer's response to the external input and the message he, or she, would like to convey. The message is then formulated into a written utterance (labelled as B). After the initial

utterance is produced, the writer interprets and evaluates it. Feedback connections (labelled as C and E) are produced which pass additional activation back to the writer's disposition and result in further utterance production (labelled as D and F). Text production, therefore, involves interactions between the writer's disposition and the text being produced.

The dual-process model assumes that both knowledge-retrieval and knowledge-constituting processes jointly contribute to effective writing. The explicit retrieving and organising process is necessary to ensure that the content knowledge is selected and tailored according to the rhetorical goals and readers' needs. The implicit constituting process is required to achieve the development of the writer's understanding. Table 3.1 provides the contrasting characteristics of the two processes in the dual-process model.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of the Two Processes in the Dual-Process Model

Features of process	**Knowledge-retrieval process**	**Knowledge-constituting process**
Form of representation	Explicit representation of knowledge in separate fixed units	Implicit representation of knowledge in connections between units
Generation of content	Retrieval from memory	Synthesis
Organization of content	Associative spread of activation within long-term memory or goal-directed manipulation of content in working memory	Feedback from content in working memory to writer's disposition

Note. From Galbraith, D. (2009). Writing as discovery. *Teaching and Learning Writing, 1*(1), 5-26.

Galbraith (2009) acknowledged the distinction between knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming approaches to writing in Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) models. In his understanding, knowledge-telling occurs when the writer merely retrieves

pre-existing content from memory, whereas knowledge-transforming is more strategic in evaluating and adapting the existing content to fit rhetorical purposes. However, Galbraith (2009) further argued that both of these two approaches are fundamentally memorial processes concerning retrieving or manipulating existing knowledge, and thus featured within the knowledge-retrieval process in the current model.

In a more recent work, Baaijen et al. (2014) further clarified the dual-process model and labelled the two processes as explicit problem solving and implicit text production processes. In the first process, pre-existing content and ideas are retrieved from memory and then organised according to writers' rhetorical goals. Although roughly equivalent to the knowledge-transforming process in Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) model, the current process only leads to reorganisation of existing ideas. The second process, text production process, involves content synthesis and knowledge constitution which lead to the development of a writer's personal understanding. The process is implicitly controlled and the text may unfold freely without external constraints. As the two processes operate according to different principles, writers may apply different writing strategies to solve the potential conflict in the writing process.

Galbraith's (1999, 2009) dual-process model contributes to the cognitive account of writing making the focus of explicit thinking processes the writer's active discovery and understanding development. He argued that classical models of the cognitive processes in writing overemphasise the explicit thinking processes, thus leading to a conceptualisation of text production as a relatively passive rather than an active knowledge-constituting process. He also pointed out the problem concerning the generation of new ideas in Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) models. As previous models treat idea generation as part of the retrieval and translating processes, Galbraith (2009) argued that it is difficult to see from where and how novel ideas arise.

3.3 Beliefs about Writing and Stance

Informed by a sociocognitive theoretical perspective and various cognitive models of writing, it is evident that writer's beliefs and conceptual disposition may pose an impact on the process of text production. As Graham, Schwartz, and MacArthur (1993) argued, "the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs that students hold about writing play an important part in determining how the composing process is carried out and what the eventual shape of the written product will be" (p. 246). In the current research the focus is on two beliefs at different levels of specificity: writing beliefs and beliefs about stance. This section presents the rationale and empirical studies concerning the two beliefs.

3.3.1 Writing Beliefs

Writing beliefs are concerned with a writer's view on what good writing is and what good writers should do; they are sets of tacit beliefs that influence how the writer demonstrates his or her knowledge in writing (Mateos & Solé, 2012; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014). Students' beliefs about writing are regarded as having "far reaching consequences" for their writing processes and outcomes (Majchrzak, 2018, p. 47).

3.3.1.1 Transmission and transaction

Researchers initially investigated the influence that implicit beliefs have on a person's behaviour in the context of reading (Schraw, 2000; Schraw & Bruning, 1996). Schraw and Bruning (1996), the pioneers in this field, developed an inventory and identified two implicit reading beliefs: *Transmissional* and *Transactional*. White and Bruning (2005) extended the model and methods to the context of writing. They designed and validated a questionnaire, *Writing Beliefs Inventory* (hereafter, WBI), with the aim of examining whether writers also held transmissional and transactional dimensions of beliefs about writing. White and Bruning (2005) proposed that writers' beliefs may impact affective

and cognitive engagement during writing, and thus influence the writer-reader interaction in the writing process. In the writing context, those with transmissional beliefs view writing as a means of transferring information from authoritative sources to the reader (White & Bruning, 2005). Writers holding predominantly transmissional beliefs tend to use information with limited personal ideas reflected in the text. In contrast, transactional writing beliefs represent the idea that writing is a way to "personally and critically construct the text by actively integrating own thinking into the process" (White & Bruning, 2005, p. 168). Writers with high transactional writing beliefs are likely to be more emotionally and cognitively engaged in the writing process.

Schraw and Bruning (1999) argued that transmission-transaction model was similar to Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) models of knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming. However, no emphasis of rhetorical goals, the major distinction between knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming, were proposed in the implicit models for either reading or writing process. Instead, White and Bruning (2005) argued that the difference between transmissional and transactional writing beliefs is the extent of cognitive and affective engagement of writer in the process; these implicit models of writing are reflected in Galbraith's (2009) dual-process model as the latter emphasised the level of writer's active involvement in the two processes. As described earlier, the first process in Galbraith's model is a knowledge-retrieval process, which mainly involves retrieving and reorganising existing knowledge. From this perspective, writers with high transmissional and low transactional writing beliefs are assumed to view writing as a matter of transcribing knowledge onto paper, and that writers with low engagement and may summarise ideas from source texts without further explanation. In contrast, writers with high transactional and low transmissional writing beliefs are assumed to view writing as an active meaning-construction process. This is consistent

with Galbraith (2009)'s knowledge-constituting process when the writers actively engage in and articulate their understanding in text production.

Similar to Schraw and Bruning's (1996) finding, White and Bruning (2005) also found that the two sets of writing beliefs were independent of each other and had additive effects on writing performance. The results of their study showed that students with high transactional writing beliefs produced better quality texts than those with low transactional beliefs, while students with low transmissional beliefs produced better quality texts than those with high transmissional beliefs. Students with higher transactional writing beliefs were found also to perform better with idea-content development, organisation, voice, sentence fluency and conventions in writing outcomes. Additionally, they were more likely to view writing as a way of self-expression and write for pleasure, than writers with lower transactional beliefs.

3.3.1.2 Empirical research on writing beliefs and writing performance

A number of studies have adopted White and Bruning's (2005) measures, to examine the relationships of writing beliefs with different aspects of writing. For instance, Sanders-Reio et al. (2014) investigated the impact of writing beliefs on writing self-efficacy, apprehension and performance in L1 undergraduate writing. They modified White and Bruning's (2005) model and focused on four aspects of writing beliefs: transmission, transaction, recursive process, and audience orientation. The results showed that, in contrast to White and Bruning (2005), transactional beliefs were a negative predictor of writing performance. The researchers further found that writing beliefs were related to writing self-efficacy and apprehension, and that transactional beliefs were a strong positive correlate of writing self-efficacy and one subtype of writing apprehension, "enjoy writing"; transmissional beliefs, however, were a modest

and negative correlate of these variables. The researchers argued that transactional beliefs may be more adaptive in complex writing assignments and that the enjoyment of writing engendered would encourage students to write productively during writing instruction; transmissional beliefs, in contrast, could foster "a mechanical and/or safe, self-protective, and detached approach to writing that entails stringing other writers' quotes together" (Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 9).

Baaijen et al. (2014) examined the relationships between writing beliefs, planning, and writing performance in L1 argumentative writing. The researchers provided a novel perspective in the understanding of the differences between transmissional and transactional beliefs. In their view, transmissional beliefs are concerned with the "source of content", that is, whether the writing should contain authoritative sources or not (Baaijen et al., 2014, p. 82). While transactional beliefs are about the "process of writing", that is, whether the writing process involves idea development (Baaijen et al., 2014, p. 82). They hypothesised that the two independent beliefs influence the same underlying dimension of engagement, and that the two beliefs (i.e., transmissional and transactional) represent different types of engagement in writing rather than different amounts, thus providing support for Galbraith's (2009) dual-process model. Transactional beliefs refer to either top-down or bottom-up writing strategies, while transmissional beliefs are concerned with the content that is written down. The researchers further found that high transactional writers produced better quality texts than low transactional writers, and that pre-planning moderated the relationship.

Neely (2014) in investigating the relationship between epistemological, writing beliefs, and rhetorical writing performance with L1 freshmen undergraduates in a writing course, found that students who held higher transmissional beliefs composed lower quality rhetorical writing; this was especially evident in the aspects of audience awareness,

avoiding certainty, counterargument, and rebuttal. Their papers also tended to be less clear and organised. Neely further investigated the change in writing beliefs across the semester. At the end of the semester, student writers started to view writing as a way of communication with an audience, which reflects features of transactional writing beliefs, and were more likely to accept revision as an integral section of the writing process.

Although a number of studies have examined the link between writing beliefs and writing performance, limited studies have specifically concentrated on the effects of writing beliefs on stance deployment. One relevant study, Mateos et al. (2011) examined the influence of epistemological, reading and writing beliefs on perspectivism in argumentative writing of fourth-year psychology students. They defined "perspectivism" as "the ability to recognise and integrate different positions on an issue" (Mateos et al., 2011, p. 287), with the degree of perspectivism in each text holistically scored from 1 to 3. The results showed that neither types of writing beliefs correlated with the scores of perspectivism, although students with higher transactional beliefs were found to better integrate and organise the information from multiple source texts. Cuevas et al. (2016) similarly found that transactional writing beliefs were associated with the quality of joint syntheses from multiple sources and strategies in addressing controversy in collaborative writing tasks from fourth-year psychology students.

Previous studies linking writing beliefs to argumentative writing suggest a significant relationship between writing beliefs and writing performance. However, studies in an L2 academic context are few with even fewer which link writing beliefs to stance-taking practices. As White and Bruning (2005) argued, relating beliefs about writing to aspects of writing is an important step towards helping students to apply their implicit beliefs to writing behaviour. As the difficulties in L2 student writers' stance-taking are frequently documented, more research in this field is required. Moreover, as writing beliefs are also

regarded as “a useful aid in teaching and learning writing” (White & Bruning, 2005, p. 169), such research studies are expected to offer useful insights to students’ learning of writing.

3.3.2 Beliefs about Authorial Stance

In this research beliefs about stance examine a writer’s understanding and attitudes toward different types of stance from a dialogic perspective and informed by studies on writing beliefs. Previous studies related to beliefs about stance are limited and mainly qualitative. For instance, Chang and Tsai (2014), investigated EFL doctoral students’ conceptions of stance, and the ties of the conceptions to their epistemic beliefs; twenty students were recruited from two general disciplines: social science and pure science, for interviews and text judgments. Chang and Tsai (2014), to communicate better with participants and elicit their beliefs, operationalised and simplified the concept of stance into a dichotomised set rooted in the dialogic perspective: Assertive stance and tentative stance. Assertive stance intends to constrain interpretation, while tentative stance seeks to open up dialogic space and accommodate other possibilities. They analysed the data in a phenomenographic way to identify “qualitatively different, hierarchically related conceptions” (Tsai, 2009, p. 1094) and found that students’ reported conceptions were “superficial” and “polarized” as they mainly discussed stance as a linguistic, rather than a behavioural or cognitive aspect (Chang & Tsai, 2014, p. 538). Students’ understanding of stance were found to be affected by disciplinary conventions and were not compatible with their mature epistemological beliefs.

Using a similar method of dichotomised stance, Chang (2016) interviewed twelve EFL doctoral students from soft and hard science disciplines for their understanding of, and attitude towards, stance. She found that while students, especially soft science students,

were generally positive towards assertive claims due to the sense of authoritativeness, they felt negative towards tentative claims due to their designation of uncertainty and lack of confidence. Chang also categorised students' conceptions of stance, hierarchically, into linguistic, cognitive, institutional domains. She noted that students' conceptions were qualitatively different from usual definitions of the stance by EAP researchers and practitioners. For instance, Wharton's (2012) conceptualisation of stance entails the epistemic, attitudinal, and dialogic domains. Chang noticed that the most salient difference was a lack of understanding of the dialogic aspect of stance in students' conceptions which, she suggested, might impede their stance deployment in academic argumentation. Petrić (2010) similarly found that the majority of master's degree students conceived voice, a similar term as reviewed in 2.1, as an individualised expression of the writer's choices, only a small number of students viewed voice as related to writers' interactions with other voices. Petrić argued that these beliefs were influenced by students' reading and writing experiences as well as teachers' feedback. In a more recent study, Wette (2018) found that first-year students were unskilled at conveying a clear stance on external sources, and their presence as an author, which corroborates previous findings of students' immature stance beliefs.

In summary, the existing studies have suggested that, as student writers appear to lack a dialogic understanding of stance, more empirical research is warranted. As Chang (2016) suggested, a dialogic lens is an appropriate approach for the operationalisation of stance in empirical investigations. There are limited studies in this area with none, if any, that have investigated the relationship between student writers' beliefs and stance-taking behaviours. Furthermore, Chang (2016) acknowledged that, as these studies were qualitative, they had a relatively small sample size. A questionnaire, with a larger sample

size of student writers (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), would contribute to further investigations of the relationships between beliefs about stance and stance deployment.

Previous studies have generated several instruments for the assessment of student writers' beliefs about stance from the perspective of identity (e.g., Ballantine, Guo, & Larres, 2015; Cheung, Stupple, & Elander, 2017; Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox, & Payne, 2010; Pittam, Elander, Lusher, Fox, & Payne, 2009). However, most of these scales are concerned with the relationship between beliefs about authorial identity and plagiarism, which are not appropriate for the current research. Thus an instrument was developed and validated to assess EFL student writers' beliefs about stance in academic writing and to investigate the relationship of beliefs about stance to stance deployment in writing and writing quality.

3.4 Instruction and Learning of Authorial Stance

In previous literature, it has been claimed frequently that students' difficulties in stance-taking may be affected by their writing instruction. This section presents a review of studies of stance instruction in the writing classroom, which have included previous calls for explicit stance instruction and empirical investigations into the effects of classroom intervention.

3.4.1 Calls for Explicit Stance Instruction

As reviewed in the last chapter, student writers' difficulties in stance-taking, due to their lack of knowledge about stance, is fundamentally attributed to educational factors (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Cumming et al., 2016, 2018; Xie, 2016). For instance, Chang and Schleppegrell (2016) explicitly argued, most L2 students are not well-prepared by the EAP instruction they received, which can be attributed to that they lack

exposure to stance resources in the learning context and materials (Biber, 2006; Wharton, 2012). Scholars, consequently, have advocated the inclusion of instruction on stance in the writing classroom to ensure L2 writers have stance awareness and resources to help them produce better writing using appropriate stances (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Charles, 2006; Ho & Li, 2018; Lancaster, 2014; Miller et al., 2014; Mu, Zhang, Ehrich, & Hong, 2015).

In second language learning, teaching that targets the mappings of linguistic forms, functions, and contexts, ranges from explicit to implicit (Fordyce, 2014). A key variable determining the teaching features is noticing, that is consciously paying attention to the target language system or mappings of form-function-context (Schmidt, 1990). Norris and Ortega (2000) summarised the difference in instructional approach as, explicit instruction involving explanation of rules or directions for learners to attend to target forms, while the instruction with neither is considered implicit. The explanation of rules in explicit instruction provides learners with metalinguistic or metapragmatic information as a direct way of getting learners to notice the target forms (Fordyce, 2014). It has been argued previously as facilitative, or even necessary, for adult learners to acquire target language features (e.g., Beck, 2006; Chandrasegaran, 2013; Pessoa, Mitchell, & Miller, 2018; Schmidt, 1990; Takahashi, 2010). It is frequently adopted in teaching of genre knowledge because it is effective in raising students' genre awareness to enhance academic writing (e.g., Chen & Su, 2012; Cheng, 2008; Huang, 2014; Hyland, 2007). Pessoa et al. (2018), therefore, argued that explicit writing instruction can help both novice and experienced academic writers.

Many scholars recommend that students need explicit instruction on stance features (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011, 2016; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Lee, 2008; Wu, 2006). For instance, Lee (2008) proposed that pedagogical emphasis should be put on the

explicit teaching of interpersonal metafunction, and that teachers need to emphasise the use of interpersonal resources to convince readers. Hyland (2005b) also advocated, explicit instruction of stance as it is often "either neglected in advanced writing classes or subordinated to a focus on informational aspects of writing" (p. 364). Chang and Schleppegrell (2011) further specifically argued that explicit discussion of expansive and contractive stance options could help L2 student writers expand their linguistic resources for a more effective academic writing. Crosthwaite and Jiang (2017) similarly recommended incorporating explicit instruction of stance features in EAP programmes, at the university level, to raise students' awareness to achieve persuasive academic writing. However, some scholars have expressed a concern about an overemphasis on stance especially for novice L2 students who may still need greater attention on the "basics" of academic writing, such as content knowledge, idea development (e.g., Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003). Given the calls for the explicit stance instruction and concerns about its role in the teaching of academic writing, empirical research is warranted.

3.4.2 Empirical Research on Instruction of Stance

Several empirical studies, which have evaluated the pedagogical effects of instruction on stance performance, have reported positive results from explicit teaching to improve student writers' stance performance. For instance, Fordyce (2014), taking a pragmatics-based perspective, compared the immediate and long-term effects of explicit and implicit classroom teaching on the use of epistemic stance of EFL learners at university level, using interventions based on four authentic texts with rich examples of epistemic stance. Fordyce measured stance performance in terms of both variety and frequency of specific stance forms. The results indicated that an explicit intervention was considerably more effective than an implicit intervention in both the immediate and long-term for most of

the targeted forms and stance variety, with the effects not influenced by students' proficiency level.

Chang and Schleppegrell (2016) investigated the effect of explicit instruction on stance with seven Mandarin-speaking doctoral students using a web-based stance corpus based on Swales' (1990, 2004) rhetorical moves and Martin and White's (2005) Engagement system. The corpus served as a concordance tool with which learners could study stance markers at the sentence level within the discoursal and rhetorical context. The students participated in three treatment sessions in which they revised their draft of a research introduction with the assistance of the concordance tool. Analysis of their drafts at different times indicated that, after the explicit instruction, learners showed improvement in the accuracy of stance deployment and became more purposeful in deploying stance to fulfil rhetorical purposes, suggesting increased awareness of stance. Chang and Schleppegrell (2016) argued that the ability to produce an effective rhetorical move structure may scaffold learners' stance-taking. Learners' drafts, however, also indicated less satisfactory deployment of expansive stances with their stance patterns including both effective and ineffective prosodies. The authors, therefore, suggested that these aspects need more pedagogical attention and may take time to develop. While Chang and Schleppegrell's study provides insights into the explicit instruction of stance deployment, the study lacks a control group and involves a limited number of students which, as they acknowledge, may constrain their claims for the effectiveness of explicit stance instruction.

Jou (2016) implemented an explicit instruction, based similarly on the Engagement system, in an EAP writing classroom to examine how it can scaffold L2 writers' metacognitive awareness of voice when writing an English article review. After seven-weeks' instruction, nine participants (seven graduate and two undergraduate students)

showed development in awareness of voice and incorporated more and varied resources for different rhetorical goals. They appeared more aware of how various engagement choices contribute to an evaluative stance and author's commitment. Furthermore, Jou reported that students benefited from the instruction at varying levels, which might be affected by reading comprehension, language proficiency and time investment.

Crosthwaite and Jiang (2017) evaluated the longitudinal development of stance features in L2 essay and report writing resulting from an EAP course at a Hong Kong university. The course lasted for 14 weeks during which three weeks were devoted to explicit instruction of stance features based on Hyland's model of interactional metadiscourse (i.e., *hedges*, *boosters*, *self-mention*, and *attitude markers*, see section 2.3.1). Students were presented with annotated examples of stance features in essay and report exemplars, which emphasised the importance of these features to successful academic writing. The researchers then analysed the frequencies and wordings of stance features in the corpus of student essays and reports collected prior to, in the middle of and after the semester. The results showed significant long-term development in student writing with increased use of hedges and an overall reduction in the use of boosters and self-mention; that the students appeared to be more careful, less polarizing, and less personal when conveying stance over time, which earned higher grades from teachers. In concluding the report Crosthwaite and Jiang recommended explicit instruction of stance features as noted earlier in this section.

Although limited in number, these intervention studies suggest that explicit teaching of stance facilitates student writers' awareness and improves the variety and frequency of targeted stance resources. These empirical studies also highlight the focus of instruction, especially on expansive stance and stance patterns, and demonstrate the pedagogical potential of the Engagement system in the teaching of stance for L2 academic writers

(e.g., Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Miller et al., 2014; Uccelli et al., 2013). These studies also suggest there is a tendency to incorporate genre knowledge into the teaching of stance for academic writing, such as Chang and Schleppegrell's (2016) inclusion of Swales' (1990, 2004) rhetorical moves in teaching materials. As Charles (2007b) advocated, an approach which makes a connection between rhetorical purposes and specific lexico-grammatical choices may be beneficial for students' learning of writing. Uccelli et al. (2013) also argued that classroom teaching should encourage students to understand language as "a functional solution" to the specific context and rhetorical purposes (p. 57). Hyland (2016c) further proposed that effective management of stance resources requires both an awareness of rhetorical purposes and the capability to deploy the resources appropriately in terms of interpersonal effects. Furthermore, these studies have used authentic writing materials in the target genre to provide guidance and practice opportunities for student writers (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Fordyce, 2014). Uccelli et al. (2013) also argued for the benefits of scaffolding students through meaning-based instruction with textual analysis of skilled academic writing.

There is a need for more intervention studies as several research gaps can be identified. Firstly, none of the studies reviewed involved a control group, which may limit the conclusion on the effectiveness of explicit instruction. It is also beneficial to compare the effects of explicit stance instruction with curriculum-based instruction to investigate the role and time allocation of teaching stance, as the EAP programme may also generate positive effects on stance-taking (Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017). Secondly, as most of these studies used either quantitative analysis or a case study with textual analysis to evaluate the treatment effects, more research is need combining both methodologies for a more robust understanding of the intervention effects. Additionally, as discussed in section

2.4, researchers have recommended more qualitative analysis of stance patterns, as it is rarely used in the intervention studies (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016).

3.5 Decisions for the Current Research

The review of literature, which has identified some research gaps influenced my decisions for the current research focus and methods. As stance is a popular concept frequently investigated in empirical studies, a wide range of studies have been conducted and detected the ineffective deployment of stance in student writing, especially concerning dialogic interaction with alternative voices and putative readers. Among these empirical investigations, gaps are identified as in section 2.4.6, concerning the research target (e.g., undergraduate thesis writing, stance patterns) and methods (e.g., dialogic approach). I thus decided to examine EFL undergraduate students' deployment of stance in thesis writing from a dialogic perspective, which appeared to be a feasible and promising approach for depicting stance patterns and writer-reader interaction with detailed text analysis.

Moreover, as limited empirical studies have investigated the relationship between beliefs, writing and stance deployment from a sociocognitive perspective and informed by cognitive models of writing, research attention to student writers' beliefs may shed light on their difficulties in writing practice. I decided to focus on two potential beliefs (i.e., writing beliefs, beliefs about stance) and investigate how they relate to students' stance deployment in the writing. The third target was to examine the effects of explicit instruction of stance, which is frequently advocated but inadequately evaluated. I, therefore, implemented an Engagement-based explicit instructional approach for enhancing stance and evaluated its effectiveness by examining both quantitative and qualitative measures of stance deployment.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter started with a review of sociocognitive perspectives, which provides the theoretical lens to examine the interrelationship between beliefs and writing practice. The subsequent section further reviewed the seminal cognitive models of writing process, based on which two possible influential beliefs at different levels of specificity, writing beliefs and beliefs about stance, were introduced. Previous empirical studies were reviewed noting that there was lack of research on the relationship between these beliefs and stance-taking practice in an academic context. The fourth section focused on instruction of stance. The need for more intervention studies on explicit stance instruction to evaluate its effectiveness using a mixed-methods was noted in previous studies. Based on the review of literature on stance, beliefs and instruction, the chapter ended by documenting the decisions for the current research. The following chapter describes and justifies the methodology for this research.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

This chapter provides the research design and the rationale for the methods selected in each phase of the research. The research paradigm is presented first, followed by a brief overview of the research design and the general information about the participants. The subsequent sections provide a detailed introduction of research design in each phase of the research, including participants, instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis approaches and techniques. The following section presents ethical considerations. A brief summary comes at the end of the chapter.

4.1 Research Paradigm and Methodological Decision

This research followed the philosophical worldview of pragmatism as the research paradigm, which is a general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that guides research actions and employment of methods (Creswell, 2014). The pragmatic paradigm holds that the current meaning of an expression is determined by the practical consequences of belief in or use of the expression in the world (Murphy, 1990). Researchers holding a pragmatic worldview focus on the research problem and use multiple approaches to understand and obtain knowledge about the problem (Creswell, 2014). Thus, this paradigm provides a philosophical underpinning for mixed-methods studies that embrace a combination of quantitative and qualitative research pursuits (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Consistent with pragmatism, the current research was problem-centred with a mixed-methods research design. It included multiple methods using different forms of data collection and analysis to improve the research validity and achieve a better understanding of the complex phenomenon of stance-taking.

4.2 Overview of the Research Design

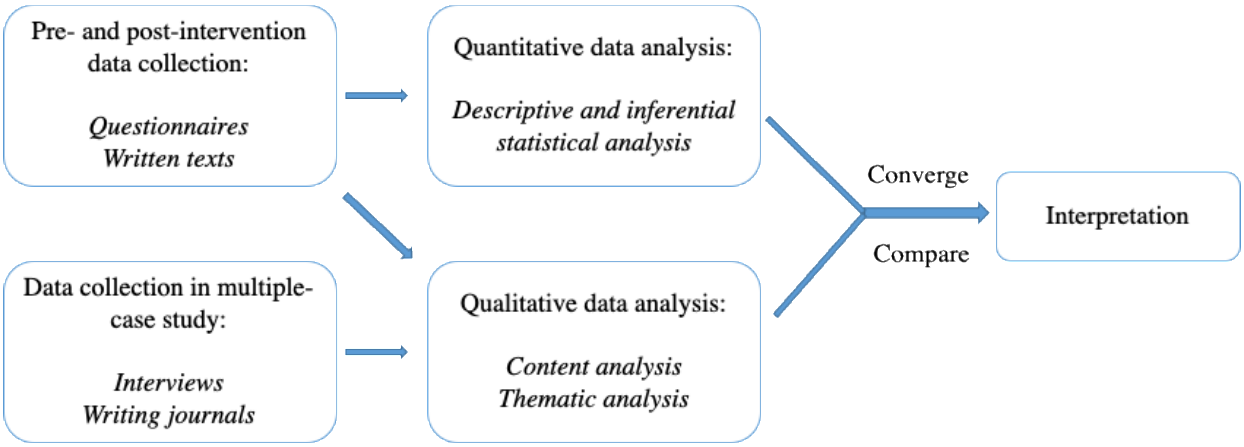
The current research included a preparatory study and two main studies. In the preparatory study, two self-reported questionnaire instruments, *Beliefs about Authorial Stance Questionnaire* (BASQ) and *Writing Beliefs Inventory* (WBI), were validated to measure students' beliefs in academic writing in an EFL context.

Two main studies were conducted using the validated instruments. Study One investigated the relationships between Chinese EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and academic writing quality at a tertiary level. Data were collected from questionnaires and students' written texts. Study Two was a quasi-experimental intervention study with a convergent parallel mixed-methods design (Creswell, 2014), which implemented an explicit stance instruction and evaluated its effects on Chinese EFL students' beliefs, stance deployment, and overall quality of academic writing. Convergent parallel mixed-methods design involves the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data which converge in an overall interpretation of results (Creswell, 2014). The intervention involved a treatment group and a comparison group, with a multiple-case study conducted at the same time. Data were collected from multiple measures that included questionnaires, written texts, semi-structured interviews and writing journals. Table 4.1 presents an overview of the overall research design indicating the objectives, measures and the number of participants involved in different stages. Figure 4.1 further provides an overview of the mixed-methods design in Study Two.

Table 4.1 Overview of the Research Design

Stage	Objectives	Measures	Participants
Preparatory	Instrument validation	Beliefs about Authorial Stance Questionnaire (BASQ) Writing Beliefs Inventory (WBI)	English-major undergraduates (Year 3-Year 4, *n* = 373)
Study One	Investigate the relationships between students' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality	Questionnaire (BASQ) Questionnaire (WBI)	English-major undergraduates (Year 4, *n* = 84)
		Students' written texts	
Study Two	Implement the writing intervention and evaluate its effects of on students' beliefs, stance deployment and academic writing quality.	Pre- and post- questionnaires (BASQ, WBI) Pre- and post- written texts	English-major undergraduates (Year 3) Treatment group (*n* = 26) Comparison group (*n* = 24)
		Multiple-case study: Semi-structured interviews Writing journals	Two students from the treatment group Two students from the comparison group
			In total: 507 participants

Figure 4.1 Mixed-Methods Design in Study Two



4.3 Participants

This research recruited a total of 507 students on a voluntary basis from four medium-ranking universities in northern China selected using convenience sampling (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012). All the participants were Chinese English-major undergraduate students in the third or fourth year of study. At the time of data collection, participants had been studying English for at least eight years since their junior high school, which included at least two years of intensive learning study of English language as their major. Students at Year 3 or 4 were at an advanced stage according to the *Syllabus for English Majors* (NACFLT, 2000), and had started to prepare, or were in the process of writing, the final thesis for the BA degree, which is a requirement for graduation as introduced in section 1.3.1. These students' responses and written texts were expected to provide valuable information about student writers' stance-taking practices in an academic setting at the undergraduate level and provide insights into how to improve stance deployment in the EFL classroom. A detailed description of participants is presented in each phase of the research.

4.4 Preparatory Study: Instrument Validation

The purpose of the preparatory study was to validate two questionnaires for subsequent investigations of students' beliefs. Questionnaires are instruments that present participants with a series of questions or statements to which they are invited to react either by writing their answers or selecting from existing answers (Brown, 2011; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012). The instrument can be used to assess what participants think, including attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and values, as well as provide relevant insights into the population being investigated (Dörnyei, 2007; Petrić & Czárl, 2003). As emphasised in previous research (e.g., Muijs, 2011; Teng & Zhang, 2016a), it is vital to examine and ensure the validity and reliability of data collection instruments in the setting under investigation.

Firstly, the *Beliefs about Authorial Stance Questionnaire* (BASQ) was developed and validated through rigorous statistical procedures to measure student writers' beliefs about authorial stance in academic writing. Secondly, *Writing Beliefs Inventory* (WBI) was borrowed from previous research, and its reliability in the EFL context of China examined, to investigate students' beliefs about writing. This section presents a description of the instruments, participants, data collection procedures and data analysis approaches.

4.4.1 Beliefs about Authorial Stance Questionnaire (BASQ)

4.4.1.1 Item generation

The questionnaire BASQ was developed following the suggested practices for psychometric scale development (e.g., DeVellis, 2016; Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). The process of item generation was based on an understanding of the Engagement system and relevant literature on stance. As suggested in previous studies (e.g. Chang 2016,

Chang and Tsai 2014), a reduction of the construct into the dichotomised concepts of assertive and tentative stances was inevitable to communicate better with respondents because of the complexity of the stance construct; the format was also preferable for completion in an empirical study. The items were thus generated and categorised into initial factors according to the two categories of heterogloss in the Engagement system: preference for dialogic contraction and for dialogic expansion. Whereas preference for dialogic contraction indicates a writer's preference for assertive stances that contract dialogic space (e.g., *I will use a strong stance when expressing my own opinions*), preference for dialogic expansion represents that a writer prefers tentative stances that expand dialogic space (e.g., *Tentative expressions are more convincing, because it is more polite and objective*). The initial list contained 30 statements as items, with an introduction section added prior to these statements describing stance, with two text examples containing either assertive or tentative stances, respectively.

4.4.1.2 Inspection of content validity

For content validity, two doctoral candidates, who had specialised in the field of education and second language writing, were invited to scrutinise and evaluate the initial items in terms of the theoretical rationale, the consistency of constructs and items, as well as item wording. The initial item list resulted in a removal of three items according to their suggestions. The revised list was given to five Chinese undergraduate English-major students to check for the clarity and readability of the items. The wording of items was modified afterwards to avoid potential ambiguity or inconsistency. The final BASQ was a 5-point Likert scale with 27 items with ratings from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement in their writing experience.

4.4.2 Writing Beliefs Inventory (WBI)

The questionnaire WBI from White and Bruning's (2005) study was used to elicit student writers' beliefs about writing. The quesitonnaire was a 19-item self-reported questionnaire with a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). As described in section 3.3.1, it was designed to elicit two kinds of writing beliefs that may influence writers' engagement during writing: Transmissional beliefs (6 items) and transactional beliefs (13 items). Given that the instrument has been mostly used with L1 students in previous studies (e.g., Baaijen et al., 2014; Cuevas et al., 2016; Mateos et al., 2011; Neely, 2014), the internal consistency of the questionnaire was examined with EFL students to ensure that it has appropriate reliability.

4.4.3 Participants

A sample of 197 participants were recruited from four universities in northern China to participate voluntarily through convenience sampling for the exploratory validation. All the participants were Chinese English-major undergraduates in the third or the fourth year of study (Year 3, n = 111, 56%; Year 4, n = 86, 44%); 92% of them were female (n = 181) and 8% male (n = 16) with ages ranging from 19 to 23 (M = 20.38; SD = .75). After the exploratory validation and modification of proposed questionnaire, another sample of 191 participants were recruited as volunteers from the same population for confirmatory validation. They were also Chinese-speaking English-major undergraduates in Year 3 or 4 (Year 3, n = 162, 85%; Year 4, n = 29, 15%); 90% were female (n = 172) and 10% male (n = 19), with the average age 20.89 (SD = 1.01).

4.4.4 Procedures

At the stage of exploratory validation, all participants from the first sample were invited to complete the questionnaire BASQ, with an additional section about their demographic

information. The English version of the questionnaire was used, given that these students were at the advanced stage who had been studying English as their major. Participants were informed of the purpose and the anonymity of the study. Each participant spent approximately 15-20 minutes completing the whole questionnaire. The proposed questionnaire was then modified according to the results of the exploratory validation. Using the same procedure, the second sample of participants was invited to complete a survey that contained the modified version of the questionnaire BASQ, the questionnaire WBI, as well as the section for demographic information. Each participant spent approximately 20-30 minutes to complete the whole survey.

4.4.5 Data Analysis

4.4.5.1 Questionnaire BASQ

Data collected from the questionnaire BASQ were first cleaned and checked for missing values, outliers, assumptions of normality, linearity and multicollinearity before being subjected to factor analyses. The cases with missing values, or same responses for all questions, were eliminated from the dataset. All the successive statistical analyses were completed by using the software IBM SPSS Statistics 25. Univariate outliers were inspected by referring to standardised scores (*z* scores) and boxplots (Kline, 2011; Stevens, 2009). Multivariate outliers that were markedly away from the centroid were detected by referring to Mahalanobis distance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Assumption of normality was examined through P-P plots, histograms and the values of skewness and kurtosis of the variables. Data from a sample are assumed to be normally distributed if the standardised skewness values are below 3 and the kurtosis values are below 8 in absolute value (Kline, 2011). Linearity was examined through scatterplots; multicollinearity and singularity were examined by referring to the correlation matrix.

For the initial validation, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted following the procedural guidelines suggested by Pallant (2011). EFA is a useful technique to detect the latent structure among the variables in the data (Field, 2013). In EFA, parallel analysis was performed for factor extraction because of its accuracy in determining the number of retained factors (Henson & Roberts, 2006; O'Connor, 2000). Maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) with oblique factor rotation, direct oblimin, was then applied to extract factor structure and loadings, as MLE is the optimal choice when data were normally distributed (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Informed by the literature, items with factor loading less than .38 or cross-loading were eliminated, each factor contained at least three items (e.g., Field, 2013; Pituch & Stevens, 2016; Stevens, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Based on the EFA results, internal consistency of each factor was examined by Cronbach' alpha reliability coefficient.

In the second stage of confirmatory validation, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the latent structure generated in EFA. CFA is a powerful tool that uses structural equation modelling (SEM) to provide a confirmatory test of a theoretical model (Hair et al., 2010). The computer program, IBM SPSS AMOS 25, was employed to conduct CFA. Multivariate outliers were inspected through the estimation of Mahalanobis *d*-squared values (Byrne, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Multivariate normality was checked by referring to Mardia's multivariate kurtosis coefficient (Mardia, 1970). Maximum likelihood estimation was then employed to evaluate the goodness-of-fit of models. This study referred to both absolute and incremental fit indices for assessing and comparing model fit (Hair et al., 2010). Four absolute fit indices were reported in the study, including the normed chi-square (χ^2/df), along with the value of chi-square statistic (χ^2), its degrees of freedom (*df*) and *p* value, the root

mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) with its corresponding 90% confidence interval, the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) and the value of gamma hat. An incremental fit index, comparative fit index (CFI), was also reported. A model with acceptable model fit was expected to have the normed chi-square < 3, RMSEA < .06, SRMR < .08, gamma hat > .95 and CFI > .90 (Fan & Sivo, 2007; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Both convergent and discriminant validity were examined and reported, and possible models were compared.

4.4.5.2 Questionnaire WBI

Data collected from the questionnaire WBI were screened and cleaned following the same procedure as the questionnaire BASQ. Data were examined for internal consistency. The values of Cronbach alpha were reported for the overall inventory, as well as the two subscales. The estimates for a well-developed attitude scale were expected to approach .80 (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). However, as it is quite common for the value to be compromised in the measurement of psychological construct (Kline, 1999), Cronbach alphas in excess of .70 were accepted as satisfactory for the inventory as a whole and subscales.

4.5 Study One: Investigating Complex Relationships

Study One investigated the relationships between student writers' beliefs, stance deployment and academic writing quality in an EFL context, by drawing, primarily, on a correlational research design. Correlational research design is a quantitative design in which correlational statistical tests are used to describe and measure the relationships between variables (Creswell, 2012). The overarching research question this study addressed is:

What are the relationships between EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and overall quality of English academic writing?

The specific research questions are as follows:

1) What is the state of students' writing beliefs and beliefs about stance?

2) What are the relationships between students' writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and writing quality?

3) What are the relationships between students' writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment?

4) What is the relationship between stance deployment and writing quality?

5) Are there any differences between high-scoring and low-scoring students in terms of writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment?

6) What are the predictive abilities of writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment to writing quality?

4.5.1 Participants

A sample of 84 participants were recruited from two medium-ranking universities in northern China to participate voluntarily. All the participants were Chinese English-major students in the fourth year of study; 96.4% were female students (n = 81) and 3.6% male (n = 3), with the average age 22.13 (SD = .56). At the time of data collection, they had completed the final thesis for the bachelor's degree. Based on the ranking of overall scores of the collected written texts, a group of high-scoring students (n = 36) and a group of low-scoring students (n = 34) were selected for the fourth research question. This classification was used only for data analysis.

4.5.2 Instruments and Materials

4.5.2.1 Questionnaire WBI and BASQ

All participants recruited for Study One were invited to complete a survey which comprised a demographic section and the two questionnaires. The demographic section collected participants' background information including gender, age and their experience of learning English. The two questionnaires were the *Writing Beliefs Inventory* (WBI) to investigate students' beliefs about writing, and the finalised *Beliefs about Authorial Stance Questionnaire* (BASQ) to explore their beliefs about authorial stance. As the participants were advanced undergraduate students studying English as their major, the English versions of the questionnaires were used.

4.5.2.2 Student writing

Participants' written texts were collected for the assessment of writing quality and stance deployment, as they can provide insights into "students' knowledge of genre, language forms and rhetorical understandings" (Hyland, 2016a, p. 118). From text analysis, researchers can have access to the language choices writers make, strategies they use, and why and how they perform in a certain way (Hyland, 2016a). In this study, the introduction sections of participants' final theses were collected with their consent. The introduction was selected because it is distinctively featured with the author's evaluative voices as they usually present opinions, refer to previous studies and emphasise research gaps in this section (Milagros del Saz Rubio, 2011; Sawaki, 2014). In China, English majors are required to write a 5000-word final thesis in English with a structure of a research article, that is, to include sections of Introduction, Literature Review, Methods, Results, and Discussion (IMRD). Students are expected to propose research questions, have scientific reasoning and methods based on the literature review, and display data

analysis and interpretation. Students are granted the freedom to decide their own research topics related to the English language, according to the scope defined by the official curriculum. In Study One, 84 pieces of written texts were collected with an average length of 394 words (M = 393.87, SD = 170.98). The topics fell into five categories: English literary studies (n = 23, 27.4%), linguistics (n = 23, 27.4%), Chinese-English or English-Chinese translation (n = 19, 22.6%), comparison of Chinese and western cultures (n = 12, 14.3%), and English language teaching (n = 7, 8.3%).

The texts were assessed after collection. To ensure the reliability and validity of the assessment procedure, the ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, & Hughey, 1981) was used as the standard rubric for the measurement of overall writing quality. Analytic rating scales are more reliable and consistent than holistic scoring (Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Teng & Zhang, 2016b, 2020); Jacobs et al.'s (1981) analytic scoring rubric has been successfully used in assessing EFL learners' writing proficiency in a number of studies (e.g., Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Ong & Zhang, 2013; Teng & Zhang, 2016b, 2020). The scoring rubric measures five aspects of writing performance: content (30%, 13-30), organization (20%, 7-20), vocabulary (20%, 7-20), language use (25%, 5-25) and mechanics (5%, 2-5). Each aspect has four levels with indicators and corresponding scores for each level. See Appendix A for the ESL Composition Profile.

4.5.3 Procedures

All participants were invited to complete the questionnaire survey at the end of the semester. They were informed of the purpose of the study and that there were no right or wrong answers. To assure the anonymity and confidentiality of the study, each participant was provided an identification code; they were asked to use this code rather

than their names, or any identification information, on the questionnaire survey as well as the writing samples they submitted. The coding information, known only to the researcher, was kept separately from the data. Participants were guaranteed that the writing samples would be used only for academic purposes and that they were entitled to withdraw any data provided by them during or after the data collection. The whole survey took each participant approximately 20-30 minutes, and all the participants agreed to submit a written text, their thesis introduction, within the following week after completing the survey.

4.5.4 Data Analysis

Data collected from the questionnaire survey and written texts were sorted and cleaned. Descriptive analyses were checked first and reported, including mean scores (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*). Assumptions were examined before data were subjected to statistical tests according to specific research questions. The analysis procedure and statistical tests used in Study One are as follows.

4.5.4.1 Scoring of writing

Two raters scored all the collected written texts by referring to the ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs et al., 1981). Rater One was a doctoral student in education specializing in EFL writing, who held a master's degree in English and had two-year experiences of English teaching. I was the second rater. After a training session and discussion of discrepant instances (discrepancies in rating were more than 2 points difference for each subcategories of the rubric from the two raters), the two raters marked students' written texts independently. The inter-rater reliability was $r = .96$, $p < .001$, indicating satisfactory reliability. Both raters re-assessed 30 written texts one months later. The

intra-rater coefficients for rater one was $r = .95$, $p < .001$ and for rater two was .97, $p < .001$. The final overall score was the average score marked by the two raters.

4.5.4.2 Analysis of writing

Quantitative content analysis was used to explore stance deployment in student writing. It is a systematic method widely used for analysing text data (Dörnyei, 2007; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Krippendorff, 2004). It focuses on language and linguistic features, and categorises and quantifies word-based data that can then be subjected to quantitative analysis and interpretation (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). The coding in this study proceeded in a top-down approach with the focus on student writers' use of different categories of stance resources. When conducted in a top-down manner, the coding begins with a pre-existing framework for analysis, which suits for hypothesis testing with a large set of data (Wharton, 2012).

Following the suggested steps of content analysis (Cohen et al., 2011), I took each sentence as the unit of analysis as used in previous studies on stance deployment (see also Lancaster, 2014; Wharton, 2012; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Wu, 2007). Drawing on the coding scheme presented in Table 4.2, each sentence was firstly identified as monoglossic (single-voiced) or heteroglossic (multiple-voiced). Monoglossic sentences are typically realised as bare assertions as commonly found in reports or narratives. Each heteroglossic sentence was further categorised as either a contractive or an expansive stance, with a label of a specific stance type, according to the dialogic effects the stance markers have provoked. In the process of coding, labels were assigned according to the main clauses if different stance resources were applied in one sentence. Subordinate clauses were not coded separately in this study as they served as complements to the proposition mainly stated by the main clause (see also

Lancaster, 2014; Li & Wharton, 2012). Open coding was undertaken manually using the computer software Nvivo ver. 12, which is designed to sort and organise non-numerical data (Séror, 2005).

The coding scheme, mainly adapted from the Engagement system, also included certain linguistic markers classified in *force: intensification* within the Graduation system of Appraisal, featuring up- or down-scaling of qualities or processes (see section 2.3.2.2). As Martin and White (2005) mentioned, the Engagement and Graduation systems are often integrated and overlapped; linguistic resources of up-scaling and down-scaling graduation also provoke dialogic effects. Therefore, these resources were counted as markers of dialogic contraction or expansion accordingly. Another adjustment in the applying the framework was that I followed the analytic procedures in previous studies combining the two subtypes of *attribute* (i.e., *acknowledge* and *distance*), as *distance* was frequently found to be a little used subtype in student writing (e.g., Lancaster, 2014; Wu, 2007). As Martin and White (2005) also indicated, the use of both of these subtypes shows the author's detachment from responsibility for the reported proposition, combining them was more appropriate for the data analysis.

To enhance credibility and reliability, Rater One in scoring was trained and invited to code 20 written texts (24%) using the same coding scheme. The total number of coded sentences agreed by the two raters was counted and then divided by the total number of sentences. The percentage of agreement was 84.3% and disagreements were resolved through discussion. To avoid potential subjectivity, 30 written texts (36%) were re-coded two months later with the percentage of agreement as 91.4%. Inter-coder and intra-coder reliabilities were acceptable.

Table 4.2 The Coding Scheme

Stance types			Type description	Examples of linguistic markers
Monogloss (M)			Make no reference to other voices; state facts or actions	
Heterogloss	Dialogic contraction	*disclaim: deny* (DD)	directly reject, negate	*not, never, few, lack of*
		disclaim: counter (DC)	counter expectation, replace	*but, however, only, still, on the contrary*
		proclaim: concur (PC)	overly announce the reader as agreeing with or having the same knowledge	*obviously, undoubtedly, as we all know*
		proclaim: pronounce (PP)	explicit author intervention; intensifiers	*indeed, really, must, quite, greatly, especially, most*
		proclaim: endorse (PE)	refer to external sources as correct	*X proves/ shows …* *X finds/ points out …*
	Dialogic expansion	*entertain* (E)	proposition as one of possible positions; allow room for multiple voices	*may, possible, seem, tend to, could, generally, often, in my opinion*
		attribute (A)	refer to external sources without displaying an attitude towards it	*According to Y, …* *Y says/ suggests …* *It is said that …*

Note. Adapted from Martin and White's (2005) Engagement system.

Based on the results of coding, quantitative analysis of stance deployment consisted of two measures: frequency and diversity. Frequency was the amount of each type of stance, which was calculated and further standardised by transforming into frequency per 100 sentences. The total frequency for contractions, expansions and heteroglosses was calculated respectively by adding the frequencies of composed subtypes. Diversity referred to the number of different types of stance that were applied in each text. For instance, if a student used *monogloss*, *disclaim: counter*, *entertain* and *attribute* in the writing, the value of stance diversity would be 4.

Word frequency analysis, a technique frequently adopted in corpus linguistics to identify the frequently occurring linguistic forms in the corpora, was selectively conducted (e.g., Coniam, 2004; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Hyland, 2008d). The inclusion of word frequency analysis was expected to provide further qualitative information assisting the interpretation of quantitative results. In this study, based on the correlational results, word frequency analysis was conducted when the examination of linguistic markers for specific stance types was needed for further illustration of the relationships between belief variables and stance frequencies. When necessary, the corpus of the targeted stance type was subjected to word frequency analysis in the software Nvivo ver. 12 to generate the initial concordance list in which the frequencies for each linguistic markers were presented. This was then followed by a further manual check to identify key stance markers and to further ensure reliability and accuracy.

4.5.4.3 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data were first screened and cleaned. Missing values, outliers and normal distribution were examined. Descriptive analyses, including mean scores (*M*) and

standard deviation (*SD*), were checked first and reported. The following statistical tests were used in Study One.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient

Data collected from questionnaires and writing samples in Study One were mainly subjected to bivariate correlational analyses using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Pearson product-moment correlation measures the strength of correlation between two variables in a linear model (Field, 2013). In this study, a series of Pearson correlations were applied to measure the relationships between student writers' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and writing quality in an EFL context. Pearson's *r* was reported for each bivariate comparison.

Independent and Paired-samples t-tests

In Study One, comparisons were conducted to investigate the differences between various factors of beliefs as well as between the responses and performance of high-scoring students and low-scoring students. The two types of *t*-test were used in this study: Independent-samples *t*-test to compare the means of two unrelated groups on the same dependent variable; paired-samples *t*-test to compare the two variables or the repeated measures obtained from the same group of participants (Dörnyei, 2007). Both tests are used for the comparisons of variables in normal distribution. In this study, the assumption of normality was examined for each dependent variable through Shapiro-Wilk test and histogram. After the examination of normality, paired-samples *t*-tests were applied to examine the differences between various factors of beliefs from students. Independent-samples *t*-tests were used to investigate whether high-scoring students and low-scoring students differed in terms of beliefs and stance deployment. Results of independent-samples *t*-tests were reported according to the results of Levene's tests for

the examination homogeneity of variance. Cohen's *d* was reported as an indicator of the effect size for *t*-tests (small = .20; medium = .50; large = .80) (Cohen, 1988, 1992).

Mann-Whitney U test and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests

Mann-Whitney *U* tests and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were used as non-parametric alternatives to independent and paired-samples *t*-tests for the analysis of non-normal variables. The effect size estimate, *r*, was reported for Mann-Whitney *U* tests and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests (small = .10; medium = .30; large = .50) (Field, 2013).

Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis is to predict one dependent variable from two or more independent variables (Hair et al., 2010). In Study One, hierarchical regression analysis was applied to evaluate the predictive effects of writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment on writing quality. In hierarchical regression analysis, predictors were entered stepwise in an order according to logical or theoretical considerations (Field, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Assumptions of multiple regression were examined concerning sample size, linearity, normality, homoscedasticity of residuals and multicollinearity. The rule of thumb for sample size suggests an observation-to-variable ratio of 20:1 for multiple regression analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Linearity was examined by referring to bivariate scatterplots. Shapiro-Wilk tests and histograms were used for the examination of normality. Homoscedasticity was examined through the visual check of the plot of standardised residuals. Risk of multicollinearity was examined by checking the correlation matrix of variables, in which the correlations between variables are expected to be less than .90 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

In Study One, the dependent variable was the writing score. The predictors in the model were decided based on the correlational results of writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and writing scores. Cohen's f^2 was reported for the effect size of regression (small = .02; medium = .15; large = .35) (Cohen, 1988, 1992).

4.6 Study Two: Quasi-experimental Intervention Study

Study Two was a quasi-experimental study to implement the writing intervention and evaluate its effects on EFL students' beliefs about writing and authorial stance, stance deployment, and overall quality of English academic writing. Quasi-experimental study is a compelling method of "establishing cause-effect relationships and evaluating educational innovations" (Dörnyei, 2007). Interventional studies are regarded as helpful to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching methods, curriculum designs and classroom arrangements in influencing the characteristics of individuals or groups of students (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015). The current study involved two groups of students (a treatment group and a comparison group) with data collected prior to and after the intervention. A multiple-case study was further conducted during the period of intervention with students from both groups to further delve into the nuanced effects of the writing instruction on students' beliefs. As Dörnyei (2007) mentioned, case studies can yield abundant data for a thick description of a complex social context. A multiple-case study or collective case study involves a number of cases that are studied jointly to reveal a general situation (Dörnyei, 2007; Stake, 2005). These qualitative data can provide ample information for an in-depth investigation of the nuanced changes in students' understanding and can also further triangulate or complement quantitative findings.

The overarching research question for Study Two is:

Did the explicit stance instruction have any impact on the treatment group's writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, stance deployment, and overall writing quality, compared with the comparison group?

The specific research questions are as follows:

1) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in the overall quality of English academic writing?

2) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in beliefs about writing and authorial stance after the intervention, both quantitatively and qualitatively?

3) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in stance deployment after the intervention, both quantitatively and qualitatively?

4.6.1 Participants

Forty-six English-major undergraduates in Year 3 from two intact classes participated in Study Two. They were randomly assigned into two conditions: a treatment group and a comparison group. The treatment group included 26 students, in which 88.46% were female (n = 23) and 11.54% were male (n = 3), with the average age 20.79 (SD = .977). The comparison group included 24 students, in which 75% were female (n = 18) and 25% were male (n = 6, with the average age 20.86 (SD = .774). At the time of data collection, all the students were enrolled in a compulsory course on EAP writing, focusing on forming academic argumentation. One teacher participant was voluntarily recruited from those who were qualified and responsible for teaching the EAP writing course during the research period. The teacher taught both groups of students after taking three training sessions about the writing intervention.

For the multiple-case study, four students (two students from each group) were voluntarily recruited to obtain in-depth information about the effects of writing instruction on students' beliefs about academic writing and authorial stance. Random sampling was utilised for the selection of participants from volunteers (Creswell, 2014). Table 4.3 presents the participants' individual profiles. To avoid data contamination, the questionnaires and written texts collected from the four participants were excluded from the analysis of group performance.

Table 4.3 Participants' Individual Profiles in Multiple-Case Study

Group	Pseudo-name	Gender	Academic interest	EAP learning experience
Treatment	Ada	F	Linguistics & Education	No
	Danielle	F	Translation & Culture	No
Comparison	Song	F	Literary studies	No
	Jing	F	Literary studies	No

4.6.2 Instruments and Materials

Various instruments were used in this study. Questionnaires and students' written texts were collected prior to and after the writing intervention. For the multiple-case study, semi-structured interviews and writing journals elicited further information on students' beliefs.

4.6.2.1 Questionnaire WBI and BASQ

The same survey, as in Study One, was used to collect student participants' demographic information and their reported writing beliefs (WBI) and beliefs about authorial stance (BASQ) in academic writing. All the students from the two groups were invited to answer the same survey prior to and after the period of writing intervention; the survey

only differed in that the questions collecting demographic information were removed in post-test as they were unnecessary.

4.6.2.2 Student writing

Students from the two groups were asked to complete writing assignments prior to and after the writing intervention. They were required to write a 300-word introductory section for their BA thesis to be completed in the near future. They were entitled to choose own topics according to their academic interests within the scope required by official curriculum. The written texts were collected one week later with their consent. The post-test writing was a revised version of students' own pre-test writing with no change in topic. Due to the after-class nature of the assignments, all the collected written texts firstly went through a procedure of plagiarism checking by using *Turnitin*[1], which is a widely used online plagiarism prevention and detection system (Buckley & Cowap, 2013; Dahl, 2007). No text was removed due to plagiarism as the similarity indices of all written texts, excluding quotes, ranged from 0% to 25%, which was acceptable according to the requirements for BA thesis in the university where study was conducted. The topics of written texts fell into five categories: English literary studies, linguistics, Chinese-English or English-Chinese translation, comparison of Chinese and western culture, and English language teaching. Table 4.4 presents a summary of the written texts collected prior to and after the writing intervention, including the total number and average length of written texts, and the number of texts for each topic category.

[1] http://www.turnitin.com/

Table 4.4 Information of Written Texts in Pre- and Post-tests

Group	Number of texts	Mean length of texts (SD)	Topics (n, %)				
			Literary studies	Linguistics	Translation	Culture	Teaching
Treatment	24	Pre: 341.13 (62.64)	10	0	3	9	2
		Post: 325.42 (58.70)	(37.5%)	(0%)	(12.5%)	(33.33%)	(8.33%)
Comparison	22	Pre: 322.68 (71.81)	8	3	5	5	1
		Post: 327.64 (57.96)	(36.36%)	(13.64%)	(22.73%)	(22.73%)	(4.55%)

Note. The number of texts excluded those from participants in multiple-case study.

Two rubrics were used to evaluate students' written texts. Firstly, the overall quality of each text was evaluated by using the same scoring rubric as in Study One, the ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs et al., 1981). Secondly, stance performance of each text was evaluated by using a stance rating scale adapted from Chang (2012) for assessing students' research introductions. Chang's (2012) rating scale drew on Swales' (2004) model of rhetorical moves, *Create a Research Space* (hereafter CARS), and the Engagement system (Martin & White, 2005). The CARS model describes three "moves" in research article introductions from the perspective of rhetorical purposes. The basic notion of "move" is defined as "a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse" (Swales, 2004, p. 228). The three moves in the CARS model are "establishing a territory", "establishing a niche" and "presenting the present work" (Swales, 2004, p. 230). Chang's rating scale was designed to evaluate the extent to which writers effectively deploy different stance resources to fulfil the rhetorical purposes for each move in academic introductions. In the application of Chang's scale, an introduction was first divided into three moves according to the CARS model. For each move, holistic scores were granted on three scoring levels (from 1 to 3). However, indicators of key stance features in the rating scale were rarely provided to assist the scoring procedure, as they might cause

discrepancy among raters. Thus, the stance rating scale in this study built on Chang's (2012) scale to provide more stance indicators for each move with an expanded range of scores; the aim was to present more differentiating scoring for the nuanced differences in stance performance. Specifically, in this study, the stance rating scale contained three scoring levels in each move, with each level given a score range (level 1: 1-3; level 2: 4-7; level 3: 8-10) with detailed indicators of stance features. See Appendix B for the stance rating scale.

4.6.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the multiple-case study to obtain students' reported beliefs about academic writing and authorial stance. An interview is a qualitative inquiry method that involves one-to-one conversation with the purpose of obtaining participants' interpretations of the target phenomena from their own perspective (Creswell, 2012). A semi-structured interview is composed of a set of pre-prepared questions providing guidance and direction for the participant (Dörnyei, 2007). Its format is open-ended and the participant is encouraged to elaborate on the proposed issues with considerable freedom (Dörnyei, 2007). It is a useful way for researchers to yield diverse and in-depth data about participants' ideas, opinions, and experience (Fraenkel et al., 2015).

Informed by previous studies (e.g., Chang, 2016; Chang & Tsai, 2014), the interview in the current study included three parts (see Appendix C for the interview protocol). The first part inquired participants' background information and previous academic writing learning experience. The second part consisted of questions about their views on academic writing and argumentation. The third part involved text reading and response. Participants were asked to read two revised versions of the same text and then address

their understandings of different types of authorial stance. The two texts for interviews prior to and after the intervention were selected from the introduction sections of two research articles[1] in the field of social science. The criteria for article selection were as follows: 1) The articles should be latest in the related field; 2) the articles should contain an introduction section; 3) the introduction section should involve deployment of multiple stance types. Each text was revised into two extreme versions, in regard to stance, based on the dichotomy of dialogic contraction and expansion in the Engagement system. One version was predominantly assertive, the other one tentative. Table 4.5 presents the examples of the two versions of a text, with key stance markers italicised. The information of the texts used in the interviews is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.5 Examples of Two Versions of Text in Interviews

Assertive Version	**Tentative Version**
Academic achievement reflects the capacity to attain learning goals included in the school curricula and is ***clearly*** related to important outcomes. There is increasing evidence that the capacity to solve typical academic problems (e.g. in mathematics and reading) ***can*** predict future educational or academic outcomes (Coyle & Pillow, 2008). The fact that achievement is ***strongly*** related to life outcomes is not surprising. In fact, academic achievement tests involve intelligence, extensive reasoning, and problem-solving capacity (Hunt, 2011). It ***must*** be noted that	Academic achievement reflects the capacity to attain learning goals included in the school curricula and is related to important outcomes. There is ***some*** evidence that the capacity to solve typical academic problems (e.g. in mathematics and reading) ***tends to*** predict future educational or academic outcomes (Coyle & Pillow, 2008). The fact that achievement is ***somehow*** related to life outcomes is not surprising. In fact, academic achievement tests involve intelligence, extensive reasoning, and problem-solving capacity (Hunt, 2011). It ***should*** be noted that

[1] The two research articles used in interviews are the following:
Prior to the intervention: Giofrè, D., Borella, E., & Mammarella, I. C. (2017). The relationship between intelligence, working memory, academic self-esteem, and academic achievement. *Journal of Cognitive Psychology*, *29*(6), 731–747.
After the intervention: Nordmark, M. (2017). Writing roles: A model for understanding students' digital writing and the positions that they adopt as writers. *Computers and Composition, 46,* 56–71.

some cognitive factors are related to academic achievement (Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001).	some cognitive factors are related to academic achievement (Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001).

Table 4.6 Information of Texts in Interviews

	Texts	Word number	Monoglossic sentences (%)	Assertive sentences (%)	Tentative sentences (%)
Prior to the intervention	Assertive version	252	42.9%	57.1%	0%
	Tentative version	245	35.7%	21.4%	42.9%
After the intervention	Assertive version	191	12.5%	75%	12.5%
	Tentative version	185	12.5%	12.5%	75%

4.6.2.4 Writing journals

In addition to semi-structured interviews, participants for the multiple-case study were asked to keep weekly writing journals during the period of writing intervention. A writing journal is a valid way of eliciting a first-person account of a language learning experience (Bailey, 1990, p. 215); it provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their beliefs in a natural way, from which researchers can access time-related development or fluctuation within participants, as well as their responses to certain stimuli (Dörnyei, 2007). In the multiple-case study, the four participants were required to complete prompt-driven weekly journals. The prompt, presented in English, listed several questions to elicit participants' views on academic writing, stance-taking, EAP writing instruction they received and other interactions or activities related to academic writing. See Appendix D for the writing journal prompt.

4.6.3 Procedures

4.6.3.1 Writing intervention

The design of the writing intervention in this study was based mainly on the Engagement system (Martin & White, 2005). The goal of the writing intervention was to provide

explicit instruction on authorial stance to improve EFL students' academic writing. Previous studies have claimed that explicit instruction directly gets learners to notice and engage with the target features in meaning-making (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Fordyce, 2014; Ho & Li, 2018). In this study, the intervention took place once a week for a 45-min session with a total of six hours (8 × 45 mins) of instruction within the context of EAP writing classes for Year 3 students.

The interventional content was divided into two parts. Firstly, students were provided with information about the genre of academic introduction drawing on Swales' (2004) CARS model. As previous studies suggested (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Charles, 2007b; Uccelli et al., 2013), students should be encouraged to understand the connection between rhetorical purposes and linguistic features. The CARS model, briefly described in section 4.6.2.2, includes three major moves, with each move containing several sub-steps (see Table 4.7). During the instruction, the textbook, *Academic writing for graduate students* (Swales & Feak, 2012), which includes a chapter on the rhetorical moves, was used. This textbook has been successfully used with advanced undergraduates for learning academic writing (Swales & Feak, 2012).

After acknowledging the rhetorical purposes, students in the treatment group were provided with instruction on stance. The content was presented following Norris and Ortega's (2000) guidelines for explicit instruction, which involves rule explanation and explicit direction to attend to target forms. For the intervention, explanation of metalanguage rules was designed based on the Engagement system to directly increase learners' consciousness of target stance features and dialogical functions. Students' learning was enhanced through practicing multi-level stance analysis. As authorial stance can be considered a functional area of language, and target forms serve a rhetorical or communicative purpose in the context, previous studies have advocated

covering multiple levels of language use in context when instructing learners on authorial stance (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Fordyce, 2014). Table 4.8 presents an overview of the writing intervention including time, instruction content and materials used. Detailed activities are presented afterwards.

Table 4.7 The CARS Model

Move 1: Establishing the territory	
Step 1	Topic generalizations of increasing specificity
Move2: Establishing a niche	
Step 1A	Indicating a gap
Step 1B	Adding to what is known
Step 2	Presenting positive justification (optional)
Move 3: Presenting the present work	
Step 1	Announcing present research descriptively and / or purposively
Step 2	Presenting research questions or hypotheses (optional)
Step 3	Definitional clarifications (optional)
Step 4	Summarizing methods (optional)
Step 5	Announcing principal outcomes (optional)
Step 6	Stating the value of the present research (optional)
Step 7	Outlining the structure of the paper (optional)

Note. From Swales, J. M. (2004). *Research genres: Explorations and applications*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Table 4.8 Writing Intervention for the Treatment Group

Time	Instructional content	Materials
Week 1	How to introduce your own research? Three rhetorical moves in introduction	*Academic writing for graduate students* (Swales & Feak, 2012)
Week 2	Key concepts in academic writing: 1) Dialogic nature of writing 2) Authorial stance	
Week 3	Stance types: Non-argumentative and Argumentative (Monogloss and heterogloss)	
Week 4	Stance types: High-argumentative (Dialogic contraction)	Texts from *Authorial Stance Database*
Week 5	Stance types: Low-argumentative (Dialogic expansion)	
Week 6	How to take your own position? Review of stance types	
Week 7	How do experts use different types of stance in introduction? Stance in experts' writing	
Week 8	How to improve your argumentation? Reflection of your own writing Post-test writing assignment	Pre-test writing

Informed by Chang and Schleppegrell's (2016) writing intervention, the technical terms in the Engagement system were simplified and substituted by a set of graduated terms to support students' learning better. For instance, monoglossic utterances were introduced as non-argumentative with an absence of interpersonal interaction. Sentences with dialogic contraction stance features were introduced as high-argumentative, emphasising the restriction of dialogic space, whereas those with dialogically expansive resources were described as low-argumentative that allowed more room for negotiation.

The text materials used in the instruction and practices were examples of authentic introductions from published journal articles selected from an online database, *Authorial stance database*[1]. The database, designed by Chang (2008), provides authentic linguistic data for users to explore patterns of stance-taking to serve specific rhetorical moves in research introductions; it has been applied in stance instruction as discursive scaffolding for L2 student writers (Chang, 2012; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016). The database consists of introductions from fifteen published journal articles from social sciences, involving education, psychology, communication studies, political studies, and information science. Users are able to explore stance expressions and alternation at various levels, such as sentence or discourse. Multi-level sample texts were selected from the database to facilitate students' understanding of the deployment of various stance. The specific instructional activities used in the treatment group included:

- Metalinguistic instruction on the use of stance and its dialogic effects
- Reading tasks to draw attention to stance use at multiple levels in the texts
- Quiz on identifying different stance types
- Peer-evaluation of pre-test writing, highlighting students' use of stance

The content of Week 1 in the intervention was also taught in the comparison group at the same time to ensure that any effect of the intervention was due to explicit stance instruction and no other variables, such as genre knowledge. After Week 1, the comparison group received regular writing instruction according to the university curriculum.

[1] http://web.ntnu.edu.tw/~peichinchang/

4.6.3.2 Teacher training

The two groups were instructed by the same teacher who was recruited voluntarily from the qualified instructors who were responsible for the EAP writing course in the semester in the university. The teacher was invited to attend three training sessions prior to the period of writing intervention (2 hours per session). The training sessions were to familiarise the teacher with the instructional content and highlight the focus of the pre-planned classroom activities in intervention. After each training session, the teacher had an opportunity to pose questions, share opinions, and reach possible solutions, clarifications, or modifications of instructional content, if necessary. For the comparison group, the teacher was expected to teach according to schedules and plans based on the university's curriculum. He was informed that classroom observations may be conducted in both groups during the period of writing intervention, to ensure teaching fidelity and that he did not implement the training package in the comparison group.

4.6.3.3 Data collection procedure

Prior to the writing intervention, all the student participants in both groups were provided with a workshop on pre-test writing in which they were informed of the requirements for topic selection and introduction writing. Their topics were checked before they started to write to make sure they were appropriate for academic theses suggested by the English-major curriculum of the university. All the participants were asked then to complete a 300-word pre-test writing assignment and submit it electronically within one week. After the collection of written texts, they were invited to complete the questionnaire survey to record their demographic information, self-reported writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance; the survey took each participant approximately 20-30 minutes. Participants were informed of the purpose of

the study and their rights to withdraw at any time during, or after, the data collection period. Each participant was given an identification code for the purpose of anonymity and confidentiality. They were asked to use this code to label the text file they submitted as well as the questionnaire survey. In Study Two, the identity of participants was inevitably known to the other participants in the same class due to the characteristics of the teaching experiment. All participants were reminded of this risk and gave their informed consent not to disclose the identity of other participants to any third parties.

During the intervention, participants in the treatment group received the 8-week writing intervention, while students in the comparison group received regular academic writing instruction based on the university curriculum. All the intervention classes for the treatment group were observed and an observation checklist completed for each class. The observation was to evaluate the teacher's fidelity to the intervention in terms of instructional content, teaching activities and classroom management. Three classes in the comparison group were also observed on a random basis. The teacher provided the same explicit stance instruction to the comparison group after the study, and all resources used in the intervention were made available to ensure participants in the comparison group were not disadvantaged. At the end of the writing intervention, students in both groups were invited to complete the questionnaire survey. They were also asked to revise their own pre-test writing based on what they had learned and submit it electronically within one week.

For the multiple-case study, four participants were invited to be interviewed individually prior to and after the period of writing intervention. Each semi-structured interview lasted approximately for thirty minutes and was conducted in a comfortable place for the participant, such as in an empty classroom. In the interview, the research purpose was explained and the participants assured that they were entitled to refuse to answer

any questions. Questions in the interview protocol were asked in L1 Chinese as preferred by the participants, and they were entitled to respond in either L1 or L2 English. Participants were also informed that the interviews were audio-recorded. During the writing intervention, the four participants were asked to keep weekly journals in either L1 or L2. Their journal writing was prompt-driven with each journal entry requiring approximately 20 minutes to complete. They were required to submit the journal electronically within two days after the writing course every week; six journals were collected from each participant in total. All the participants in multiple-case study were provided a pseudonym as part of the research project to protect their identity and guarantee confidentiality. Any identifying information about the university and the faculty were removed, and no identifiable information was released to a third party.

4.6.4 Data Analysis

Data collected in Study Two included the questionnaire survey and written texts from students in two groups, as well as interviews and writing journals from multiple-case study. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used.

4.6.4.1 Scoring of writing

The written texts collected were scored by the two raters, as in Study One. To avoid potential rating bias, a third person, other than the two raters, rearranged the written texts before scoring procedure, with the participants' identification codes and grouping information temporarily removed. The two raters first evaluated the overall quality of the written texts, as in Study One, by referring to the ESL composition profile (Jacobs et al., 1981). The inter-rater reliability was $r = .88$, $p < .001$, and the intra-rater coefficients for the two raters were $r = .89$ and .87, respectively, $p < .001$, indicating satisfactory reliability.

After completing the scoring of overall quality, the two raters evaluated the appropriateness of stance deployment by granting stance scores, using the stance rating scale, for the three rhetorical moves respectively. After a training session and discussion of discrepant instances (at least 2-point difference in stance scores for each move given by the two raters), the two raters marked the written texts independently. The inter-rater reliabilities for stance scores of the three moves were r = .89, .96, and .93, respectively, p < .001. One month later, the two raters re-evaluated 27 pieces of written texts (30% of the total number). The intra-rater coefficients for the two raters were r = .91 and .92, respectively, p < .001. Inter-rater and intra-rater reliabilities for both raters were satisfactory. The final score for each move was the average of the scores given by the two raters. The overall stance score for each text was the sum of the corresponding stance scores of the three moves.

4.6.4.2 Analysis of writing

Quantitative and qualitative analyses of students' written texts were conducted. The coding of the sentences in each text into stance types was undertaken as for Study One. The first rater for scoring the written texts was also invited to code 20 texts (22% of the total number) to ensure the reliability of coding procedure. The inter-coder agreement was 86.7%, and the intra-coder agreement was 89.3%, both were acceptable. For the quantitative analysis, two measures of stance deployment: frequency and diversity, were calculated as in Study One. The frequency of each type was also transformed into standardised frequencies per 100 sentences. The quantitative data were subjected to statistical analysis as described in the following section.

Qualitative examination of stance deployment in students' written texts, based on the coding results, focused on the configuration or sequencing patterns of various stance

types. Ryshina-Pankova (2014) argued that investigating the stance patterns, or interplay of stances, involved in writing can be helpful to uncover how students develop and construct arguments to achieve rhetorical purposes and persuade putative readers. In this study, stance patterns examined mainly focused on Move 1 and Move 2 in students' introduction texts. As Chang and Schleppegrell (2016) claimed, these two rhetorical moves are challenging for student writers, analysis of which can identify salient features of stance pattern. As Move 3 primarily involves the outline or structure of thesis, it has mostly monoglossic utterances with little, if any, stance variation. Based on the coding results, the texts were re-read, salient recurring patterns of stance in the two groups identified and compared, prior to and after the writing intervention, with particular attention paid to overall stance patterns and the patterns for including external voices. The percentages of salient patterns were reported and further interpreted with text examples.

4.6.4.3 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data collected from the questionnaire survey and written texts were first screened and cleaned. Missing values, outliers and assumption of normality were examined before the data were subjected to statistical tests. The following tests were applied to analyse quantitative data to examine the effects of the writing intervention.

Independent and Paired-samples t-tests

As introduced in Study One, independent-samples *t*-tests compare the results of two groups that are independent of each other, while paired-samples *t*-tests compare the two variables or the repeated measures obtained from the same group of participants (Dörnyei, 2007). In Study Two, after the examination of normality of each variable, independent-samples *t*-tests investigated whether there were significant between-group

differences prior to and after the writing intervention for normally distributed variables. Paired-samples *t*-tests were applied to explore the differences within each group. Cohen's *d* was used to measure the effect size of the significant difference (small = 0.2; medium = 0.5; large = 0.8) (Cohen, 1988, 1992).

Mann-Whitney U tests and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests

Mann-Whitney *U* tests and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were used as non-parametric alternatives to independent and paired-samples *t*-tests for the analysis of non-normal variables. The effect size estimate, *r*, was reported for Mann-Whitney *U* tests and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests (small = .10; medium = .30; large = .50) (Field, 2013).

4.6.4.4 Qualitative data analysis in multiple-case study

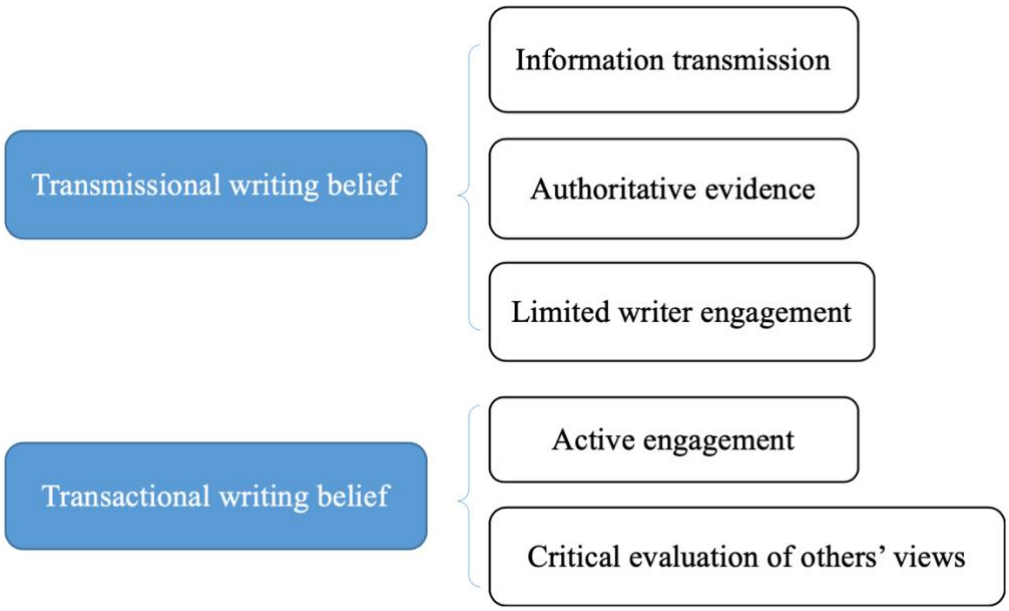
For the multiple-case study, all the audio-recordings of interviews and writing journals were transcribed. After transcription, each participant received a copy of the transcript to check accuracy and make any amendments or delete any statements if desired. The transcripts were then translated into English, if they were not initially in English, for the convenience of reporting. The first rater in the scoring of writing was invited to examine the translated transcripts to ensure accuracy and authenticity.

Thematic analysis, a widely adopted method for analysing qualitative data, was used to analyse the interview and journal transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2018). After all the transcripts were read and re-read, they were analysed manually following Braun and Clarke's (2006) guideline for thematic analysis. The interview, after eliciting background information, included two main sections administered in different ways with different targets, that is, questions for writing beliefs and text responding for eliciting beliefs about stance, respectively. Thus, data collected

from the two sections were analysed and reported separately to address corresponding research questions.

The analysis of the section of the interview on writing beliefs combined inductive and deductive approaches. A number of initial codes were generated first and then combined to form themes by consulting existing literature as well as findings in previous stages of the current research. Figure 4.2 presents the themes identified for students' reported writing beliefs, which included transmissional and transactional writing beliefs. Whereas the subthemes of transmissional writing beliefs included *information transmission*, *authoritative evidence*, and *limited writer engagement*, the subthemes of transactional writing beliefs were *active engagement* and *critical evaluation of others' views*. Each subtheme will be defined in Chapter Six when reporting qualitative results.

Figure 4.2 Themes for Students' Reported Writing Beliefs



For the interview section on authorial stance involving text reading and response, analyses were mainly deductive focusing on three aspects; these were students' views on *assertive stance*, *tentative stance* and *stance preference*, to portray students'

understanding and judgment of stance for either dialogic contraction or expansion and their preference in the comparison of the two stance types in their own writing. Key sentences for each theme or subtheme were extracted from the dataset to achieve a detailed portrayal of student participants' reported writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance. Analysis of writing journals complemented the findings of interviews to achieve a better understanding of any changes in the status of students' beliefs. To ensure the reliability of the coding procedure, the first rater for scoring the written texts was invited to code all the transcripts from one participant with a detailed codebook. Any disagreement of coding was resolved through discussion.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Before data collection, the Deans of the targeted faculties were contacted for their permission to collect data. Once approval was received the department secretary was contacted for assistance in distributing recruitment advertisements as well as the Participant Information Sheets (PISs) and the Consent Forms (CFs) to targeted students and teachers. (See Appendix E to G for PISs and CFs for faculty dean, students, and teachers.) Students and teachers, who were interested in participating the research, returned the signed CFs to a drop-box in the secretary' office confirming their informed consent. Those who were not selected as participants received a thank-you letter.

Participants were informed of the purpose and procedure of the research, in which they were about to participate, through the PISs and the CFs and that participation was voluntary. The faculty Dean had also assured students that neither participation, non-participation or withdrawal would affect their grades or relationship with the university. Teachers were also assured that participation, non-participation or withdrawal would

not affect their career or their relationship with the faculty. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants were guaranteed at each stage of the research.

The collected Consent Forms and hard copies of the data were securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland; electronic data were stored confidentially on the researcher's computer which was password-protected. After six years, all hard copy data will be shredded, and digital information will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices. Participants were assured that data collected were primarily for a doctoral thesis but may also be used for academic publications or conference presentations.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter started with an introduction of the research paradigm, followed by an overview of the overall research design. The current research included a preparatory study for instrument validation and two main studies. Study One investigated the relationships among students' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality. Study Two was a quasi-experimental intervention study in which a writing intervention was implemented, and its outcomes evaluated. The subsequent sections described the research design in each phase, including participants, instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis methods. Finally, this chapter addressed the ethical considerations in this research. The next chapter presents the findings of preparatory study and Study One; the findings of Study Two are reported in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five: Results of Preparatory Study and Study One

This chapter reports the results of the preparatory study and Study One. The first section presents the preparatory study with a detailed description of the validation of two questionnaires that were used to investigate beliefs about authorial stance and writing beliefs of EFL students. The following section reports the results of Study One that investigated the relationships between student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality in an EFL setting at the tertiary level.

5.1 Results of Preparatory Study: Instrument Validation

5.1.1 Belief about Authorial Stance Questionnaire (BASQ)

5.1.1.1 Results of exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The questionnaires, a total of 197, were first screened and cleaned before validation. Seven missing values were detected through manual inspection and the cases were deleted as they were less than 10% of the dataset (Hair et al., 2010). Three cases with univariate outliers were detected and eliminated, by referring to *z* scores and boxplots (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). After their deletion, the final sample of 187 responses were subjected to subsequent analysis. The sample size satisfied the expected case-to-variables ratio of (5:1) for the 27-item scale (Pituch & Stevens, 2016).

Descriptive statistical analyses of the 27 items in BASQ showed that the mean scores ranged from 2.53 (Item 20) to 3.82 (Item 2) and the standard deviation ranged from .655 (Item 24) to 1.025 (Item 23). The values for skewness and kurtosis were between - 1.00 (Item 24) to .405 (Item 20) and between -.890 (Item 15) to 1.537 (Item 24), respectively. Both were within the suggested cut-off values for normal distribution (+/-3 for skewness,

+/-8 for kurtosis) (Kline, 2011). Q-Q plots and histograms also indicated normal distribution. Linearity was examined through scatterplots and satisfied for multivariate analysis. Multicollinearity and singularity were examined by looking at the correlation matrix for all items. The determinant of the R-matrix was .003 greater than the threshold value of .00001, indicating that there was no problem with multicollinearity (Field, 2013). Additionally, the highest correlation in the matrix was $r = .585$ between Item 10 and 12, which was smaller than the suggested value for multicollinearity ($r > .90$), indicating that no multicollinearity or singularity was detected and that factor analysis could be carried out (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

The sample of 187 responses was subjected to EFA. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure for the data was KMO= .713, indicating the sample size was adequate and at the level of middling for the variables (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). The Bartlett's test of sphericity ($df = 351$, $p < .001$) was significant, indicating that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix and that the factor matrix can be extracted (Field, 2013; Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Following O'Connor's (2000) SPSS syntax, parallel analysis was carried out and indicated three underlying factors. Table 5.1 presents the results of factor extraction in parallel analysis.

Table 5.1 Factor Extraction in Parallel Analysis

Root	Raw Data	Means	Percentile
1.000000	4.348199	1.779934	1.897839
2.000000	2.900766	1.654938	1.742712
3.000000	1.659362	1.564203	1.637457
4.000000	1.420153	1.485816	1.548634

A maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) was conducted on the 27 items with direct oblimin factor rotation. Given the sample size, items with factor loading over .38 were retained (Stevens, 2009). A total of eight items were excluded due to low loading or cross loading (Q1, Q3, Q5, Q7, Q14, Q23, Q25, Q26). It was noted that only two items (Q20, Q6) were properly loaded on Factor 3. After a re-examination of the two items, it was found that they represented the positive feeling for dialogic contraction as items in Factor 1 did (Q20: *A strong stance represents a good hold of knowledge*; Q6: *Tentative expressions are not precise, especially when introducing previous research*). As the items did not contribute to a novel factor from the dialogic perspective and the number of items less than three indicates an unstable latent construct (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010), Factor 3 was therefore temporarily removed from subsequent analysis. As the two-factor model was also more congruent to the conceptualised framework, it was preferred as a more readily interpretable and theoretically sensible pattern of results (Fabrigar et al., 1999).

The retained seventeen items in two factors explained 37.31% of the total variance (KMO= .743, $df = 136$, $p < .001$). Factor 1 consists of nine items, accounting for 21.52% of variance. Factor 2 includes eight items, accounting for 15.79% of variance. After the examination of the item clusters, Factor 1 was labelled as *Dialogic Contraction*, indicating students' preference for assertive stance or less inclination to use tentative stance in academic writing. Factor 2 was named as *Dialogic Expansion*, referring to students' preference for tentative stance or less tendency to use assertive stance in academic writing.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the overall questionnaire was .731 and for the two factors were .782 and .709, respectively, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and reliability ($\alpha > .70$) (DeVellis, 2016; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012). Table 5.2 provides the

results of EFA of the retained seventeen items with factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Table 5.2 Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (*n* = 187)

Factor	Items	Factor loadings		Cronbach's α
		1	2	
Dialogic Contraction (DC)	DC1-Item 9	.761		.782
	DC2-Item 13	.597		
	DC3-Item 22	.568		
	DC4-Item 18	.510		
	DC5-Item 2	.491		
	DC6-Item 10	.487		
	DC7-Item 4	.486		
	DC8-Item 21	.459		
	DC9-Item 12	.425		
Dialogic Expansion (DE)	DE1-Item 11		.637	.709
	DE2-Item 15		.562	
	DE3-Item 27		.515	
	DE4-Item 17		.498	
	DE5-Item 24		.447	
	DE6-Item 8		.442	
	DE7-Item 16		.405	
	DE8-Item 19		.404	

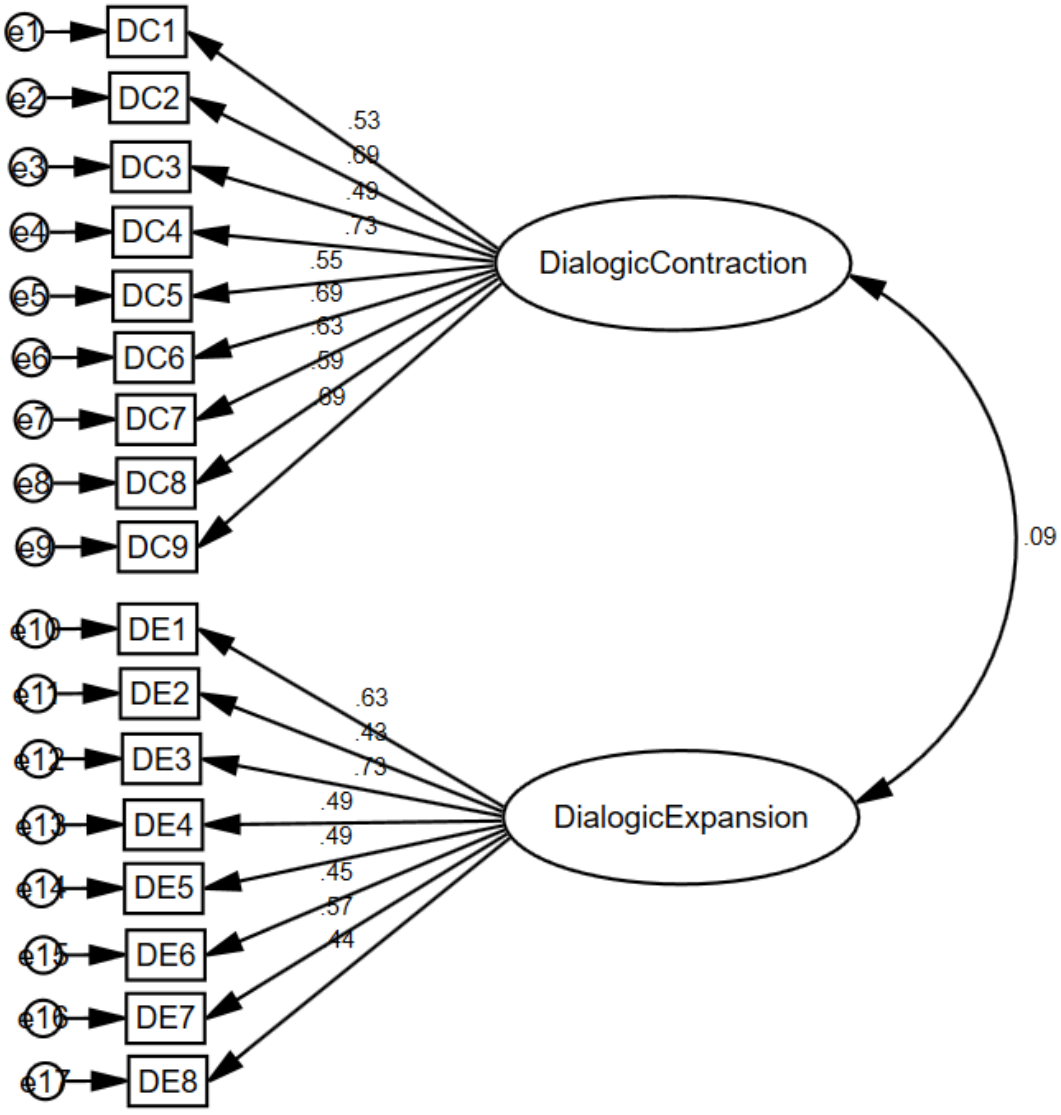
5.1.1.2 Results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

The modified version of the questionnaire BASQ with 17 items was then examined with the second sample of participants (*n* = 191). Data were screened and cleaned for confirmatory validation for testing the two-factor model generated from EFA. Three cases with missing values were eliminated and two were further removed as univariate outliers. The final sample size of 186 cases met the suggested case-to-variable ratio (10:1) for CFA (Field, 2013).

Descriptive analyses showed that the mean scores of the items ranged from 3.08 (DC6) to 3.81 (DC5), with standard deviation ranging from .653 (DE5) to .984 (DC6). The values of skewness and kurtosis ranged from -1.055 (DE5) to .192 (DC8), and from -.901 (DE2) to 1.651 (DE5), respectively. Both were within the cut-off ranges for univariate normality. The mean scores for the two factors were above the level of neutral (M = 3.44, SD = .59 for DC, M = 3.49, SD = .46 for DE). Multivariate normality was then examined by referring to Mardia's multivariate kurtosis coefficient (Mardia, 1970). In the AMOS program, the multivariate kurtosis value was 58.703. The critical ratio of it was 15.75, which was above the cut-off value of 5 for multivariate normality, indicating multivariate non-normality of the data (Bentler, 2006). Therefore, bootstrap maximum likelihood estimation was conducted to generate bias-corrected estimates and confidence intervals to examine whether multivariate nonnormality affect the significance of each regression path. The results showed that all the estimates changed only slightly and kept the same level of significance as the original results, suggesting that the nonnormality did not affect the proposed paths' significance.

Based on the dialogic framework and the results of EFA, a two-factor model was first tested through CFA. Maximum likelihood was performed to calculate the model's fit indices and estimates. The results showed that χ^2 = 191.57, df = 118, $p < .001$, χ^2/df = 1.624, SRMR = .0706, RMSEA = .058 [.043, .073], CFI = .906, Gamma hat = .96. All the indices were above the acceptable threshold value, indicating that the model fit was satisfactory. Bollen-Stine bootstrap (B = 1000) was also carried out taking multivariate nonnormality into account, and the results showed that the current model fits the data (p = .104) (Hancock & Liu, 2012). Figure 5.1 presents the two-factor model tested for beliefs about authorial stance.

Figure 5.1 Two-Factor Model of BASQ (17 items)



Note. DC = Dialogic Contraction; DE = Dialogic Expansion

In this model, all the parameter estimates of the 17 items were statistically significant at $p < .001$. Standardised regression weights of items on the latent constructs ranged from .43 to .73, most of which were above or extremely close to the suggested benchmark value of .50 (Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2011). Table 5.3 shows CFA regression weights for the two-factor model. Although the values of three items (DE2, DE6, and DE8) were moderately below the recommended benchmark value, they were retained

as they presented significant estimates, which were considered important to the model (Byrne, 2016), and their removal would not further improve the model fit. Additionally, the internal consistency of the two constructs were satisfactory (Cronbach's α = .848 and .748, respectively). Therefore, the convergent validity of the model was acceptable. The results also identified the discriminant validity of the two constructs in that no significant correlation was detected (r = .088, p = .332).

Table 5.3 CFA Regression Weights for the Two-Factor Model of Beliefs about Stance

Factor	Items	Unstandardised estimates	Standardised estimates	C.R.
Dialogic Contraction	DC1-Item 9	1.000	.528	a
	DC2-Item 13	1.207	.694	6.492*
	DC3-Item 22	.866	.492	5.229*
	DC4-Item 18	1.177	.727	6.651*
	DC5-Item 2	.894	.551	5.652*
	DC6-Item 10	1.349	.690	6.470*
	DC7-Item 4	.999	.627	6.126*
	DC8-Item 21	.954	.593	5.922*
	DC9-Item 12	1.259	.688	6.461*
Dialogic Expansion	DE1-Item 11	1.000	.628	a
	DE2-Item 15	.794	.432	4.836*
	DE3-Item 27	.997	.734	7.119*
	DE4-Item 17	.702	.488	5.360*
	DE5-Item 24	.611	.487	5.354*
	DE6-Item 8	.623	.445	4.966*
	DE7-Item 16	.880	.572	6.076*
	DE8-Item 19	.608	.439	4.908*

Note. * = p < .001. "a" means the regression weight was fixed at 1.00 for model identification purpose, therefore no critical ratio was calculated. DC = Dialogic Contraction; DE = Dialogic Expansion.

Based on the dialogic framework and the results of EFA, the two-factor model (Model 1) was further compared with a one-factor model with all items loading on one factor

(Model 2). As evident in the comparison of goodness-of-fit indices shown in Table 5.4, Model 1 had a better model fit than Model 2 and all the listed indices were within the acceptable range of value. Model 2's poor model-fit also further support the discriminant validity of Model 1 (Bryant, 2000). Therefore, Model 1 was retained. See Appendix I for the finalised questionnaire BASQ. The CFA results indicate that the finalised questionnaire is valid and reliable to be used for subsequent investigations.

Table 5.4 Goodness-of-fit Indices for Models in Comparison

Model	χ^2	*df*	χ^2/df	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	Gamma hat
Model 1	191.573*	118	1.624	.906	.058 [.043, .073]	.0706	.96
Model 2	423.995*	119	3.563	.612	.118 [.106, .130]	.135	.84

Note. * $p < .001$, *df* = degree of freedom, CFI = Comparative Fit Index, RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, SRMR = Standardised Root Mean Square Residual. RMSEA was presented with 90% confidence interval.

5.1.2 Writing Beliefs Inventory (WBI)

A sample of 191 was screened and cleaned first. Five cases with missing values were eliminated. The final sample size of 186 fulfilled the requirement for 19-item scale (Field, 2013). Descriptive analyses indicated that the mean scores of 19 items ranged from 2.88 (Item 4) to 4.16 (Item 11) and the standard deviation ranged from .668 (Item 15) to 1.095 (Item 5). The skewness and kurtosis levels ranged from -1.286 (Item 7) to .244 (Item 4) and from -.854 (Item 5) to 3.720 (Item 15), respectively, indicating sufficiently normal distribution. The sample was subjected to the examination of internal consistency reliability.

Cronbach's α for the overall scale was .714, and .551 and .687 for the two factors (i.e., transmissional beliefs and transactional beliefs), respectively. The Cronbach's α value

of Factor 1, transmissional beliefs, was considered as problematic (α = .551) (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). This could be affected by the limits of psychological measurement as well as the relatively small number of items in the subscale (Kline, 1999). Table 5.5 shows the item-total correlation in this factor and Cronbach's alpha if the item is deleted. The alpha statistics showed that the item-total correlation of Item 1, r = .018, was severely lower than the suggested value of .30 (Field, 2013), and that the overall reliability for Factor 1 would improve to .619 after its removal which would achieve a marginally acceptable value for the psychological construct (Kline, 1999). Therefore, Item 1 was excluded from the finalised inventory.

Table 5.5 Item-Total Correlation and Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted for Factor 1

Items of Transmissional Beliefs	Correlated Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Good writers include a lot of quotes from authorities in their writing.	.018	.619
2. Writing's main purpose is to give other people information.	.306	.503
3. A primary goal of writing should be to have to make as few changes as possible.	.243	.529
4. Writing should focus around the information in books and articles.	.356	.477
5. The key to successful writing is accurately reporting what authorities think.	.464	.410
6. The most important reason to write is to report what authorities think about a subject.	.402	.449

The internal consistency for Factor 2, transactional beliefs, was also not satisfactory considering the large number of items it contains (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010), Table 5.6 shows the item-total correlation in this factor and Cronbach's alpha if the item is deleted. The statistics indicated that the item-total correlation of Item 8, r = .064, was far lower than the recommended level of .30 (Field, 2013), and the overall reliability would substantially improve to a satisfactory level of .715 after its removal (Dörnyei &

Taguchi, 2010). Although another two items, Item 14 and 18, also had a level of correlation lower than .30, they were retained considering that the theoretical breadth may be affected by their deletion, and that their removal would not bring a meaningful increase for the reliability of the factor. Therefore, only Item 8 was excluded from further analysis. Cronbach's α for the finalised inventory was .722 and those for the two factors were .619 and .715 respectively. Appendix J provides the finalised inventory of 17 items used for following investigations.

Table 5.6 Item-Total Correlation and Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted for Factor 2

Items of Transactional Beliefs	Correlated Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
7. Writing requires going back over it to improve what has been written.	.501	.643
8. Writing is a process involving a lot of emotion.	.064	.715
9. It's important to develop a distinctive writing style.	.330	.666
10. Good writers stick closely to the information they have about a topic.	.353	.664
11. Good writing involves editing it many times.	.447	.651
12. Writing often involves peek experiences.	.296	.671
13. Writing helps me understand better what I'm thinking about.	.428	.654
14. I always feel that just one more revision will improve my writing.	.090	.704
15. Writing helps me see the complexity of ideas.	.397	.660
16. My thoughts and ideas become clearer to me as I write and rewrite.	.279	.674
17. Writers' views should show through in their writing.	.422	.654
18. Writing is often an emotional experience.	.166	.692
19. Writers need to immerse themselves in their writing.	.499	.641

5.1.3 Summary of Preparatory Study

This section provided a detailed description of the validation of two questionnaires measuring students' beliefs about authorial stance and writing beliefs. For the questionnaire BASQ, the results of EFA and CFA provided substantial evidence for a two-factor model with sound validity and reliability. Students' beliefs about authorial

stance were differentiated as two factors, *dialogic contraction* and *dialogic expansion*, which aligned with the two broad categories of heteroglossia in the Engagement system. The other questionnaire, the questionnaire WBI, was modified according to the results of internal consistency. The revised version retained the two factors, *transmissional beliefs* and *transactional beliefs*, with an acceptable reliability. The two questionnaire instruments were ready, thus, for subsequent investigations.

5.2 Results of Study One: Investigating Complex Relationships

This section reports the results of Study One which investigated the relationships between EFL students' beliefs, stance deployment, and overall writing quality in an academic writing setting. Data were collected from two questionnaires validated in preparatory study, WBI and BASQ, as well as written texts from student participants. Study One intended to address the first overarching research question: *What are the relationships between EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and overall quality of English academic writing?* According to the order of the specific research questions, the first part reports the results of correlational investigations concerning students' beliefs, stance deployment, and writing scores. The second part presents the comparison of variables between high-scoring and low-scoring students. The third part reports the predictive effects of beliefs and stance deployment on overall writing quality. A summary of findings comes at the end.

5.2.1 Correlational Investigations

5.2.1.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 5.7 presents descriptive statistics of overall writing scores, writing beliefs, and beliefs about authorial stance. The mean score of overall writing quality was 73.59 (*SD*

= 8.53). The descriptive statistics identified differences in the mean scores between the two factors in each instrument, and a further examination was conducted to check whether the differences were statistically significant. Paired samples *t*-tests were performed to compare the differences between the two factors of writing beliefs and between the two factors of beliefs about stance. The assumption of normal distribution was examined and satisfied.

Table 5.7 Descriptive Statistics and Results of Paired Samples *t*-tests of Writing Beliefs and Beliefs about Stance (n = 84)

		M	*SD*	*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Overall score		73.75	8.68			
Writing beliefs	Transmissional beliefs	3.08	.63	10.369	< .001	1.131
	Transactional beliefs	3.83	.37			
Beliefs about stance	Dialogic contraction	3.58	.53	3.159	.002	.345
	Dialogic expansion	3.31	.49			

Results showed that students' reported transactional beliefs (M = 3.83, SD = .37) were significantly higher than transmissional beliefs (M = 3.08, SD = .63), t (83) = 10.369, p < .001, Cohen's d = 1.131, with a large effect size (large effect size = d > .80, Cohen, 1988). For students' beliefs about stance, the reported level of preference for dialogic contraction (M = 3.58, SD = .53) was significantly higher than dialogic expansion (M = 3.31, SD = .49), t (83) = 3.159, p < .01, with a small effect size (Cohen's d = .345) (Cohen, 1988).

Table 5.8 reports descriptive statistics for the quantitative data on stance deployment in students' written texts, including stance diversity and the frequencies of various stance types. The average stance diversity of written texts was 4.75 (SD = 1.33). The frequency

of monogloss was 60.77 (*SD* = 14.12) and that of heterogloss was 39.23 (*SD* = 14.12). For heteroglossic sentences, the average frequencies of various stance subtypes ranged from .89 (*SD* = 2.42) for *proclaim: concur* to 9.80 (*SD* = 9.34) for *entertain*; students also used more frequently dialogic contraction resources (*M* = 23.48, *SD* = 11.09) than dialogic expansion (*M* = 15.75, *SD* = 10.89).

Table 5.8 Descriptive Statistics of Stance Diversity and Frequencies (*n* = 84)

	Diversity	Mono	Heter	Contraction				Expansion			Total contraction	Total expansion
				DD	DCo	PC	PP	PE	E	A		
M	4.75	60.77	39.23	2.16	9.71	.89	9.02	1.69	9.80	5.94	23.48	15.75
SD	1.33	14.12	14.12	3.64	6.54	2.42	7.90	3.70	9.34	7.68	11.09	10.89

Note. Mono = Monogloss; Heter = Heterogloss; DD = disclaim: denial; DCo = disclaim: counter; PC = proclaim: concur; PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; E = entertain; A = attribute. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

5.2.1.2 Correlational results

This part firstly presents the correlational results concerning writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and writing scores. Correlations between quantitative data of stance deployment and the above variables are reported afterwards.

A series of bivariate Pearson correlation with two-tailed significance were conducted to estimate the relationships between students' writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and writing scores. Results in Table 5.9 indicated that only transactional writing beliefs were significantly correlated with overall writing score (r = .224, p = .040), while other variables were not. The two factors of writing beliefs were not significantly correlated (r = .201, p = .067), nor were the two factors of beliefs about stance (r = -.178, p = .106). Transactional beliefs, however, were significantly correlated with both preference for

dialogic contraction (r = .329, p = .002) and dialogic expansion (r = .222, p = .042), while transmissional beliefs were not significantly correlated with either.

Table 5.9 Correlation between Writing Beliefs, Beliefs about Stance and Writing Scores (n = 84)

		Correlations				
		Overall score	TM	TA	DC	DE
Overall score		1				
Writing beliefs	TM	-.109	1			
	TA	**.224***	.201	1		
Beliefs about stance	DC	.047	.203	**.329****	1	
	DE	.187	.083	**.222***	-.178	1

Note. ** p < .01; * p < .05. TM = Transmissional beliefs; TA = Transactional beliefs; DC = Dialogic contraction; DE = Dialogic expansion.

Table 5.10 presents the results of bivariate Pearson correlation estimating the relationships between stance deployment, beliefs, and writing scores. Concerning writing scores, stance diversity (r = .288, p = .008) and the frequency of *disclaim: counter* (r = .304, p = .005) were identified as significant correlates, while the correlations between writing scores with frequencies of other stance types were not significant. The results concerning writing beliefs showed that the frequency of *disclaim: deny* was significantly correlated with transmissional beliefs (r = .251, p = .022), and the frequency of *proclaim: endorse* was negatively correlated with transactional beliefs (r = -.217, p = .047).

Table 5.10 Correlations between Stance Diversity, Frequencies, Writing Beliefs and Beliefs about Stance (n = 84)

		Stance diversity	Total contraction	Total expansion	DD	DCo	PC	PP	PE	E	A
Overall score		**.288***	.131	-.081	.090	**.304****	.027	-.062	-.119	-.001	-.114
Writing beliefs	TM	-.050	.194	-.052	**.251***	.139	-.204	.131	-.058	-.010	-.061
	TA	.114	.141	-.078	.119	.119	-.046	.160	**-.217***	-.014	-.094
Beliefs about stance	DC	-.038	**.223***	-.029	-.114	.121	-.094	**.303****	-.020	.004	-.045
	DE	.107	.156	-.126	.189	**.227***	.078	-.003	-.164	-.120	-.033

Note. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$. TM = Transmissional beliefs; TA = Transactional beliefs; DC = Dialogic contraction; DE = Dialogic expansion; DD = disclaim: denial; DCo = disclaim: counter; PC = proclaim: concur; PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; E = entertain; A = attribute.

In terms of the relationships between beliefs about stance and stance deployment, results firstly showed that preference for dialogic contraction (DC) was positively correlated with the frequency of total contraction (r = .223, p = .041), with a small effect size, while the correlation between preference for dialogic expansion (DE) and the frequency of total expansion was non-significant (r = -.126, p = .253). Additionally, the two factors of beliefs about stance were found to be correlated significantly with the frequencies of two subtypes of contractive stance. Specifically, DC was positively correlated with the frequency of *proclaim: pronounce* (PP, r = .303, p = .005) with a medium effect size, and DE was significantly correlated with the frequency of *disclaim: counter* (DCo, r =.227, p = .038). No significant correlation was detected among other variables.

To investigate the relationships further, word frequency analysis was conducted for *disclaim: counter* and *proclaim: pronounce*. Table 5.11 presents the results of word frequency analysis. The top five of the mostly used stance markers in each type are listed.

Table 5.11 Results of Word Frequency Analysis

Ranking	Proclaim: Pronounce		Disclaim: Counter	
of frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
1	more*	36	but	77
2	especially	21	however	38
3	most	14	although	13
4	very	10	still	10
5	always	8	just	6
	must	8		

Note. * The frequency of the word "more" takes into account those use as intensifiers, such as "what's more", "more importantly", while the use of the word for comparison is not included as stance indicators.

5.2.2 High-Scoring and Low-Scoring Students

This part of the chapter reports the comparison of writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and stance deployment between students of high overall-score and students of low overall-score. The normality of variables, examined within each group, by Shapiro-Wilk tests and histograms, showed that the variables of writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, and stance diversity were normally distributed. The stance frequencies of monogloss, heterogloss, total contraction and total expansion were in normal distribution, while the frequencies of all the subtypes were non-normally distributed. Independent-samples *t*-tests were used in the comparisons of normally distributed variables, and Mann Whitney *U* tests were used for non-normal variables.

5.2.2.1 Writing beliefs and beliefs about stance

A series of independent-samples *t*-tests were performed to examine whether high-scoring students were differentiated from low-scoring students in terms of writing beliefs and beliefs about stance. Results of Levene's tests indicated that homogeneity of variance can be assumed for transactional beliefs (F (1, 68) = .213, p = .646), preference for dialogic contraction (F (1, 68) = .000, p = .993) and dialogic expansion (F (1, 68) = 1.519, p = .222), but heterogeneity of variance were detected in transmissional beliefs (F (1, 68) = 4.192, p = .044). Results of equal variances not assumed, therefore, were reported for transmissional beliefs. Table 5.12 shows the descriptive statistics and results of independent-samples *t*-tests.

With regard to writing beliefs, results showed that while high-scoring students (M = 3.94, SD = .36) reported a significantly higher level of transactional beliefs than low-scoring students (M = 3.72, SD = .32), t (68) = 2.751, p = .008, Cohen's d = .688, at a

medium level of effect size (Cohen, 1988), they were not significantly different for transmissional beliefs.

Table 5.12 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples *t*-tests of Writing Beliefs and Beliefs about Stance between High-Scoring and Low-Scoring Students

Variables		High-Scoring Students			Low-Scoring Students			*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
		N	M	*SD*	N	M	*SD*			
Overall score		36	81.74	3.59	34	65.06	5.30			
Writing beliefs	TM	36	3.08	.66	34	3.17	.51	-.659	.512	.176
	TA	36	3.94	.36	34	3.72	.32	2.751	.008	.688
Beliefs about stance	DC	36	3.72	.51	34	3.48	.48	2.049	.044	.504
	DE	36	3.41	.54	34	3.27	.42	1.219	.227	.336

Note. TM = Transmissional beliefs; TA = Transactional beliefs; DC = Dialogic contraction; DE = Dialogic expansion.

As for beliefs about stance, high-scoring students had a significantly higher rate of dialogic contraction (M = 3.72, SD = .51) than low-scoring students (M = 3.48, SD = .48), t (68) = 2.049, p = .044, Cohen's d = .504, with a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988). Also notable is that the overall score also produced a small effect (Cohen's d = .336) with preference for dialogic expansion, although the differences between high-scoring students (M = 3.41, SD = .54) and low-scoring students (M = 3.27, SD = .42) were not significant.

5.2.2.2 Stance deployment

Independent-samples *t*-tests were conducted to explore whether there are differences between high-scoring students and low-scoring students in terms of stance diversity and the frequencies of general stance categories (i.e., monogloss, heterogloss, total contraction and total expansion) that were in normal distribution. Results of Levene's

tests indicated that homogeneity of variance can be assumed for stance diversity (F (1, 68) = .096, p = .758), frequency of monogloss (F (1, 68) = .136, p = .714), heterogloss (F (1, 68) = .136, p = .714) and total contraction (F (1, 68) = .010, p = .922). Heterogeneity of variance was detected for the frequency of total expansion (F (1, 68) = 7.511, p = .008), and so, results of equal variances not assumed were reported for total expansion.

Table 5.13 presents the descriptive statistics and results of independent-samples *t*-tests for stance diversity and frequencies. High-scoring students (M = 5.00, SD = 1.22) used significantly more types of stance than low-scoring students (M = 4.29, SD = 1.29), t (68) = 2.352, p = .022, Cohen's d = .550, with a medium effect size (Cohen, 1988). For the frequency of general stance categories, no significant difference was detected between high-scoring and low-scoring students.

Table 5.13 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples *t*-tests of Stance Diversity and Frequencies between High-Scoring and Low-Scoring Students

Variables	High-Scoring Students			Low-Scoring Students			*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
	N	M	*SD*	N	M	*SD*			
Stance diversity	36	5.00	1.22	34	4.29	1.29	2.352	.022	.550
Monogloss	36	59.31	15.21	34	62.31	14.87	-.833	.408	.202
Heterogloss	36	40.69	15.21	34	37.69	14.87	.833	.408	.202
Total contraction	36	25.75	11.56	34	20.98	11.64	1.720	.090	.410
Total expansion	36	14.94	9.59	34	16.72	13.13	-.643	.523	.136

Note. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

Mann Whitney U tests were then conducted to explore whether there were differences between high-scoring students and low-scoring students in terms of the frequencies of

stance subtypes that were in non-normal distribution. As shown in Table 5.14, results indicated that high-scoring students (M = 12.00, SD = 5.73) only differentiated themselves from low-scoring students (M = 8.15, SD = 7.28) in the frequency of *disclaim: counter*, U = 359, z = -2.980, p = .003, r = .356, with a medium effect size. The frequencies of other stance subtypes were not significantly different between high-scoring students and low-scoring students.

Table 5.14 Descriptive Statistics and Mann-Whitney *U* tests of Stance Frequencies between High-Scoring and Low-Scoring Students

Variables		High-Scoring Students			Low-Scoring Students			*z*	*p*	*r*
		N	M	*SD*	N	M	*SD*			
Contraction	DD	36	2.69	3.94	34	1.74	3.69	-1.281	.200	.153
	DCo	36	12.00	5.73	34	8.15	7.28	-2.980	.003	.356
	PC	36	.96	2.12	34	.59	2.29	-1.236	.216	.148
	PP	36	8.99	7.20	34	7.97	8.97	-.948	.343	.113
	PE	36	1.10	2.05	34	2.53	5.16	-.528	.598	.063
Expansion	E	36	9.24	8.15	34	10.07	11.48	-.533	.594	.064
	A	36	5.70	8.32	34	6.64	7.58	-.569	.569	.068

Note. DD = disclaim: denial; DCo = disclaim: counter; PC = proclaim: concur; PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; E = entertain; A = attribute. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

5.2.3 Predictive Effects on Overall Writing Quality

This part of the chapter reports the results of the predictive effects on overall writing quality. As shown in the correlational matrices reported previously (Table 5.9; Table 5.10), writing beliefs and stance diversity were found to be significantly correlated with overall writing scores, while the relationships between beliefs about stance and overall

score were not significant. As most of the frequencies of various stance types were not significantly correlated with writing scores (except for *disclaim: counter*), they were not taken into account for the regression analysis. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted with the order of variables entered guided by previous literature (e.g., Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; White & Bruning, 2005). According to White and Bruning (2005), students' writing beliefs impact their writing process and outcome, including the dimension of voice performance. Thus, writing beliefs were entered in the first block and stance diversity in the second block for predicting overall writing scores.

The sample size satisfied the preferred observation-to-variable ratio of 20:1 for multiple regression analysis (Hair et al., 2010). The assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were examined and satisfied for individual variables. No risk for multicollinearity was detected as the correlation between the variables reported previously were well below .90 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Table 5.15 shows the summary of hierarchical regression analysis predicting writing quality from writing beliefs and stance diversity. In the first block, two factors of writing beliefs as a group explained 7.5% of the variance in overall writing quality, $R^2 = .075$, adjusted $R^2 = .052$, F (2, 81) = 3.289, $p = .042$. Among them, only transactional beliefs significantly and positively predicted overall writing quality ($\beta = .257$, $p = .021$), while transmissional beliefs were not significant as a predictor. Stance diversity, entered in the second block, explained an additional 6.4% of the variance in overall writing quality, $\Delta R^2 = .064$, Δ F (1, 80) = 5.947, $p = .017$. Taken together, the two blocks of variables explained 13.9% of the variance in overall writing quality, $R^2 = .139$, adjusted $R^2 = .107$, F (3, 80) = 4.309, $p = .007$, indicating a medium effect size, Cohen's $f^2 = .16$ (Cohen, 1992). In the final model, both transactional beliefs ($\beta = .224$, $p = .039$) and stance diversity ($\beta = .255$, $p = .017$) significantly predicted writing quality.

Table 5.15 Multiple Regression Analysis of Writing Beliefs and Stance Diversity on Overall Writing Scores (n = 84)

Predictors		Standardised Coefficients Beta	
		Step 1	Step 2
Writing beliefs	Transmissional beliefs	-.161	-.141
	Transactional beliefs	.257*	.224*
Stance diversity			.255*
ΔR^2			.064
ΔF			5.947*
R^2		.075	.139
Adjusted R^2		.052	.107
F		3.289*	4.309*

Note. * $p < .05$.

5.2.4 Summary of Study One

This section presented the results concerning the relationships between students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and overall writing quality in the EFL context. Firstly, one factor of writing beliefs, transactional beliefs, was found to be positively correlated with overall writing quality, while the relationships of writing quality with transmissional beliefs and beliefs about stance were not significant. Results also revealed that both factors of beliefs about authorial stance were positively correlated with transactional beliefs.

Secondly, writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance were found to correlate with the frequencies of various stance subtypes. Preference for dialogic contraction were found to correlate with the total frequency of contractive stances, while the relationship between preference for dialogic expansion and the total frequency of expansive stances

was not statistically significant. Stance diversity and the frequency of one stance subtype (*disclaim: counter*) were detected to significantly correlate with overall writing quality.

Thirdly, high-scoring students reported a significantly higher level of transactional beliefs and preference for dialogic contraction than their low-scoring counterparts. While the frequencies of most stance types were not statistically different, high-scoring students produced written texts with greater stance variety. Lastly in the multiple regression analysis, transactional beliefs and stance diversity were found to be significant factors in predicting overall writing quality.

5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter reported the results of the preparatory study and Study One. The preparatory study examined and confirmed the validity and reliability of two questionnaire instruments for measuring EFL student writers' writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance. The findings of Study One showed that the relationships between writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and overall writing quality were complex, with variables correlated and intertwined. The findings provide initial support to the thesis that writing beliefs and beliefs about stance influence stance deployment and academic writing quality.

Chapter Six Results of Study Two: Quasi-Experimental Intervention Study

This chapter reports the results of Study Two, which evaluated the effects of explicit stance instruction on EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, stance deployment, and overall quality of academic writing. This study addressed the second overarching research question: *Did the explicit stance instruction have any impact on the treatment group's writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, stance deployment, and overall writing quality, compared with the comparison group?*

Data included participants responses in two questionnaires, WBI and BASQ, as well as students' written texts from two groups (i.e., a treatment group and a comparison group), prior to and after the writing intervention. Qualitative data were also collected from semi-structured interviews and weekly journals, part of a multiple-case study with students from both groups. The findings are presented in two sections. The first section reports the results from the examination of quantitative data, including the comparisons of writing scores, writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and quantitative measures of stance deployment (i.e., frequencies and diversity) in pre- and post-tests both within and between groups. The second section reports the analysis of the qualitative data about students' beliefs gained from the multiple-case study, and the comparisons of qualitative data describing stance deployment (i.e., stance patterns). A summary is presented at the end of the chapter.

6.1 Quantitative Results

This section reports the quantitative results. Examination of normality assumption is reported first, followed by a comparison of pre-intervention performance between

groups. The effects of intervention are presented afterwards, addressing the three specific research questions proposed: *1) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in the overall quality of English academic writing after the intervention? 2) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in beliefs about writing and authorial stance after the intervention? 3) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in stance deployment after the intervention?* Each variable was compared within each group and between groups in the post-test. A summary of quantitative findings is presented at the end of the section.

6.1.1 Assumption of Normality

Shapiro-Wilk tests and histograms were applied to check the normality of all the variables for statistical tests within each group in the pre- and post-tests. The variables concerning writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance showed sufficiently normal distribution. All the writing scores, except for the Move 2 stance scores (hereafter M2), were normally distributed. In terms of stance frequencies, the general categories of total contraction, total expansion, heterogloss, and monogloss, along with two stance subtypes (*disclaim: counter* and *entertain*) had normal distribution. The frequencies of the rest of stance subtypes, however, were non-normally distributed. Stance diversity was found normally distributed. Table 6.1 presents a summary of the variables quantitatively examined in this study.

Paired and independent-samples *t*-tests were applied for the comparisons of normally distributed variables within each group and between the two groups, respectively. Levene's tests were used to check the assumption of homogeneity of variance for independent-samples *t*-tests. Non-parametric tests, Mann-Whitney *U* tests and

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests, were conducted for the comparisons of variables in non-normal distribution.

Table 6.1 Summary of Variables in Study Two

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td colspan="3">Variables</td></tr>
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</table>

Note. * non-normally distributed variables. M1 = Move 1; M2 = Move 2; M3 = Move 3; DD = disclaim: denial; DCo = disclaim: counter; PC = proclaim: concur; PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; E = entertain.

6.1.2 Performance of Two Groups in the Pre-tests

6.1.2.1 Writing scores

Two sets of scores were obtained for each written text: An overall writing score and an overall stance score with three stance scores for each move (i.e., M1, M2 and M3 stance scores). Results of Levene's tests indicated homogeneity of variance for the overall

writing scores (F (1, 44) = .014, p = .907) and M3 stance scores (F (1, 44) = .1.441, p = .236), while heterogeneity of variance were detected in M1 stance scores (F (1, 44) = 13.101, p = .001) and the overall stance scores (F (1, 44) = 5.093, p = .029). Therefore, results of equal variances not assumed were reported for M1 stance scores and the overall stance scores. A series of independent-samples *t*-tests were conducted, except that Mann-Whitney *U* test was used for the comparison of M2 stance scores in the pre-test between the two groups.

Table 6.2 reports the descriptive statistics of writing scores and results of independent-samples *t*-tests. Results showed that there was no significant difference in writing scores in the pre-test between the treatment group and the comparison group in terms of the overall writing scores, the overall stance scores, M1 and M3 stance scores. For M2 stance scores, results of Mann-Whitney *U* test indicated that there was no significant difference, U = 241.50, z = -.687, p = .492, r = -.101.

Table 6.2 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples *t*-tests of Writing Scores between Groups in the Pre-tests

Writing scores	Group	*N*	M	*SD*	*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Overall scores	Treatment	24	68.65	8.17	1.346	.185	.392
	Comparison	22	65.37	8.36			
Overall stance scores	Treatment	24	11.46	4.89	1.108	.274	.402
	Comparison	22	10.09	3.41			
M1 stance	Treatment	24	4.85	1.99	1.846	.073	.810
	Comparison	22	4.00	1.05			
M2 stance	Treatment	24	1.69	1.76			
	Comparison	22	1.14	.35			
M3 stance	Treatment	24	4.92	2.90	-.047	.963	-.012
	Comparison	22	4.95	2.53			

6.1.2.2 Writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance

Results of Levene's tests indicated that homogeneity of variance can be assumed for all the variables of writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance between the two groups in the pre-test: Transmissional beliefs (F (1, 44) = .373, p = .545), transactional beliefs (F (1, 44) = .221, p = .641), dialogic contraction (F (1, 44) = 2.936, p = .094), and dialogic expansion (F (1, 44) = 1.268, p = .266). Results of independent-samples t-tests indicated no significant differences in writing beliefs and beliefs about stance in the pre-test between the treatment group and the comparison group. Table 6.3 reports the descriptive statistics and results of independent-samples t-test.

Table 6.3 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-tests of Writing Beliefs and Beliefs about Stance between Groups in the Pre-test

		Group	*N*	M	*SD*	*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Writing beliefs	TM	Treatment	24	2.86	.68	- .121	.905	-.032
		Comparison	22	2.88	.63			
	TA	Treatment	24	3.62	.42	- .497	.622	-.171
		Comparison	22	3.68	.35			
Beliefs about stance	DC	Treatment	24	3.51	.36	.334	.740	.067
		Comparison	22	3.47	.60			
	DE	Treatment	24	3.23	.47	.867	.391	.282
		Comparison	22	3.12	.39			

Note. TM = Transmissional beliefs; TA = Transactional beliefs; DC = Dialogic contraction; DE = Dialogic expansion.

6.1.2.3 Stance deployment: Frequencies and diversity

Results of Levene's tests indicated that homogeneity of variance can be assumed for the normally distributed variables between the two groups, stance diversity (F (1, 44) = 1.813, p = .185), and the frequency of *disclaim: counter* (F (1, 44) = 1.156, p = .288),

entertain (F (1, 44) = .953, p = .334), monogloss (F (1, 44) = .423, p = .519), heterogloss (F (1, 44) = .423, p = .519), total contraction (F (1, 44) = .078, p = .782), and total expansion (F (1, 44) = .362, p = .551). Independent-samples *t*-tests were conducted and no significant difference was found between the two groups in the pre-test. Table 6.4 shows the descriptive statistics and results of independent-samples *t*-tests.

Table 6.4 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples *t*-tests of Stance Diversity and Frequencies between Groups in the Pre-test

	Group	*N*	M	*SD*	*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Stance diversity	Treatment	24	5.33	1.24	1.465	.150	.528
	Comparison	22	4.86	.89			
DCo	Treatment	24	14.39	8.46	1.247	.219	.408
	Comparison	22	11.51	7.06			
E	Treatment	24	9.93	7.79	.873	.387	.288
	Comparison	22	8.09	6.39			
Monogloss	Treatment	24	54.21	14.75	-1.858	.070	.591
	Comparison	22	61.83	12.90			
Heterogloss	Treatment	24	45.79	14.75	1.858	.070	.591
	Comparison	22	38.17	12.90			
Total contraction	Treatment	24	31.51	11.81	1.251	.218	.384
	Comparison	22	27.29	11.00			
Total expansion	Treatment	24	14.28	9.80	1.276	.209	.419
	Comparison	22	10.88	8.11			

Note. DCo = disclaim: counter; E = entertain. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

Mann-Whitney *U* tests were conducted for the frequencies of stance subtypes in non-normal distribution, which revealed that there was also no significant difference between the two groups. Table 6.5 provides the descriptive statistics and results of Mann Whitney *U* tests.

Table 6.5 Descriptive Statistics and Mann-Whitney *U* tests of Stance Frequencies between the Treatment Group and the Comparison Group in the Pre-test

	Group	*N*	M	*SD*	*z*	*p*	*r*
DD	Treatment	24	3.49	4.50	-1.227	.220	.181
	Comparison	22	1.90	2.99			
PC	Treatment	24	1.11	2.25	-.588	.557	.087
	Comparison	22	1.97	3.76			
PP	Treatment	24	9.73	7.24	-.386	.700	.057
	Comparison	22	9.76	8.34			
PE	Treatment	24	2.80	3.64	-.635	.525	.094
	Comparison	22	2.15	3.46			
A	Treatment	24	4.35	5.11	-1.023	.306	.151
	Comparison	22	2.79	4.18			

Note. DD = disclaim: denial; PC = proclaim: concur; PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; A = attribute. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

The statistical results in this part revealed that the two groups were comparable prior to the writing intervention in terms of writing scores (i.e., the overall writing score and stance scores), writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, and quantitative measures of stance deployment (i.e., stance diversity and frequencies).

6.1.3 Effects of Intervention

6.1.3.1 Writing scores

Within group

A series of paired-samples *t*-tests were applied to compare the overall scores, the overall stance scores, M1 and M3 stance scores in the pre- and post-tests within each group. Results in Table 6.6 showed that both groups had significant improvement in terms of the overall writing scores, the overall stance scores and M1 stance scores after the

writing instruction they received respectively. The effects of the gains were strong in the treatment group (Cohen's d = 1.177, 1.313 and .846), while the effects were around the medium level in the comparison group (Cohen's d = .681, .497 and .534) (Cohen, 1988). Students in the treatment group also had a significant improvement in M3 stance scores with a small effect size (Cohen's d = .423). No significant change was detected for the comparison group in terms of M3 stance scores.

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were conducted for the comparisons of M2 stance scores within each group. Results revealed significant improvement of scores in the post-test than the pre-test for both the treatment group (z = 4.028, p < .001, r = .822) with a large effect size and the comparison group (z = 2.012, p = .044, r = .429) with a medium effect size.

Table 6.6 Descriptive Statistics and Results of Paired Samples *t*-tests of Writing Scores within Group

Group	Writing scores	Pre-test		Post-test		*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
		M	*SD*	M	*SD*			
Treatment Group (n = 24)	Overall writing scores	68.65	8.17	76.83	5.93	5.765	< .001	1.177
	Overall stance scores	11.46	4.89	18.88	4.82	6.430	< .001	1.313
	M1 stance	4.85	1.97	6.85	2.03	4.145	< .001	.846
	M2 stance	1.69	1.76	6.29	2.60			
	M3 stance	4.92	2.90	5.73	1.89	2.072	.050	.423
Comparison Group (n = 22)	Overall writing score	65.36	8.36	68.16	7.76	3.192	.004	.681
	Overall stance score	10.09	3.41	12.02	4.51	2.332	.030	.497
	M1 stance	4.00	1.05	4.68	1.71	2.503	.021	.534
	M2 stance	1.14	.35	2.48	2.59			
	M3 stance	4.95	2.53	4.86	1.98	- .238	.814	.051

Between groups

Homogeneity of variance was examined and can be assumed according to the results of Levene's tests for the overall writing scores (F (1, 44) = 2.382, p = .130), the overall stance scores (F (1, 44) = .030, p = .863), M1 (F (1, 44) = .938, p = .338) and M3 stance scores (F (1, 44) = .099, p = .755). A series of independent-samples t-tests were conducted to investigate whether the two groups were significantly different in the post-test.

Results revealed significant differences between the two groups with regard to the overall writing scores (t (44) = 4.282, p < .001, Cohen's d = 1.118), the overall stance scores (t (44) = 4.967, p < .001, Cohen's d = 1.520) and M1 stance scores (t (44) = 3.909, p < .001, Cohen's d = 1.272). This indicated that the treatment group outperformed the comparison group in the post-test with a large effect size on these three aspects. However, the two groups did not statistically differ in M3 stance scores, t (44) = 1.516, p = .137, Cohen's d = .438.

Mann-Whitney U test was performed to compare the M2 stance scores between groups in the post-test. Results showed that students in the treatment group achieved significantly higher scores (M = 6.29, SD = 2.60) than students in the comparison group (M = 2.48, SD = 2.59), U = 96.00, z = -3.792, p < .001, r = -.559, with a large effect size.

6.1.3.2 Writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance

Within group

A series of paired-samples t-tests were applied to compare the writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance in the pre-test and post-test within each group. The results in Table 6.7 showed that no significant differences were found within both groups in the

post-tests. However, in terms of writing beliefs, both the mean scores of transmissional and transactional beliefs of the treatment group slightly increased with a small effect size (Cohen's d = .237 and .381), while those scores of the comparison group remained basically unchanged. Concerning beliefs about authorial stance, the mean scores of dialogic contraction in both groups were roughly unchanged. However, both groups experienced an increase in the mean scores of dialogic expansion, $M_{\text{treatment}}$ changed from 3.23 to 3.43, $M_{\text{comparison}}$ changed from 3.17 to 3.27, with a small effect size (Cohen's d = .293 and .281), though the increases were not significant.

Table 6.7 Descriptive Statistics and Paired Samples *t*-tests of Writing Beliefs and Beliefs about Stance within Group in the Post-test

Group	Variables		Pre-test		Post-test		*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
			M	*SD*	M	*SD*			
Treatment Group (n = 24)	Writing beliefs	TM	2.86	.68	3.02	.57	1.163	.257	.237
		TA	3.62	.42	3.80	.33	1.868	.075	.381
	Beliefs about stance	DC	3.51	.36	3.53	.40	.131	.897	.027
		DE	3.23	.47	3.43	.42	1.435	.165	.293
Comparison Group (n = 22)	Writing beliefs	TM	2.88	.63	2.85	.61	-.182	.857	.039
		TA	3.68	.35	3.63	.27	-.594	.559	.127
	Beliefs about stance	DC	3.47	.60	3.48	.38	.121	.905	.026
		DE	3.17	.29	3.27	.30	1.752	.202	.281

Note. TM = Transmissional beliefs; TA = Transactional beliefs; DC = Dialogic contraction; DE = Dialogic expansion.

Between groups

The assumption of homogeneity of variance was satisfied according to the results of Levene's tests for writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance: Transmissional beliefs (F (1, 44) = .937, p = .644), transactional beliefs (F (1, 44) = 1.973, p = .600), dialogic contraction (F (1, 44) = .410, p = .430), and dialogic expansion (F (1, 44) =

1.449, p = .075). A series of independent-samples *t*-tests were conducted to investigate whether the two groups were significantly different in the post-test.

Results revealed no significant difference between the two groups with regard to writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance: Transmissional beliefs, t (44) = .937, p = .354, Cohen's d = .268; transactional beliefs, t (44) = 1.973, p = .055, Cohen's d = .649; dialogic contraction, t (44) = .410, p = .684, Cohen's d = .124; and dialogic expansion, t (44) = 1.449, p = .154, Cohen's d = .524. Although not significant, students from the treatment group reported a higher level than the comparison group in transactional beliefs, $M_{\text{treatment}}$ = 3.80 (SD = .33), $M_{\text{comparison}}$ = 3.63 (SD = .27) and dialogic expansion, $M_{\text{treatment}}$ = 3.43 (SD = .42), $M_{\text{comparison}}$ = 3.27 (SD = .30) in the post-test with a medium effect size.

6.1.3.3 Stance deployment: Frequencies and diversity

Within group

A series of paired-samples *t*-tests were applied to compare, within each group, the normally distributed variables of stance deployment, including stance diversity, frequencies of the general stance categories (i.e., total contraction, total expansion, monogloss, and heterogloss) and frequency of *disclaim: counter* and *entertain*. Table 6.8 presents the descriptive statistics and results of paired-samples *t*-tests. It can be noted that the treatment group had significant changes in terms of the frequency of total expansion (t (21) = 3.341, p = .003, Cohen's d = .682), heterogloss (t (21) = 3.050, p = .006, Cohen's d = .623) and monogloss (t (21) = -3.050, p = .006, Cohen's d = .623) with a medium effect size after the writing intervention, while changes in other types were not significant. However, no significant changes were detected for these variables in the comparison group in the post-test.

Table 6.8 Descriptive Statistics and Results of Paired Samples *t*-tests of Quantitative Measures of Stance Deployment within Group

Group	Variables	Pre-test		Post-test		*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
		M	*SD*	M	*SD*			
Treatment Group (*n* = 24)	Stance diversity	5.33	1.24	5.50	1.10	.624	.539	.127
	DCo	14.39	8.46	12.49	7.65	-.969	.342	.198
	E	9.93	7.79	13.58	9.93	1.641	.114	.335
	Total contraction	31.51	11.81	31.15	15.40	-.139	.891	.028
	Total expansion	14.28	9.80	23.82	13.49	3.341	.003	.682
	Monogloss	54.21	14.75	45.02	19.07	3.050	.006	.623
	Heterogloss	45.79	14.75	54.98	19.07	-3.050	.006	.623
Comparison Group (*n* = 22)	Stance diversity	4.86	.89	5.14	1.21	-1.188	.248	.253
	DCo	11.51	7.06	11.28	6.92	.172	.865	.037
	E	8.09	6.39	5.88	5.22	1.903	.071	.406
	Total contraction	27.29	11.00	29.36	12.03	-1.366	.186	.291
	Total expansion	10.88	8.11	10.65	7.94	.118	.907	.025
	Monogloss	61.83	12.90	59.99	16.63	.976	.340	.208
	Heterogloss	38.17	12.90	40.01	16.63	-.976	.340	.208

Note. DCo = disclaim: counter; E = entertain. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequencies per 100 sentences.

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were conducted for other variables in non-normal distribution, including the frequency of *disclaim: deny*, *proclaim: concur*, *proclaim: pronounce*, *proclaim: endorse*, and *attribute*. Results in Table 6.9 revealed that after the writing intervention, the treatment group had significant changes in the frequency of *proclaim: pronounce* (z = -2.294, p = .022, r = .468), *proclaim: endorse* (z = -2.411, p = .016, r = .492), and *attribute* (z = -3.070, p = .002, r = .627). The change in *attribute* was a large effect size and those for the other two types were in a medium level of effect size (Field, 2013). No significant changes were found in the comparison group in the post-test.

Table 6.9 Descriptive Statistics and Results of Wilcoxon Signed-rank Tests of Quantitative Measures of Stance Deployment within Group

Group	Variables	Pre-test		Post-test		*z*	*p*	*r*
		M	*SD*	M	*SD*			
Treatment Group (N = 24)	DD	3.49	4.50	4.07	6.25	-.659	.510	.135
	PC	1.11	2.25	2.48	3.68	-1.491	.136	.304
	PP	9.73	7.24	6.77	7.91	-2.294	.022	.468
	PE	2.80	3.64	5.36	6.14	-2.411	.016	.492
	A	4.35	5.11	10.25	10.05	-3.070	.002	.627
Comparison Group (N = 22)	DD	1.90	2.99	1.89	2.88	-.059	.953	.013
	PC	1.97	3.76	2.25	3.74	-.169	.866	.036
	PP	9.76	8.34	11.15	6.38	-.893	.372	.190
	PE	2.15	3.46	2.78	3.31	-.296	.767	.063
	A	2.79	4.18	4.77	7.18	-.770	.441	.164

Note. DD = disclaim: denial; PC = proclaim: concur; PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; A = attribute. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

Between groups

A series of independent-samples *t*-tests were applied to compare the normally distributed variables of stance deployment in the post-test between the two groups, including stance diversity, frequencies of the general stance categories (i.e., total contraction, total expansion, monogloss, and heterogloss), and frequency of *disclaim: counter* and *entertain*.

Results of Levene's tests indicated homogeneity of variance for the stance diversity (F (1, 44) = .006, p = .938) and frequency of *disclaim: counter* (F (1, 44) = .569, p = .455), total contraction (F (1, 44) = 1.198, p = .280), monogloss and heterogloss (F (1, 44) = .381, p = .540), while heterogeneity of variance were detected in the frequency of

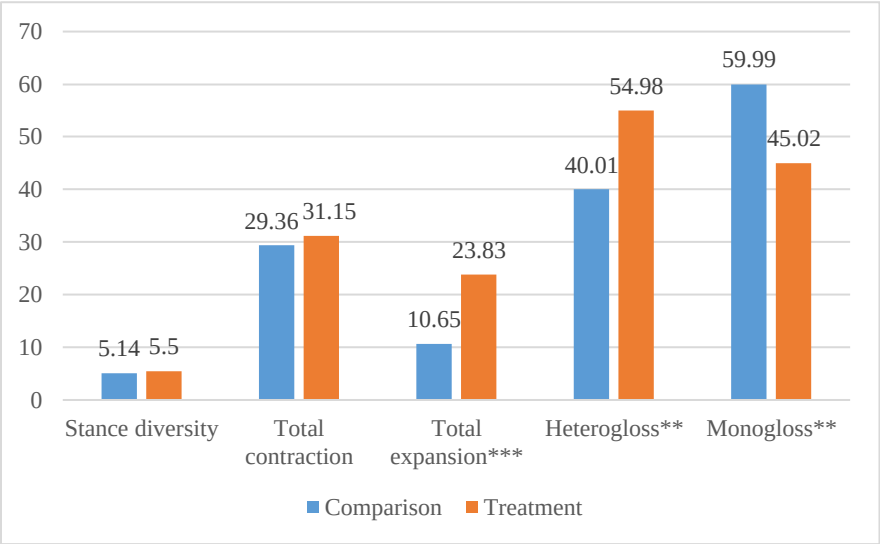
entertain (F (1, 44) = 6.818, p = .012), and total expansion (F (1, 44) = 4.539, p = .039). Therefore, results of equal variances not assumed were reported for these two variables.

Results of independent-samples *t*-tests revealed that the frequency of *entertain* in treatment group (M = 13.58, *SD* = 9.93) was significantly higher than the comparison group (M = 5.88, *SD* = 5.22), t (44) = 3.330, p = .002, Cohen's d = 1.476). Students in the treatment group used more total expansion (t (44) = 4.075, p < .001, Cohen's d = 1.660) and heterogloss (t (44) = 2.826, p = .007, Cohen's d = .900) than students in the comparison group; at the same time, they applied fewer monogloss than their counterparts in the comparison group, t (44) = -2.826, p = .007, Cohen's d = .900. No significant difference was detected between the two groups in terms of stance diversity (t (44) = 1.068, p = .292, Cohen's d = .301) and the frequency of *disclaim: counter* (t (44) = .560, p = .578, Cohen's d = .175), and total contraction (t (44) = .438, p = .664, Cohen's d = .149).

Mann-Whitney *U* tests were performed to compare the frequencies of stance types that were in non-normal distribution between the two groups in the post-test, including *disclaim: deny*, *proclaim: concur*, *proclaim: pronounce*, *proclaim: endorse* and *attribute*. Results showed that the frequency of *proclaim: pronounce* in the treatment group (M = 6.77, *SD* = 7.91) was significantly lower than the comparison group (M = 11.15, *SD* = 6.38), U = 152.50, z = -2.470, p = .014, r = -.364, with a medium effect size. And the frequency of *attribute* in the treatment group (M = 10.25, *SD* = 10.05) was significantly higher than the comparison group (M = 4.77, *SD* = 7.18), U = 161.00, z = -2.325, p = .020, r = -.343. While non-significant results were obtained in the comparisons of the frequency of *disclaim: deny* (U = 236.5, z = -.699, p = .485, r = -.103), *proclaim: concur* (U = 252.00, z = -.310, p = .756, r = -.046), and *proclaim: endorse* (U = 210.50, z = -1.258, p = .208, r = -.185). Figure 6.1 and 6.2 provide a visual

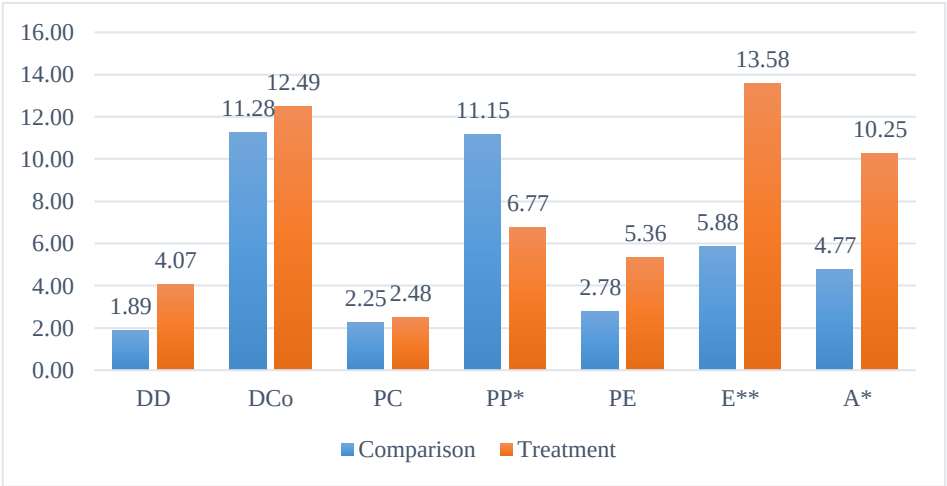
summary of the comparisons of quantitative measures of stance deployment between the two groups in the post-test.

Figure 6.1 Comparisons of Stance Diversity and Frequencies of General Stance Categories between Groups in the Post-test



Note. *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

Figure 6.2 Comparisons of Frequencies of Stance Subtypes between Groups in the Post-test



Note. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$. DD = disclaim: denial; DCo = disclaim: counter; PC = proclaim: concur; PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; E = entertain; A = attribute. Frequency of each type is standardised as frequency per 100 sentences.

6.1.4 Summary of Quantitative Results

This section reported the quantitative results of Study Two which examined the effects of writing intervention on EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about stance, stance deployment, and overall quality of academic writing. The equivalent conditions of the two groups in all the variables in the pre-tests were documented.

After the writing intervention, most of the writing scores of both groups, that is, the overall writing scores, the overall stance scores, M1 and M2 stance scores, were found to have improved significantly. There was a larger effect size, representing greater gains, in the treatment group than in the comparison group. No significant differences were detected within each group and between groups after the writing intervention for students' beliefs.

In regard to stance deployment, there were no significant differences found in stance diversity within each group and between groups in the post-test. However, the frequencies of various stance categories, including heterogloss, monogloss, and total expansion, and of stance subtypes, that is, *attribute*, *proclaim: endorse*, *proclaim: pronounce* changed significantly in the post-test writing in the treatment group, while all the frequencies were unchanged statistically in the comparison group. After the writing intervention, students in the treatment group presented significantly more instances of heterogloss and less monogloss than students in the comparison group. Specifically, compared with students in the comparison group, students from the treatment group used more dialogic expansive sentences with *entertain* and *attribute*, and less contractive instances of *proclaim: pronounce*.

The quantitative results presented in this section provide preliminary support for the effectiveness of explicit stance instruction on students' academic writing quality in an

EFL setting. Although students did not exhibit a significant change in their self-reported beliefs, the findings reveal that the writing intervention improved the dialogic features and overall quality of student writing to a greater extent than curriculum-based instruction.

6.2 Qualitative Results

This section reports qualitative results from the multiple-case study and the comparisons of qualitative patterns of stance deployment in students' written texts. The qualitative findings provide triangulation for, and a complement to, the quantitative results reported in the previous section; they provide further data to answer the following research questions in Study Two: *1) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in beliefs about writing and authorial stance after the intervention? 2) How did the treatment and the comparison groups differ in stance deployment after the intervention?*

In this section, the first two parts report the results of thematic analyses of the data collected from the multiple-case study which examined the nuanced changes in students' beliefs in relation to writing and stance; each theme is presented separately. The subsequent part provides the results of the comparisons of qualitative patterns of stance in student writing between the two groups at different times, focusing on the overall stance patterns and patterns for inclusion of external voices. A brief summary of qualitative findings is presented at the end of the section.

6.2.1 Results of Students' Reported Writing Beliefs

6.2.1.1 Overview of the results

Thematic analysis of interviews indicated that students' self-reported writing beliefs included transmissional and transactional writing beliefs (see Figure 4.2). The

subthemes of transmissional writing beliefs included *information transmission*, *authoritative evidence*, and *limited writer engagement*. The subthemes of transactional writing beliefs involved *active engagement* and *critical evaluation of others' views*. Table 6.10 provides an overview of themes in students' reported writing beliefs elicited in the semi-structured interviews. Results showed that participants from the two groups reported similar transmissional writing beliefs prior to and after the writing intervention. In terms of transactional writing beliefs, participants from the treatment group reported changes in different subthemes after the writing intervention, while students from the comparison group exhibited little change. Each theme is reported separately in the following sections with examples of students' responses. Extracts from writing journals are used to complement the findings of interviews to achieve a better understanding of the changing status of students' beliefs.

Table 6.10 Themes in Students' Self-Reported Writing Beliefs in Interviews

Themes		Treatment				Comparison			
		Ada		Danielle		Song		Jing	
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Transmissional writing beliefs	Information transmission	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Authoritative evidence	√	√	√	×	√	√	√	√
	Limited writer engagement	×	×	×	×	×	×	√	√
Transactional writing beliefs	Active engagement	×	√	√	√	√	√	×	×
	Critical evaluation of others' views	×	×	×	√	×	×	×	√

Note. "√" indicates that students expressed views concerning the subtheme in interviews. "×" means that students did not express views on the subtheme.

6.2.1.2 Transmissional writing beliefs

The theme of transmissional writing beliefs includes three subthemes: *Information transmission*, *authoritative evidence* and *limited writer engagement*. Results showed that participants from the two groups reported substantially similar understanding in the three subthemes prior to and after the writing intervention, and that they exhibited little change over time. For each subtheme, students' reported beliefs are compared between groups and across time.

Information transmission

The first subtheme, *information transmission*, refers to the belief that academic writing is a knowledge-telling process and the writing purpose is to give readers information. Prior to the writing intervention, all the participants exhibited the similar beliefs when talking about academic writing. For instance,

> "Firstly, academic writing is to illustrate one thing, provide other people some information, informational knowledge or methodological knowledge." (Ada, TPr[1])

> "I think good academic writing should let readers receive and understand information correctly. ... It is to let readers receive some information and readers can make judgment. I think this is good academic writing." (Jing, CPr)

It is apparent that in their view, academic writing was conceptualised as a process of information conveying. Academic texts served as a container of information and

[1] TPr = Treatment group, Pre-interview. In the following extracts, TPo = Treatment group, Post-interview; CPr = Comparison group, Pre-interview; CPo = Comparison group, Post-interview.

knowledge. After the writing intervention, participants' understanding remained largely unchanged. For instance, they reported:

> "Academic writing is to introduce information or deliver knowledge. This is the purpose." (Ada, TPo)

> "You did some research and then you want to communicate to others, you have to convey a certain information." (Danielle, TPo)

> "I think academic writing should be preciseness in both structure and contents because it is aim to convey accurate information." (Danielle, 6th Journal)

> "I think academic writing should be quite technical and contain professional knowledge." (Jing, CPo)

They expressed a similar knowledge-telling belief as they did prior to the writing intervention; academic writing was still considered as a process of conveying information.

Authoritative evidence

The second subtheme, *authoritative evidence*, assumes that academic writing should involve authoritative evidence or sources. Prior to the writing intervention, all the participants similarly emphasised the importance of including authoritative supporting evidence. For example,

> "The opinion should be based on firm evidence, either data or citations. It should be illustrated logically." (Ada, TPr)

> "(For good academic writing) we should look at its wording, arguments and format. And whether the data cited are authoritative or not. … Try to use more citations or data." (Danielle, TPr)

> "You can write whatever you want for informal writing. But for thesis, you need to refer to a lot of materials, such as those in influential journals. " (Jing, CPr)

In their opinions, academic writing should involve authoritative sources, such as data, citations or resources in professional journals. Participants thought that convincing arguments were constructed with the support of authoritative evidence. Danielle further expressed that substantial data and citations in writing could contribute to the persuasiveness of argumentation. In addition to academic resources, participants also frequently reported using solid facts, or examples, to help establish argumentation or express views, which is related to their belief that authoritative evidence is required. For instance,

> "I think I should provide more facts, so that my writing can be more convincing." (Danielle, TPr)

> "Good arguments should start from objective truths." (Jing, CPr)

> "Normally I will apply related materials including experimental statistics and news reports in my academic writing to make my arguments sound convincing." (Jing, 1st Journal)

They considered that reliable facts and examples were helpful for constructing an argument as they were solid in nature. This was consistent with their emphasis on the authoritativeness of evidence to avoid challenge or confrontation from readers. Toward

the end of the writing intervention, all the participants, except Danielle, expressed a similar understanding. For instance,

> "It should have a viewpoint, and most importantly have examples of facts. That is, it should have examples to prove its view." (Ada, TPo)

> "If you want to convince me, you should have some strong and convincing examples, or something from the experts' research." (Jing, CPo)

> "Authenticity is important in order to make the arguments of a paper more convincing. A large number of surveys and data access will increase the accuracy and authenticity of the paper." (Song, 4th Journal)

While most of the participants still valued authoritative sources or strong examples in academic writing, as they did prior to the writing intervention, Danielle expressed a different view, which is presented in section 6.2.1.3, suggesting that academic writing should involve critical evaluation of previous studies.

Limited writer engagement

The third subtheme, *limited writer engagement*, means that writers' personal preference or tendency toward the issue under discussion should be limited in the text. Only Jing from the comparison group clearly articulated her views, which were largely unchanged after the writing intervention. Prior to the writing intervention, she reported as follows:

> "I think it should be objective. Just discuss the facts. It should not like the essay you write with your own thought. It can have your view, but it should not involve personal emotion. You just discuss an issue objectively. … The writer has his own preference and thinks this is right. Then he intentionally lead readers to that direction. I don't think this is good." (Jing, CPr)

Jing emphasised the objectivity of academic writing and thought that a writer should not involve personal emotions and attitudes toward the issue under discussion. Her words also revealed her reluctance to engage the reader through the writing; in her view, she said, the writer should not intentionally guide readers' thoughts. After the writing intervention, she similarly said:

> "I think good academic writing needs to show people some data in an authentic way. And it should not mislead others. Good academic writing can inspire people to think, no matter whether they have knowledge about the topic or not. The writing can inspire them to think and come up with their own thoughts. … When you discuss, you should not be subjective, then your writing will be more authoritative." (Jing, CPo)

Jing retained her emphasis on the authenticity and objectivity of writing, pointing out that a writer should not, subjectively, intervene with readers' thoughts. It is clear that, after the writing intervention, her view of limited writer engagement with the reader had not changed.

It is evident that participants from both groups reported a similar understanding that academic writing is a process of information transmission that relies, predominantly, on authoritative evidence. Their views remained largely unchanged after the writing intervention. *Limited writer engagement,* which only Jing explicitly referred to, was also unchanged in the post-interview.

6.2.1.3 Transactional writing beliefs

The theme of transactional writing belief includes two subthemes: *Active engagement* and *critical evaluation of others' views*. Results showed that participants from the two groups responded similarly to the two subthemes of transactional writing beliefs prior

to the writing intervention. However, after the writing intervention, the groups reported differently on the subtheme, *active engagement*. One participant from each group also expressed a changed belief with the subtheme, *critical evaluation of others' views*, after the writing intervention. For each subtheme, students' reported beliefs are compared between groups and across time.

Active engagement

The first subtheme, *active engagement*, assumes that a writer should actively incorporate his or her own thinking into writing or actively engage with putative readers. Prior to the writing intervention, one participant from each group, Danielle and Song, expressed their views. They reported:

> "Firstly, it (academic writing) should have a research direction and then the writer should discuss in the direction with his or her own viewpoints. … The purpose of arguments is to convince others and support your own ideas as well. … Good arguments should be consistent with your own ideas. And you should find some corresponding reasons, such as facts or examples, or data, to support your ideas." (Danielle, TPr)

> "The purpose of argumentation is to arouse readers' interest. They should know what your paper is about. … Firstly, you need to point out the general direction of the paper. Secondly, you should express your own views. I think these two points are quite important. … Firstly, you should present facts to let other people know the issue. And then you can express your viewpoint about this." (Song, CPr)

Danielle and Song similarly mentioned that writers should actively integrate their own thinking when constructing arguments. They also claimed that active engagement, or expression of views, should include facts or examples as supporting evidence. It was apparent that, although they expressed a transactional understanding of writing process, they tended to establish argumentation in a transmissional way.

After the writing intervention, two participants from the treatment group, Ada and Danielle, reported an awareness of the writer's active engagement in argument writing; and they further exhibited a clear awareness of stance which was qualitatively different from the beliefs expressed previously. For instance, they said:

> "The purpose of argument is to convince readers. … In the process of writing, an objective voice should be used to state facts and a strong voice should be used to express writer's opinion to convince readers. … Good argument is to use low-argumentative when talking about others' views. Then readers will feel, er, something is not right. Then when they read the writer's view, they will feel it quite strong and certain." (Ada, TPo)

> "In terms of voice, we need to use assertive stances for expressing our own views, because it is more convincing in this way. … to show that I'm quite sure about the opinion." (Danielle, TPo)

Ada and Danielle clearly articulated that a writer should actively integrate his/her own views to convince putative readers. Furthermore, both overtly reported the application of authorial stance for various purposes in constructing an argument, which was markedly different from their previously expressed understanding. They recognised that various types of stance should be adopted for different purposes, which could contribute to expressing their views and argumentation in a more convincing way. Danielle

reflected on her understanding in her journal and explicitly referred to the change of her own understanding toward the end of the writing intervention, as she wrote:

> "When we wrote argumentations before, we were used to state a lot of facts to prove that our point of view is convincing. But academic writing is different. … And high-argumentative sentence must be used to make introduction persuasive." (Danielle, 6th Journal)

As mentioned in 4.6.3.1, an assertive stance was introduced as "high-argumentative" in the writing intervention to facilitate students' understanding better. Danielle had clearly noticed her previous transmissional tendency to include facts to make a convincing argument, and she then expressed her recognition of the importance of the use of stance to achieve that goal. Her journal showed her change of belief and her development of an awareness of stance towards the end of writing intervention.

After the writing intervention, Jing from the comparison group did not refer this aspect in the post-interview, while Song expressed her view on active engagement, which was similar to that stated previously. As she reported:

> "Firstly, your writing is for others to read. So if only you understand it and others don't, the writing is unsuccessful. The purpose of argumentation is to let readers understand your writing, what you are doing, your purpose. ... Effective arguments can be achieved in two ways. First, you can directly say your opinion about the issue. Second, you can be indirect and discuss positive and negative sides of the issue." (Song, CPo)

Song's view, compared with hers in the pre-interview, remained mostly unchanged. While she mentioned the writer's active role in integrating own opinion in arguments,

her focus remained on the reader's understanding. According to her, the purpose of argumentation should be on the successful transmission of content issues to readers, such as "purpose", "positive and negative sides of the issue", and that the way to achieve effective arguments was either direct or indirect presentation of the viewpoints. Thus, although she expressed her awareness of active engagement, her way of achieving the goal of convincing arguments remained more transmissional. It could be assumed that she might present more information or evidence to let readers understand the issue, as she described in the pre-interview.

Critical evaluation of others' views

The second subtheme, *critical evaluation of others' views*, refers to the belief that academic writing involves critical evaluation of others' views. Prior to the writing intervention, no participants clearly expressed beliefs concerning this aspect. However, after the time of writing intervention, one participant from each group, Danielle and Jing, reported views of critical evaluation but with evidence of different stance awareness. Danielle from the treatment group mentioned:

> "For the same topic, other people may have already done some research. So in such circumstances, if you want to attract readers, you must summarize previous studies and point out their shortcomings. And then you can express your own viewpoint. … Then use tentative stances to cite others' views." (Danielle, TPo)

Danielle pointed out that writers needed to evaluate critically previous studies to construct a solid foundation for proposing their own opinions in academic writing. She further exhibited stance awareness by articulating that tentative stances should be adopted when referring to others' views. Jing from the comparison group also expressed a concern for others' views, as she said in post-interview:

> "If I want to express a view, I can firstly use others' views that are different from my own, and then go to my own opinions. Or I can use similar examples from others, such as similar research, then I will say what I have done further. … I can directly express my view, and then to say the differences of my study and other studies. Differences and similarities. ... I think we need to learn from previous studies." (Jing, CPo)

Jing similarly reported including critical evaluation and establishing arguments on the basis of previous views. The content in the introduction genre provided for both groups may have made her more aware of the importance of previous studies in academic writing. Jing's view was different from Danielle's, however, in that she did not overtly express an awareness of stance in evaluating previous studies.

With transactional writing beliefs, prior to the writing intervention, participants in both groups similarly acknowledged the writer's active engagement in expressing personal ideas, but with a more transmissional tendency to build a convincing argument. They also appeared unaware of including critical evaluation of others' views. After the writing intervention, the views from the two groups showed qualitative differences. Participants from the treatment group expressed the need for active engagement and critical evaluation of others' views in academic writing, and an explicit awareness of the important role of stance in establishing an argument. While the beliefs expressed by the participants from the comparison group were mostly similar to the pre-interview. Although they expressed an increased awareness of critical evaluation of previous views, their understanding mainly focused on content without an apparent awareness of stance.

6.2.2 Results of Students' Reported Beliefs about Authorial Stance

The analysis of participants' responses in interviews and their journals focused on three aspects: Students' views on *assertive stance*, *tentative stance* and *stance preference*. The first two aspects portrayed students' understanding of and attitudes toward stance for dialogic contraction and dialogic expansion, whereas the third aspect depicted their preference when comparing the two stance types in their own writing. Results showed that, prior to the writing intervention, participants from both groups used similar words to describe their understanding of assertive and tentative stances, and reported similar stance preferences. However, after the writing intervention, they expressed different stance preferences in their writing and gave various reasons. Results are reported according to each aspect with extracts of students' responses in interviews and journals.

6.2.2.1 Assertive stance

Results showed that the participants from both groups deployed similar words to depict an assertive stance. Table 6.11 presents the examples of participants' views on assertive stances with keywords in bold. At each time, participants from both groups most frequently described an assertive stance from an epistemic domain by using the words like "strong", "certain" or "sure". They paid attention to the strengths of claims and levels of certainty when they encountered assertive stances. They often conceived an assertive stance as "absolute", but rather than being a dialogic understanding, this description might be the result of their reluctance to be extreme and might feel safer being neutral or objective to avoid contradiction.

Although having a similar repertoire, it was interesting thing to note, in Danielle's journal, a change in her understanding of assertive stance in academic writing. As she wrote:

> "In the past, I thought that it is unnecessary for academic writing to write in a high-argumentative tone because it is too exaggerated. However, after last class, I thought high-argumentative stance is also really useful in academic writing." (Danielle, 3rd Journal)

As a result of the intervention, her attitude toward an assertive stance had slightly changed from being concerned it was "absolute" and "exaggerated", to thinking it could be useful for providing certainty for academic writing. This change is more obvious when compared with the comments by Song and Jing' from the comparison group, who said in the post-interview, they felt negative towards assertive stance as they were concerned it could be viewed as being absolute.

6.2.2.2 Tentative stance

Table 6.12 lists the examples of participants' views on tentative stances. Results showed that the participants in the two groups did not express salient differences in their description of tentative stance. They mostly described a tentative stance in a similar way, at each time, as "not strong", "uncertain", or "not absolute". From these words, it was apparent that participants conceived a tentative stance as the opposite side of an assertive stance. They similarly focused on the strengths of claims and levels of certainty that the stance features could bring to the text. It could also be noted that, at different times, participants mentioned that a tentative stance could "leave some space" for others, which appeared rather a passive choice as a result of avoiding being absolute, or handling unfamiliar content issues.

Table 6.11 Participants' Views on Assertive Stance

Groups	Participants	Pre-interview	Post-interview
Treatment group	Ada	• Because in each sentence, there are some words like "strongly", "clearly". They make me feel that the writer is very **certain** about the issue. • As a reader, I am more likely to **trust** the assertive text that with a **strong** voice.	• In the assertive text, … the voice is very **certain** and **strong**. It makes reader feel like, "Yes, it is right".
	Danielle	• I feel that it is too **absolute**. There is nothing absolutely right or wrong.	• In the assertive text … these words show that the writer is very **sure** about the research and own opinion, and convey a **certain** view to readers.
Comparison group	Song	• The assertive text is surely more convincing. Because the words in it, no…it cannot be called convincing, the words in it are quite **absolute**. • Because the text seems to remain the writer's... uh… assure that this is the writer's personal opinion.	• Because there is nothing to be definitely correct. … The assertive text is very **absolute**, like "undoubtedly".
	Jing	• The writer of the assertive text seems quite **sure** about what he says. • I feel the writer is quite **sure** and knows the research field quite well.	• I think, usually when a writer uses the words like "must", there are always other things that are contradictory. People can always find something to argue with him.

Table 6.12 Participants' Views on Tentative Stance

Groups	Participants	Pre-interview	Post-interview
Treatment group	Ada	• While when I read the tentative text, the feeling is just so-so, **not** as **strong** as the assertive text. • The tentative text makes reader think. The words in it, such as "somehow related to life outcomes", make me consider the possibility in my life.	• In the tentative text, the same sentence is written as "are probably part of". So the reader also feel like, "OK, maybe like this". Then, when the writer refers to others' pinions, the reader further feels **uncertain**…
	Danielle	• The tentative text is **neutral**. It has its own view and also provides readers some space to express their own opinions. • I don't think the tentative text is weak. I think its voice is quite suitable for expressing opinions. Generally, formal text is like this, not to show the writer a lot, **not** to use **too strong** voices.	• The tentative text is **uncertain**. The words, like "according to somebody" or "suggests", expressed opinions that are not so certain. • So for the field you're not so familiar with, you can **leave some space** for others to discuss.
Comparison group	Song	• The words in the tentative text make me feel that the writer is **not so sure** about his or her own views. … It makes me feel that other people can push your ideas over with another evidence.	• Because there is nothing to be definitely correct. The tentative text is better because the writer expresses own views **without being absolute**.
	Jing	• The writer in the tentative text is **not so certain**, such as he uses "it could be suggested", "seem to". I feel his view is not so sure. • It **leaves some space** for readers and does **not** say things in an **absolute** way.	• I think the tentative text is better. • When I write previously, for example, I used "will" in my writing. Then the teacher would change it with another word that is **more mild** and euphemistic.

6.2.2.3 Stance preference

When comparing participants' stance preference, both groups, prior to the writing intervention, exhibited a similar preference for tentative stance in their own writing. In the post-interview, participants from the treatment group changed with a preference expressed for an assertive stance, while the comparison group participants stayed with a tentative preference.

Prior to the writing course

Prior to the writing intervention, all the participants from both groups, except Jing from the comparison group, explicitly expressed the preference for tentative stance in their own writing. For instance, they reported:

> "When writing, I think we should not use the strong words quite frequently, if we don't have firm evidence. …When I'm writing, I tend to use tentative stances. Because I think if I'm not so sure or I cannot be 100% confirm or deny, I should leave some space." (Ada, TPr)

> "When I'm writing, I tend to write like the tentative text. That is, not to be too absolute. The assertive text looks too absolute. It makes me feel like that there is only one way to go, only this direction, no other ways." (Danielle, TPr)

> "If I'm writing, I will not be too absolute like that. Because I think, you are not elaborating a truth but only your personal opinion. So if you use those words that are quite absolute, the writing will make others think that you are kind of ... like everything you say is right...that kind of feeling. … My writing may be more like the tentative text." (Song, CPr)

The three participants' preference for a tentative stance was apparently because of their negative feeling towards an assertive stance. They thought assertive stance to be over extreme and regarded a tentative stance as a better, or safer choice, for their own writing. Although Jing expressed a preference to use assertive stance in her own writing, she explained that it was for the purpose of tests and that her personal preference was to use a tentative stance. As she reported:

> "But sometimes I also feel that the tentative text is more objective. It leaves some space for readers and does not say things in an absolute way. But I was taught in class that I should state things like the assertive text. But I feel to say things like the tentative text is more objective. … So sometimes I feel confused. … Now, I may write like the assertive text. But previously I would write like the tentative text. Because of the teacher's emphasis in class, … I will use words like 'strongly', 'significantly'. … This is all for the preparation for the TEM4 test." (Jing, CPr)

Jing's personal preference for the tentative stance was rooted in the idea that tentative stance did not convey meaning in an absolute manner, which was similar to other participants. She further mentioned that she was taught in class to use assertive stances for convincing argumentative writing, the reason for which she did not fully understand. With the teacher's constant emphasis, she had to apply more assertive stances to achieve better test scores. Jing appeared not to consider these linguistic expressions as stance markers, applied them as instructed without understanding why they contribute to a convincing argumentation.

Participants' responses further showed that when considering stance preference for their own writing, they primarily paid attention to the constrained dialogic space rather than

the certainty assertive utterances could provide. It was possible that their major concern was the possible challenges or conflicts created by the utterance, and so they resorted to tentative stances for a more neutral or safer choice that could reduce this risk. To some extent, their responses manifested a passive or conservative choice concerning stance preference.

After the writing course

After the writing intervention, participants from the two groups expressed differences in their stance preference. While for participants from the comparison group their preference remained the tentative stance, Ada and Danielle from the treatment group had changed views and expressed a preference for assertive stance. For instance, they reported:

> "I think I will use assertive stance to express opinions in my writing. … and use low-argumentative voice when referring to others' views. Because I think as a writer, you should make readers feel certain when expressing your own opinions. If you are not certain, other people will not believe what you write. If you think that other people may challenge your ideas, so you use low-argumentative voices to provide some space for discussion. But I think, you can be certain and other people can also argue with you." (Ada, TPo)

> "After the writing course, I think I will write more like the assertive text. I will be certain when expressing my own opinions. And I may also add some uncertain views, when reviewing previous studies." (Danielle, TPo)

> "And the mixture of two stances is also the way to make our academic writing convincing. Because reader can be convinced by high-argumentative statement and also can know the author's preciseness." (Danielle, 3rd Journal)

Both of participants clearly stated their preference for an assertive stance for their own writing. They expressed awareness of the epistemic certainty brought by assertive stance, rather than concern of it being viewed as extreme, as expressed prior to the writing intervention. They further proposed to deploy a mixture of assertive and tentative stances to construct convincing writing. Both articulated the tendency to use an assertive stance for expressing their own views and a tentative stance for introducing others' views. Their opinions indicated a more active informed choice, and critical judgment in stance use, than prior to the writing intervention, which suggests increased knowledge of stance as well as self-confidence. They were able to report less biased beliefs about two kinds of stances and to use them for different purposes indicating they possessed a deeper understanding of the effects of different types of stance and when and how to use them to make convincing arguments.

After the writing instruction, Song and Jing from the comparison group expressed an unchanged preference for tentative stances in their own writing; their gave similar reasons as they did previously. For instance, in the post-interviews they reported:

> "Because there is nothing to be definitely correct. The tentative text is better because the writer expresses own views without being absolute. … I tend to be like the tentative text when I'm writing." (Song, CPo)

> "The assertive text is quite direct, like the use of word 'must'. I think, usually when a writer use the words like 'must', there are always other things that are contradictory. People can always find something to argue with him. … I think

> my writing is more like the tentative text. … But not exactly the same. For instance, I will not use 'probably' here, I may directly say 'a part of....', but I will also not use 'undoubtedly' here like the assertive text. So I think my writing is more like the tentative one. … But not all the sentences are like it. Maybe it's a combination with those sentences without any modifiers." (Jing, CPo)

Their comments showed that their beliefs and preferences were similar to those prior to the writing intervention. With a similar negative attitude towards an assertive stance as being over absolute or easily challenged, they preferred to use tentative stances in their own writing. Jing further proposed that her writing tended to be a combination of monogloss and tentative stances.

In summary, participants from both groups reported a preference for using tentative stances in their own writing prior to the writing intervention; their choice was largely a passive response caused by the negative attitudes toward an assertive stance. After the writing intervention, the preference of the participants from the comparison group was unchanged, as were their reasons for their choice; whereas participants from the treatment group reported a change in preference to an assertive stance and proposing further they were likely to use both types of stance for different purposes in writing. They made a more active choice using critical judgment in stance use than their counterparts in the comparison group.

6.2.3 Results of Stance Patterns in Student Writing

This section reports the results of qualitative analysis of stance deployment (i.e., stance patterns) comparing the two groups prior to and after the writing intervention. From the analysis, it was apparent that after writing intervention, students' written texts from the two groups demonstrated qualitatively different overall patterns, as well as patterns for

including external voices. The noticeable recurring patterns of stance deployment in writing from the two groups in the pre-test and post-test are reported and compared.

6.2.3.1 Overall patterns

Taking Move 1 and Move 2 as a whole, results showed that pre-test writing from both groups mainly include a pattern combining monogloss and contractive stances. After the writing intervention, while the stance patterns in the writing from the comparison group remained substantially unchanged, student writing in the treatment group started to employ the patterns with an alternation of contractive and expansive stances.

Prior to the writing intervention

From the analysis of pre-test writing, it was evident that most students developed their arguments by recursively applying monogloss followed by dialogically contractive stances. The stance patterns most frequently identified were monogloss with *disclaim: counter* (mono + DCo), monogloss with *proclaim: pronounce* (mono + PP) and monogloss with *disclaim: counter* and *proclaim: pronounce* (mono + DCo + PP). In the pre-test writing, 62.5% of students (15 out of 24) in the treatment group and 72.7% of students (16 of 22) in comparison group relied mainly, even solely, on the above-mentioned ways of stance alternation for framing arguments and projecting a position in Move 1 and Move 2, without references to external voices. For instance, see Example (1) as follows, in which key stance markers are in bold and corresponding stance subtypes are presented in brackets, excluding monogloss:

(1) In recent years, with the development of the medical treatment, America develops some advanced technology in medical treatment. China also gets great progress in medical treatment. **But** compared with America, China **still** has a long distance to go in some complex diseases [*contract: disclaim: counter*]. So many Chinese who get these

> complex diseases choose to go to America to receive treatment. **But** most of them do not know the procedure of receiving treatment in American hospital and which hospital they should go [*contract: disclaim: counter*]. And this will result in inconvenience **even** conflict in some special occasion [*contract: disclaim: counter*]. So it is important for people to know which hospital they should go and the specific procedure of medical treatment in American hospital. (TPr4[1])

The student writer was introducing the importance of understanding the differences between medical treatment between China and America. The paragraph began with monoglossic assertions that present the general background. The writer then put forward the idea that medical treatment in China was underdeveloped by means of contractive *disclaim: counter*. Afterwards, the writer proceeded with a bare assertion indicating the consequence that many Chinese went to America for treatment, which is followed by *disclaim: counter* to stress the problem that people did not know much about medical treatment in America. The student writer established the research area by reiterating the pattern of monogloss with *disclaim: counter*. The possible effects were that the putative readers were constantly surprised by the countering expectations, which might pose threats to reader solidarity. The repetitive use of contractive stances in close proximity could project a subjective position where the writer concedes no room for negotiation. In many cases, the claims were not substantiated by supporting evidence or elaboration, which could result in unwarranted claims and diminish the power of the arguments.

[1] TPr = Treatment group, Pre-test writing. In the following examples, TPo = Treatment group, Post-test writing; CPr = Comparison group, Pre-test writing; CPo = Comparison group, Post-test writing. The number was the identification code for each written text, which was used only for the purpose of data analysis.

After the writing intervention

In the post-test, the patterns in the written texts from the comparison group changed little: 63.6% of students (14 of 22) kept mainly applying the alternation of monogloss and *disclaim: counter* or *proclaim: pronounce* (mono + DCo; mono + PP; mono + DCo + PP) for crafting claims. Although writing from the other eight students (36.4%) exhibited more diverse stance types, the recurring patterns were mostly constrained to the alternation of monogloss and other dialogically contractive stances, with expansive stances rarely occurred. Take the following Example (2) for instance:

(2) The diet is the first need for human's survival and development. As the old adage, "bread is the staff of life," it **fully explains** how highly people think of eating [*contract: proclaim: endorse*]. **It is a universal truth** that different areas have different diets [*contract: proclaim: concur*]. Over the past few decades, there have been many studies about Chinese and western diets. They analysed the differences in diet etiquettes, dish names, ingredients, and some other things. Take diet etiquettes for example, Chinese sit around a table to eat together, meanwhile they toasting each other and talking loudly. **But** westerners eat quietly [*contract: disclaim: counter*]. **I must admit** that those are veritable differences [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. However, **I want to indicate** that those are rooted in different cultures [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. Clark, an American well-known anthropologist, in his work *What is Culture* **points out** that "Absolutely a person's diet is subjected to the restrictions of its access to food species, but also subjected to cultural constraints." [*contract: proclaim: endorse*] **It can be seen** how inseparable diet and culture are [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. People grow up in different cultures bear different characteristics, have various beliefs and diverse living habits. Hence those form distinctive diets. As the process of global integration, the exchange of Chinese and western culture is becoming closer. **Of course**, cultural difference in food is a common context [*contract: proclaim: concur*]. Nowadays

> western food is common in China, and Chinese restaurants also spread all over the world. Therefore, it is important for us to have a good acknowledge of the two cultures. (CPo10)

The student writer was elucidating the importance of understanding the differences between Chinese and western dietary cultures. The paragraph started with a proposition, a bare assertion, asserting the importance of diet, which was supported by an external voice from direct quotation through *proclaim: endorse*. The student then indicated the dietary differences by using monogloss accompanied with *disclaim: counter*. Afterwards, the central claims were proposed through *proclaim: pronounce* that dietary differences were rooted in cultures, which projected a subjective insistence upon the credibility of the proposition which could pose a risk on reader solidarity. To support his position, the student endorsed the voice from an anthropologist, which was followed again by a subjective interpolation of *proclaim: pronounce* indicating the close relationship between diet and culture. At last, the writer indicated the commonness of food differences in different cultures by bare assertions and enacting concurrence with the putative reader. Overall, it was apparent that the student writer established arguments through the recurring alternation of monogloss and contractive stances. The student was constantly contracting the dialogic scope of alternatives, which were essentially similar as most students did in the pre-test writing. The risk of misalignment still exists as the putative readers might object to the viewpoint or axiological paradigm in the text.

In the post-test, the stance patterns in the written texts from the treatment group exhibited changes compared with the comparison group, as well as with their pre-test writing. Only 25% of students (6 of 24) used the dominant patterns evident in the pre-test (i.e., mono + DCo; mono + PP; mono + DCo + PP). Another 29.2% of them (7 of 24) applied monogloss with various contractive stances, similar to the emergent patterns in the post-test writing from the comparison group. However, 45.8% of student writers

(11 of 24) changed to adopt the recurring alternation of expansive and contractive stances in the establishment of argumentation, which was not detected in pre-test writing. See Example (3) below:

(3) In current society, there are increasing transnational marriages. People like to choose their partners from other countries, because they enjoy the unique and novel conjunction of two cultures. **However**, they ignore some potential conflicts [*contract: disclaim: counter*]. **According to** the report from China National Radio in 2016, the divorce rate of transnational marriage was up to 30% in South Korea [*expand: attribute*]. It **seems to** attract public attention that there are many potential problems and contradictions in transnational marriages [*expand: entertain*]. **Some people think** the reasons which lead to the divorces of transnational marriages are the same as domestic marriages [*expand: attribute*]. **However**, that viewpoint was not persuasive [*contract: disclaim: counter*], because it **did not** mention the different cultural backgrounds between couples [*contract: disclaim: deny*]. **Obviously**, the researches on transnational marriages should not ignore the disparate cultural environments [*contract: proclaim: concur*], because the environment is **extremely** influential for one's growth [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. Since a person was born, most of the information he received was from the environment and society. Hence, a person's values, world view and outlook on life **prone to** conform to the cultural background [*expand: entertain*]. And people with different cultures **tend to** have different personalities, habits and views [*expand: entertain*]. **If** those differences cannot be understand and recognized, they **may** bring about some quarrels and controversies in marriages [*expand: entertain*]. **As far as I concerned**, the root cause of conflicts are the dissimilar views of marriage [*expand: entertain*]. **If** people know their partners' cultural backgrounds and recognize the differences between their views of marriage, they **may** understand their partners better and try to think in the way of the other in quarrels [*expand: entertain*]. Hence, realising the different views of marriage

> can help couples avoid and resolve conflicts effectively and run their marriages successfully. (TPo21)

The student writer was discussing the importance of different views of marriage in different cultures involved in a transnational marriage. She firstly introduced the increasing popularity of transnational marriages by using monogloss. Then she used *disclaim: counter* to supplant the view and proposed her own idea that potential conflicts in such marriages were ignored. Afterwards, the student provided evidence to support her position by referring to the report from China National Radio through expansive *attribute*. She then lead the argument to the public view of problems involved in transnational marriages by using *entertain* and *attribute*. Subsequently, *disclaim: counter* was used to provide a contrary position that the viewpoint was not persuasive, followed by an explanation through *disclaim: deny* that cultural background was not taken into account. The student further argued the significance of cultural influences on transactional marriages by enacting concurrence with reader and accentuating through intensifiers pertinent to *proclaim: pronounce*. After explanations through monogloss and entertain, the student clearly proposed the central claim that different views of marriage from different cultures were the root cause of conflicts in transnational marriages. By means of *entertain* (i.e., *as far as I'm concerned*), the argument was granted as "the writer's own subjectivity" that construed a "heteroglossic backdrop" by which the writer indicated a recognition that others' might not share this position (Martin & White, 2005, p. 107). The student concluded the argumentation by indicating the significance of knowing those differences on conflicts in transnational marriages through *entertain*.

Overall, the student writer employed various contractive and expansive stances to build the argumentation. The pattern of contractive and expansive stances proceeded

throughout the text: From countering common views, to attributing to other sources and voices, to countering them by indicating the defects, to proclaiming and entertaining one's own ideas. Through the alternation of contractive and expansive stances, the writer proposed ideas and interacted with other voices in an intersubjective dialogue.

6.2.3.2 Patterns for including external voices

The patterns for including external voices in pre- and post-test writing are presented. At different times, the report consists of three continuous sections to compare the performance of the treatment group and the comparison group: 1) the ways that students introduced previous research; 2) the patterns for including other external voices (e.g., proverbs); 3) the ways that students particularly used the two stance types concerning external voices (i.e., *proclaim: endorse* and *attribute*).

Results revealed that, prior to the writing intervention, students from both groups similarly drew on a pattern of monogloss or contractive stance followed by *proclaim: endorse* or *attribute* for the inclusion of external voices. With further examination, it was found that endorsing stances were mainly achieved through direct citations, and that most of the attributions involved hearsay formulations with an ambiguous source of information. In the post-test, while students from the comparison group continued to use similar patterns and features as in the pre-test, student writing collected from the treatment group manifested slightly different patterns (e.g., mono + PE/A + PP or PE) for the inclusion of external voices. They endorsed opinions in more diverse ways and not solely through direct citations, while the ambiguity of source continued in the attributed sentences in the comparison group.

Prior to the writing intervention

In analysing the inclusion of external voices in pre-test writing, it was found first that students from both groups rarely referred to previous research: only 8.3% of students (2 out of 24) in the treatment group; and 4.5% (1 of 22) in the comparison group. When previous studies were taken into account, student writers mainly summarised the research in the relevant field in a monoglossic way, such as Example (4).

(4) Many people have already done some research on *Hamlet*, including the background of it, the analysis of characters and theme of it. (TPr11)

Although there was little involvement of previous research, around half the student writers in both groups (45.5%, 10 of 22 in the comparison group; 50%, 12 of 24 in the treatment group) introduced other external voices to support their claims, such as proverbs or famous quotes. Dialogues with external voices were established generally through patterns of monogloss or contractive stances followed either by *proclaim: endorse* (mono / contract + PE) (27.3%, 6 of 22 in the comparison group; 20.8%, 5 of 24 in the treatment group), or by *attribute* (mono / contract + A) (22.7%, 5 of 22 in the comparison group; 33.3%, 8 of 24 in the treatment group[1]. See (5) and (6) as examples for the two patterns:

(5) Furthermore, the culture have been giving a big effect on its own nationals in different ways. **As the proverb goes**, "each place has its own way of supporting its own inhabitants" [*contract: proclaim: endorse*]. **It is** this reason **that** causes to great difference between Chinese and western cultures [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. (TPr2)

[1] The text involving both patterns was counted in for the number of both patterns. Therefore, the sum of numbers of the two patterns might not be equal to the total number of texts.

As shown in Example (5), the student writer started an argument with a monoglossic assertion indicating that culture has a big effect on its people. A proverb was then endorsed through direct quotation to support the claim. Without further interpretation, the student writer proposed another claim that this is the reason causing cultural differences, the logic of which seems a bit confusing. This example suggests that student writers tended to include external voices as follow-up evidence for the preceding claim and that the source texts were mainly presented through direct borrowing without illustration. This may cause problems in the integration of ideas or the logical development of argumentation as illustrated in the above example. It was also found that direct citations were dominant when students used endorsing stances in the pre-test writing (87.5% in the comparison group, 62.5% in the treatment group).

(6) In ancient China, it has **already** been paid attention to building a great teacher-student relationship [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. **Confucius had said** that with education, there is no distinction between classes or races of men [*expand: attribute*]. **It is also said** that teachers should be tireless in teaching [*expand: attribute*]. While **some educators thought** that students must obey teachers completely with no doubt, and teachers had the right to punish students who did not behave themselves [*expand: attribute*]. (CPr22)

For the alternative pattern of (mono / contract + A), represented by Example (6), the student writer first proposed the central claim through contractive stance, *proclaim: pronounce*, that teacher-student relationship was paid great attention in ancient China. He then invited three source texts through *attribute* as supporting evidence for the claim. Similar to Example (5), the external voices included here were simply listed without further interpretation as the argument ended. It was also noted that the formulations the student writer attributed to were largely unclear in their origins (*it is said, some*

educators thought). This phenomenon was pervasive within the *attribute* stances used in the pre-test writing from both groups (70% in the comparison group, 58.9 % in the treatment group).

After the writing intervention

In the post-test, students in the comparison group showed improvement in the percentage previous research mentioned, from 4.5% in the pre-test to 22.7% in the post-test (5 of 22). Previous studies were introduced through either monoglossic summaries (13.6%) as in the pre-test, or the pattern of monogloss with *attribution* (mono + A) (9.1%) that was similar to formulations for inclusion of external voices which have ambiguous sources in the pre-test. See Example (7) and (8):

(7) The past researches have studied about the correct expression used in different situation, such as business communication, and have studied about the application of pragmatics in daily life. (CPo8)

(8) For decades, researchers and experts from all walks of life have dedicated themselves to exploring the nature of love. **Physiologists maintain** that feelings of love are a complicated biochemical reaction happening in people's brain [*expand: attribute*]; **psychologists regard** love as manifestations of social contact [*expand: attribute*]; **social psychologists propose** that love mainly derives from physical attractiveness [*expand: attribute*]. (CPo18)

As indicated in Example (8), the student writer constructed the argument by first introducing the research field through a bare assertion. The subsequent three sentences were all *attribution* to invite opinions from various perspectives. The argument then ended with no further explanation or integration of the external opinions in the central claim the writer intended to address, as used in the pre-test. Additionally, it can be seen

that, the formulations the student writer attributed, similarly had an ambiguous source or were hearsays as previously.

For the comparison group, the percentage of written texts which included external voices changed little after the intervention: from 45.5% to 50% (11 of 22). Most source texts were presented through a pattern of monogloss followed by *proclaim: endorse* (mono + PE, 22.7%) or *attribute,* (mono + A, 31.8%) with little further interpretation of the source texts, such as shown in Example (8). Moreover in the comparison group, direct citations were still dominant when endorsing external voices (91.7%), the majority with ambiguous sources in the application of *attribute* (73.7%). While the instruction of genre may have enhanced the involvement of previous studies in writing by the comparison group, the way students established and supported the arguments did not change significantly.

In the post-test, texts of students in the treatment group showed substantial changes compared with those in the comparison group; 58.3% of students (14 of 24) involved previous research explicitly, and 83.3% of students (20 of 24) included external voices in their writing. The majority of the source texts in writing were presented using the previous patterns of monogloss with *proclaim: endorse* (mono + PE, 20.8%, 5 of 24) or monogloss with attribute (mono + A, 45.8%, 11 of 24). Of them, 37.5% of students (9 of 24) not only listed the source voices as supporting evidence as they did in the pre-test but provided further illustration to integrate them better into the development of argumentation. The pattern involved was usually monogloss or contractive stance with *proclaim: endorse* or *attribute*, followed further by *proclaim: pronounce* or *proclaim: endorse* (mono + PE or A + PP or PE). See Example (9):

(9) **Indeed**, the quality of family education determines the future development of children [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. **Many findings have shown** that the children who were educated in fine families may have good characters and success mostly. On the other hand, children who grow up in a discordant family tend to behave badly, they even have criminal act [*contract: proclaim: endorse*]. **According to** Twyman Johnson, successful tutoring possibly leads to successful children, and failed parenting leads to failed children [*expand: attribute*]. **His words** just **illustrated** the importance of family education [*contract: proclaim: endorse*]. Most of **previous researches have noted** the closed relation between family education and children's development [*contract: proclaim: endorse*]. From these **we can clearly see** that a good family education have considerable influence on children and it is important to understand the factors that family education has the effect on children [*contract: proclaim: pronounce*]. (TPo20)

The student writer first proposed the central claim through *proclaim: pronounce* that family education affects children's development. The next sentence endorsed the previous findings to support the central claim, which was immediately followed by another reference through *attribute*. Then the student writer used a *proclaim: endorse* move (i.e., *His words just illustrated…*) again to interpret the attributed source text in the last sentence. The argument proceeded with another endorsement of previous research as supporting evidence. At the end of the paragraph, the student writer provided further interpretation through *proclaim: pronounce* and aligned the putative reader at the same time by using the word "*we*". The pattern used here (contractive stance + PE or A + PE or PP) provided an interpretive support to the central claim, which allowed the student writer to incorporate the external sources and build a persuasive argumentation.

For the treatment group in the post-test, direct citations only showed in 18.2% of instances of *proclaim: endorse* in the writing when including endorsing utterances. This

was a saliently lower percentage compared with the comparison group, as well their own scores in pre-test. Instead of direct quotations, students started to use diverse endorsing markers (e.g., *point out, propose, firmly believe*…) to paraphrase and integrate the external voices to construe academically credible propositions, such as Example (10).

(10) Baker in his masterpiece <In other words, translation tutorial introduction> **pointed out** that the term "equivalence" is only used for convenience rather than its theoretical status [*contract: proclaim: endorse*]. (TPo6)

However, in terms of applying *attribute*, student writers in the treatment group still mostly relied on formulations with ambiguous sources or hearsays (71.4%), which was not notably different from their counterparts in the comparison group.

6.2.4 Summary of Qualitative Results

Analysis of the data collected from the multiple-case study showed that while students' views were quite similar before the writing instruction, they expressed differentiated writing beliefs and stance preference between the two groups after the period of writing intervention. Although no statistically significant differences were detected as reported in section 6.1.3.2, the qualitative findings revealed nuanced differences in students' understanding which provided evidence of the effects of writing intervention.

With regard to writing beliefs, participants reported similar and unchanged transmissional beliefs in each of the three subthemes: *Information transmission*, *authoritative evidence*, and *limited writer engagement*. However, after the writing intervention, the participants articulated transactional beliefs about writing, between the groups, that were clearly differentiated, especially in the subtheme of *active engagement*. Students from the treatment group also exhibited explicit awareness of stance-taking when expressing their transactional writing beliefs.

In terms of beliefs about authorial stance, participants' descriptions were little different concerning assertive and tentative stance respectively between the two groups at each of the times. With regard to stance preference in their own writing, participants expressed the same tentative tendency prior to the writing intervention. However, after the writing intervention, students from the treatment group preferred assertive stances and tended to use both types of stances actively for different rhetorical purposes; while the participants from the comparison group maintained a preference for tentative stance.

Qualitative analysis of stance deployment in students' written texts revealed that in the pre-test, students in both groups mainly constructed claims by recursively applying the patterns of monogloss with limited types of contractive stances. In the post-test, students from the treatment group started to employ an alternation of contractive and expansive stances, while students from the comparison group continued to draw on the previous patterns to build argumentation.

With regard to the patterns for including external voices, results indicated that in the pre-test, students mostly adopted a pattern of monogloss or contractive stance followed by *proclaim: endorse* or *attribute*. They either directly cited external voices or referred to ambiguous sources for supporting evidence with little further interpretation. After the writing intervention, many students in the treatment group deployed different patterns (e.g., mono + PE/A + PP or PE) for the inclusion of external voices. They used less direct citations and provided more interpretation of source information with diverse stance types. In contrast, students from the comparison group maintained the patterns and features similar to those used in the pre-test. However, the reliance on ambiguous sources in attribute utterances did not alter significantly in both groups.

The qualitative results reported in this section provide triangulation and further revealed the nuanced differences in students' writing beliefs and beliefs about stance that could not be detected in quantitative investigations. The findings also provide support for the statistical differences in stance deployment and explain how students' stance deployment was different between groups and changed after the writing instruction.

6.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter reported quantitative and qualitative findings from the intervention study which evaluated the effects of explicit stance instruction on student writers' beliefs, stance deployment and academic writing quality. Firstly, after the writing intervention, students from the treatment group outperformed their counterparts in the comparison group in the overall writing quality. Secondly, although their writing beliefs and beliefs about authorial stance exhibited no statistically significant difference, students from different groups reported qualitatively different views in transactional writing beliefs and stance preference after the writing intervention. Students from the treatment group further exhibited increased awareness of stance. Finally, students' written texts from the two groups showed salient differences in stance deployment both quantitatively (i.e., stance frequencies) and qualitatively (i.e., stance patterns).

The quantitative and qualitative results together render empirical evidence for the effectiveness of explicit stance instruction on students' academic writing performance in an EFL context, with in-depth information on how the explicit stance instruction affected students' beliefs and writing performance. It can be noted that the writing intervention improved student writers' awareness and understanding of stance, writing beliefs, and stance deployment, contributing to more convincing argumentation and better academic writing quality.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

This chapter presents a discussion of the results within a wider context of theoretical models and key empirical studies. In each section, key findings are summarised and elaborated to address the corresponding research questions in the proposed order. The chapter concludes with a summary.

7.1 Dichotomised Stance Beliefs

The preparatory study developed and validated the psychometric instrument measuring the participants' beliefs about authorial stance. The rationale for the development of the scales was to categorise students' beliefs about authorial stance into preference for dialogic contraction and for dialogic expansion, to align with the two broad categories of heteroglossia in the Engagement system (Martin & White, 2005). The results of EFA and CFA provided substantial evidence for the two-factor model of the instrument.

Factor 1, labelled as dialogic contraction (DC), refers to students' preference for assertive stances or less inclination to use tentative stances in academic writing. The nine items are mainly concerned with three aspects: evidentiality (e.g., *DC6: A strong voice seems more certain, thus more academic and serious*); attitude (e.g., *DC2: A strong stance reflects that the writer is confident*); dialogic interaction (e.g., *DC3: I need to use strong stance when I want to persuade the reader*). Factor 2, named as dialogic expansion (DE), refers to students' preference for tentative stances, or an unlikely tendency toward assertive stances, in academic writing. This factor indicates that, compared with a strong stance, students regarded a tentative stance as a more appropriate choice in the above-mentioned three domains (e.g., *DE1: Tentative expressions are more academic and precise, because no one can be 100% sure; DE7:*

A weak stance sounds humble and cautious; DE5: Tentative expressions allow more room for writers to argue for a point). These domains aligned with the theoretical conceptualisation of authorial stance proposed from a social interactive perspective. For instance, as Wharton (2012) posited, stance construct encompasses epistemic, attitudinal, and dialogic domains. In the preparatory study, that these domains were not distinguished from each other but were interrelated to form a reliable factor suggests that students' beliefs about stance were relatively consistent in different domains and they were interwoven to form a general understanding of stance.

The findings also revealed that there was little, if any, correlation between the two factors (r = .088, p = .332), which implies that students perceived the two general categories of stance as independent and isolated, consistent with the assumption of dichotomised stance beliefs. This result also corroborates the previous supposition that EFL students' understanding of authorial stance was not comprehensive and in some way immature (Chang, 2016); it provides further evidence for the "polarized" understanding of stance found in EFL students in previous studies (Chang & Tsai, 2014, p. 538). The findings might be attributed to student writers' lack of awareness that dialogic interaction is fundamental to various positionings, and they understand assertive and tentative stances in different ways, rather than at different levels, of dialogic interaction.

The results provide preliminary evidence for a two-factor model, which divides student writers' beliefs about authorial stance into dialogic contraction and dialogic expansion. The findings revealed that the two factors were distinguished both conceptually and empirically. The validation not only contributes to the assessment of EFL student writers' beliefs about authorial stance in an academic writing context but also offers insight and support for the dialogic account of stance-taking in the writing process.

7.2 Beliefs, Stance Deployment, and Writing Performance

This section discusses the findings in Study One which investigated the relationships between students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and academic writing quality in an EFL context. Results indicate that the relationships between various variables were complex, which could be attributed to multiple factors concerning students' L1 culture, previous learning experiences, and knowledge of writing, genre, and audience.

7.2.1 Writing Beliefs and Beliefs about Authorial Stance

7.2.1.1 Findings in descriptive statistics

Table 7.1 Findings in Descriptive Statistics of Writing Beliefs and Beliefs about Stance *(n = 84)*

		M	*SD*	*t*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Writing beliefs	Transmissional beliefs	3.08	.63	10.369	< .001	1.131
	Transactional beliefs	3.83	.37			
Beliefs about stance	Dialogic contraction	3.58	.53	3.159	.002	.345
	Dialogic expansion	3.31	.49			

The descriptive statistics of writing beliefs revealed that students possessed a significantly higher level of transactional beliefs than transmissional beliefs. This indicates that students demonstrated a higher level of understanding of writing as a way to "personally and critically construct the text by actively integrating their own thinking into the process" (White & Bruning, 2005, p. 168). The finding is consistent with those in previous studies on university students (e.g. Baaijen et al., 2014; Sanders-Reio et al.,

2014; White & Bruning, 2005), indicating that students, at this level, may have a relatively high level of affective and cognitive engagement with the text.

The descriptive analyses of beliefs about stance indicated that students reported a significantly higher level in preference for dialogic contraction than dialogic expansion. This suggests that students perceived assertive stances as a better choice in academic writing. The finding resonates with the previous studies reporting that EFL students expressed more positive attitudes toward assertive stances than tentative stances, especially in the field of social sciences (Chang, 2016; Chang & Tsai, 2014). However, in contrast to Chang's (2016) finding that students generally articulated negative attitudes regarding tentative stance, in this study, it was found that students' attitude was relatively neutral, according to the mean value of dialogic expansion, which may be influenced by students' L1 conventions and traditions as posited by Hyland (2012). As Hinkel (1997, as cited in Hyland, 2016c) supposed, Chinese students tended to be affected by Confucian traditions to exhibit caution and hesitancy, which could contribute to their preference for tentative stances, understood as a mitigating strategy. It could also be possible that students tended to stay neutral and be cautious due to their lack of understanding of the effects of tentative stances in the writing context.

7.2.1.2 Relationships between transactional writing beliefs and beliefs about stance

Results showed that transactional writing beliefs were significantly correlated with both the factors of stance beliefs (with dialogic contraction, $r = .329$, $p = .002$; with dialogic expansion, $r = .222$, $p = .042$). The relationships indicate that students with a higher level of transactional writing beliefs were likely to be inclined to either, or both, assertive and tentative stances. As mentioned earlier, transactional writing beliefs entail the understanding of writing as an active integrating process of personal thinking. This

suggests that students, who held a higher level of transactional writing beliefs tended to actively construct ideas, instead of summarizing information (Baaijen et al., 2014), reflecting, thus, the writers' orientation to cognitive engagement (White & Bruning, 2005). Therefore, it is reasonable that students were more likely to show an inclination towards heteroglossic utterances to convey personal ideas, rather than monoglossic reports or narratives.

7.2.2 Beliefs and Writing Quality

7.2.2.1 Transactional writing beliefs as a positive correlate and a significant predictor

Results of correlation and multiple regression analyses showed that transactional writing beliefs were a positive correlate (r = .224, p = .040) and a significant predictor for the overall writing scores (β = .224, p = .039). The findings suggest that student writers who reported a higher level of transactional writing beliefs produced better text quality in the academic writing task. As White and Bruning (2005) argued, writers with higher transactional beliefs demonstrate higher level of cognitive engagement in the composing process and actively integrate their own thinking into writing, resulting in higher quality of idea-content development, organisation, sentence fluency, and voice. This finding, along with previous studies (e.g., Baaijen et al., 2014; White & Bruning, 2005), provides further evidence of students' transactional understanding of writing contributing to writing quality in an EFL context, and contributes to the literature by extending the investigation to an academic setting.

Another possible reason for the results could be concerned with writing strategy. As Baaijen et al. (2014) speculated, high transactional writers produce better quality texts using a revision drafting strategy, in which the writer produces an initial draft based on implicit understanding, then explicitly organises and revises it into a rhetorically

appropriate text. It appears that high transactional writers are able to combine knowledge-constituting and explicit organisation processes, as proposed in Galbraith's (2009) model, to achieve better text production than low transactional writers. Therefore, it is possible that students in this study, with higher transactional beliefs, were able to produce better 'Introductions' by using a revision-drafting strategy, in which they do an initial draft and explicitly revised during the writing process.

This finding also preliminarily clarifies the concern raised by Baaijen et al. (2014) that high transmissional beliefs, the understanding that writing should be about citing authoritative sources, might contribute to text quality in academic tasks which require citations. The finding in the current study shows that the overall quality of academic texts, at the university level, was influenced by transactional beliefs to a greater extent than by transmissional beliefs. It could be that while students acknowledge the importance of citing external sources, at the undergraduate level, students were able to cite from sources to only a limited extent, which might affect the transmissional impact, if any, on writing outcomes. As Cumming et al. (2018) reported, there was limited instances and usage of citations observed in undergraduate EFL students' writing from sources. Future research may be warranted to investigate the relationship between writing beliefs and students' citation practices in source-based writing.

7.2.2.2 Unclear relationships between beliefs about stance and writing quality

The relationships between students' beliefs about authorial stance and their overall writing quality were not statistically significant. Although no significant relation was found, it is not yet conclusive regarding how stance beliefs contribute to the writing outcome. As authorial stance has been found frequently as a key contributor to successful academic writing (e.g., Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Gray & Biber, 2012; Hood,

2006; Sawaki, 2014), beliefs about stance may pose an indirect influence on the writing outcomes rather than having a direct effect. A possible explanation is that, as the two factors of stance beliefs were found to be independent as discussed earlier in 7.1, students may hold various configurations of stance beliefs (e.g., high dialogic contraction—high dialogic expansion, high dialogic contraction—low dialogic expansion), which may exert impact on writing quality, as often found in research on beliefs (e.g., Schraw, 2000; Schraw & Bruning, 1996, 1999; White & Bruning, 2005). Future research, with a larger sample, could examine the influence of different configurations of stance beliefs on writing performance. The finding could also be attributed to the relationship between beliefs about stance and writing quality being mediated by other cognitive or motivational factors. As argued in previous studies, domain-specific beliefs may predict performance together with other beliefs, such as self-efficacy belief or epistemic beliefs (Mateos et al., 2011; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014).

7.2.3 Beliefs and Stance Deployment

7.2.3.1 Relationships between writing beliefs and stance deployment

Students' writing beliefs were correlated to the frequencies of different stance types; for example, transactional writing beliefs were negatively correlated with the frequency of *proclaim: endorse* (r = -.217, p = .047). This suggests that students with a higher level of transactional beliefs use fewer endorsing formulations in their writing than those with lower level of transactional beliefs. Utterances of *proclaim: endorse* are linked to external voices which are endorsed by the author's voice as valid and maximally warrantable (Martin & White, 2005). White and Bruning (2005) also claimed that transactional writing beliefs involve active integration of the writer's own thinking into the process, and were found to be evidence of students' experience of writing as self-

expression. Therefore, this finding suggests that, if students were more willing to engage actively in integrating personal thoughts into written texts, they might refer less to external voices. The finding, however, is not consistent with previous studies in which transactional writing beliefs were found to be associated with better integration of source information (e.g., Cuevas et al., 2016; Mateos et al., 2011; Wette, 2018). This discrepancy may be because transactional beliefs were related to how external sources are integrated, rather than the quantity of external sources.

Results also showed that students' transmissional writing beliefs were positively correlated with the frequency of *disclaim: deny* (r = .251, p = .022). This suggests that students with a higher level of transmissional beliefs would use more instances of *disclaim: deny* in their writing. Transmissional beliefs support a view of writing as a means for reporting authoritative information (White & Bruning, 2005). Through *disclaim: deny*, the author posits a textual voice as directly rejecting or negating the alternative position introduced into the dialogue, implying a context of negative evaluation or debate (Martin & White, 2005; Whiteside & Wharton, 2019). The result, therefore, could be because students, with higher transmissional beliefs, tended to use information to directly reject or challenge alternative views that were not consistent with the authoritative information. As transmissional beliefs are also found to be associated with low self-efficacy and less enjoyment of writing (Baaijen et al., 2014; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; White & Bruning, 2005), another explanation may be that the student writers, with high transmissional beliefs, dislike writing, and they have a low level of confidence and so use more negative expressions in the writing process.

7.2.3.2 Relationships between beliefs about stance and stance deployment

The relationships between beliefs about authorial stance and stance deployment were found to differentiate between the two factors of stance beliefs. A significant positive correlation was detected between the preference for dialogic contraction and the total frequency of contractive stances (r = .223, p = .041). The finding indicates that students who preferred to use assertive stance, were more likely to apply more resources of dialogical contraction than those who expressed a lower preference for dialogic contraction. To some extent, the finding lends support to the previous supposition that beliefs about stance may contribute to students' stance deployment (e.g., Chang, 2016; Chang & Tsai, 2014).

The correlation between preference for dialogic expansion and the frequency of expansion stances, however, was found to be non-significant (r = -.126, p = .253). A possible reason, for this interesting finding, is that students possessed low calibration regarding tentative stances. For instance, students might report an inclination to use tentative stances, but they did not deploy them as they were incapable of applying tentative stances in writing. It may also be that, as student writers, they were influenced by previous learning experiences or a teacher's feedback (Petrić, 2010); they might be more attracted by assertive stances, or monoglosses, in their writing, and, cautiously apply, or intentionally avoid, tentative stances. This low calibration, also frequently found in the relationships between motivational factors and writing practices (e.g., Chen & Zhang, 2019; Schunk & Usher, 2019), could be that, when they responded to the questionnaire, students lacked knowledge about what tentative stance entails. The underuse of tentative expressions may also be because students were unaware of writing for an audience as they expected only the teacher would read their writing, and not a real audience in the academic discipline (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Yoon & Römer, 2020).

This echoes the call in previous studies that it would be helpful to enhance student writers' understanding of stance and linguistic capability, especially concerning tentative stances, to achieve better stance-taking and effective writing (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Lancaster, 2016a; Wu, 2007). Further studies could be conducted to explore EFL student writers' motivation for specific stance decisions in their own writing, such as through discourse-based interviews (e.g., Lancaster, 2016b), to lead to understanding the issue better.

Further investigation into the relationships between the two factors of beliefs about stance and the frequencies of various stance subtypes revealed significant correlations between preference for dialogic contraction and the frequency of *proclaim: pronounce* (r = .303, p = .005), and between the expressed preference for dialogic expansion and the frequency of *disclaim: counter* (r =.227, p = .038). The findings are not consistent with the assertions in Cheng and Unsworth (2016) that, although both stance types function to contract dialogic space, *proclaim* was considered as more dialogically expansive than *disclaim*. In this study, as *proclaim: pronounce* was found in word frequency analysis to be realised mostly through intensifiers (e.g., *more, especially, most, very*, shown in Table 5.11), its correlation with the expressed preference for dialogic contraction suggests that students preferring assertive stances would apply more intensifiers. This echoes the finding in Aull and Lancaster (2014) that novice student writers tended to overuse intensifying boosters. Wu (2007) and Miller et al. (2014) similarly reported that *proclaim: pronounce* was more frequently used in the low-rated writing and postulated that application of stance was influenced by students' writing proficiency or linguistic competence. It may be that intensifiers were more accessible, for students at this level, to express a strong voice, compared with alternative stance options.

The positive correlation between preference for dialogic expansion and the frequency of *disclaim: counter* indicates that students believing that tentative stances are better, would use more contractive resources of *disclaim: counter*, especially contrastive linking words, as revealed by word frequency analysis (e.g., *but, however, although*, shown in Table 5.11). It is likely that students with a higher tendency for dialogic expansion mitigated claims by using counterarguments. This may be due to students' inaccurate understanding of the dialogic functions of stance markers or inability to perform tentative stances accordingly. Another reason might be that students with a higher tendency for dialogic expansion used more contractive linking words, mainly for text cohesion, rather than presenting dialogically contractive stances (see also Yousefpoori-Naeim, Zhang, & Baleghizadeh, 2018). As Lancaster (2014) claimed, student writing at this level is "rewarded" for presenting contrastive stance for persuasion (p. 40). However, as contrastive linking adverbials may evoke different functions (Izutsu, 2008; Kuzborska & Soden, 2018), further qualitative analyses are needed to provide more rigorous findings about students' purpose in using contrastive linking words and the relationship with their understanding of stance.

7.2.4 Stance Deployment and Writing Quality

7.2.4.1 Stance diversity as a positive correlate and a significant predictor

Correlation and multiple regression analyses indicated stance diversity as a positive correlate of (r = .288, p = .008), and a significant predictor (β = .255, p = .017) for the overall writing quality. This suggests that student writers who deployed more diverse stance types would gain higher scores for their academic introductions. The finding resonates with the previous proposition that including multiple voices is essential for successful academic writing (e.g., Miller et al., 2014). It is also congruent with Fordyce

(2014), which reported a positive correlation between stance variety and L2 students' proficiency scores (r = .45, p < .001), and proposed an emphasis on stance variety in writing instruction. However, the finding is not consistent with Uccelli et al. (2013), in which the diversity of stance types was not associated with overall quality of argumentative writing by L1 students in high school. The difference in the results could be due to the different task requirements or context. The finding in this study, therefore, extends understandings of the impact of stance deployment on writing quality, in that stance diversity may have a greater impact on writing for students with a higher level of writing proficiency. Another reason may be that stance diversity in the current study entails a wider range of stance types than in Uccelli et al. (2013) by taking into account *proclaim: endorse* and *attribution,* which were not included previously. The additional stance types may impact on the relationships under investigation as referring to external sources is highly valued in students' academic text in higher education (Cumming et al., 2018).

The finding of the significant contribution of stance diversity to writing quality also supports the advocacy in previous studies for the development of learners' linguistically diverse capacity to meet rhetorical and discoursal purposes (e.g., Pessoa, Mitchell, & Miller, 2018; Reilly, Zamora, & McGivern, 2005). As Pessoa et al. (2018) argued, students were required to control a range of linguistic resources for evaluating information and perspective, providing support for claims, and expressing tentativeness.

7.2.4.2 Frequency of disclaim: counter as a positive correlate

Correlational results showed that only the frequency of *disclaim: counter*, among all the stance types and categories, was found to be correlated with the overall writing quality (r = .304, p = .005), suggesting that students who applied more instances of *disclaim:*

counter would achieve higher writing scores. As the main sources of *disclaim: counter* were found to be contrastive linking words in word frequency analyses (e.g., *but, however, although*, see Table 5.11), this finding, along with previous studies (e.g., Izutsu, 2008; Kuzborska & Soden, 2018; Lancaster, 2014, 2016a; Wu, 2006), further endorses the contribution of contrastive linking adverbials to writing performance. The reason could be that these contrastive linking words may contribute to stronger text coherence and organisation (Yousefpoori-Naeim et al., 2018), which were assessed in a major section of the writing quality rubric in this study. It also may be attributed to that students' use of contrastive stances foregrounded research problems or opinions, which then contributed to strong arguments and effective writing (Lancaster, 2016a).

Except for *disclaim: counter*, no significant relationships were detected between the frequencies of other stance types and writing quality. The lack of statistically significant correlation indicates that the frequency of each of these stance types does not directly contribute to writing quality. An explanation may be that the way that various stance types are combined may impact the writing quality to a greater extent than individually, as suggested by Ryshina-Pankova (2014) and Miller et al. (2014) that it is not only the presence or absence, but also the nuanced interplay of stance resources that impact on writing.

7.2.5 High-Scoring and Low-Scoring Students

As summarised in Table 7.2, the comparison of beliefs and stance deployment of high-scoring and low-scoring students revealed significant findings. High-scoring students reported a significantly higher level of preference for dialogic contraction than low-scoring students, which indicates that high-scoring students viewed contractive stances as a better choice in writing and showed more preference than low-scoring students.

This may be attributed to that high-scoring students were more confident in writing than low-scoring students, as found in previous studies reporting positive relationships between self-efficacy and writing performance (e.g., Bruning et al., 2013; Chen & Zhang, 2019; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; Teng, Sun, & Xu, 2018). In the social sciences, the writer's interpretation is highly valued (Hyland, 2005), therefore students with high self-confidence may express opinions in writing more assertively, and they thus preferred assertive stances for its ability to enhance certainty and authority (Chang, 2016). Results also showed that high-scoring students (M = 3.41) reported higher, but non-significant, level of preference for dialogic expansion than low-scoring students (M = 3.27). These findings indicate that students' beliefs about stance, especially in terms of preference for dialogic contraction, may vary across writing proficiency levels, which is consistent with other psychological factors, such as self-efficacy and motivational beliefs (e.g., Teng & Zhang, 2016b, 2018).

Table 7.2 Summary of Findings in the Comparisons of Beliefs and Stance Deployment between High-Scoring and Low-Scoring Students

Variables	High-Scoring Students			Low-Scoring Students			*t* / *z*	*p*	Cohen's *d* / *r*
	N	M	*SD*	N	M	*SD*			
Writing beliefs (TA)	36	3.94	.36	34	3.72	.32	2.751	.008	.688
Beliefs about stance (DC)	36	3.72	.51	34	3.48	.48	2.049	.044	.504
Stance diversity	36	5.00	1.22	34	4.29	1.29	2.352	.022	.550
Frequency of DCo	36	12.00	5.73	34	8.15	7.28	-2.980	.003	.356

Note. Only variables with statistically significant differences are presented. TA = Transactional writing beliefs; DC = Dialogic contraction; DCo = *disclaim: counter*.

The high-scoring students also deployed *disclaim: counter* more frequently than low-scoring students. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Lancaster, 2014, 2016a; Wu, 2006), which found high-rated student essays tended to use more resources to express contrastiveness in problematizing issues in argumentation. However, except for *disclaim: counter*, there were no statistically differences in the frequencies of other stance types, and heterogloss in total, between high-scoring and low-scoring students, unlike previous studies that detected salient differences in the frequencies of various stance features among students of varying writing proficiency (e.g., Lancaster, 2014, 2016a; Wu, 2007). However, the results in this study resonate with Lee and Deakin's (2016) findings in successful and less-successful ESL student essays. This may indicate that the two groups of students in this study matched Lee and Deakin's (2016) grouping of successful and less-successful students, as they were not differentiated enough in the writing quality because of the limitation of the sample size. Another plausible explanation to the findings in stance frequencies could be that as the high-scoring and low- scoring students utilised similar quantities of various stance types, they might have differences in nuanced stance configuration that might contribute to different writing quality, as proposed in previous studies (e.g., Miller et al., 2014; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014). For instance, Ryshina-Pankova (2014) found that both stronger and weaker student texts adopted contracting and expanding stance resources, but the key difference was in the order and location of their use. In this study, therefore, in comparison with low-scoring students, high-scoring students may have made more appropriate stance choices on the construction of arguments, so that achieve a better control of dialogic space for better text quality.

Consistent with many previous studies on EFL student writing, both high-scoring and low-scoring students produced more monoglossic (M = 59.31 and 62.31) than

heteroglossic utterances (M = 40.69 and 37.69), which is considered a common problem for novice academic writers (e.g., Lancaster, 2014; Wu, 2007; Wharton, 2012; Xie, 2016). As Martin and White (2005) pointed out, monoglossic utterances, which are undialogic in nature, do not provide room for alternative views. Therefore, when students rely on monogloss in academic texts, their arguments are blatantly assertive and compelling to the reader, and ineffectively persuasive. The finding may indicate that the students at this level were ineffective in terms of constructing convincing arguments, regardless of writing proficiency. This could be due to that students, in this study, might not have been aware that they were expected to take evaluative positions to establish persuasive arguments, as they had not been taught the stance features; thus, they produced impersonal and report-like statements which they regarded as more suitable for an academic style (Hyland, 2012). As many scholars posited, students, influenced by genre, teaching materials, or cultural conventions, tend to assume that academic writing should be impersonal and lack awareness of the interpersonal functionality and dialogic nature of writing (Charles, 2006; Hyland & Tse, 2005; Que & Li, 2015; Tang & John, 1999; Vergaro, 2011). Students' underuse of stance expressions may have also been due to that they lacked awareness of an audience, as they knew their writing only reached the teacher rather than real disciplinary audiences (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Yoon & Römer, 2020).

In summary, the comparisons between high-scoring and low-scoring students suggest that students' beliefs may vary across writing proficiency levels. However, there was little differentiation in students with different writing proficiency levels in the frequency of various stance types, except for *disclaim: counter*, which may indicate the impact of stance configuration on writing quality. Both high-scoring and low-scoring students displayed a similar reliance on monogloss, or bare assertions, in writing, suggesting that

they were ineffective in constructing argumentation. These findings all contribute to a better understanding of the relationships between EFL student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality.

7.3 Effects of Writing Intervention on Writing Performance, Beliefs and Stance Deployment

This section discusses the findings in Study Two which evaluated the effects of explicit stance instruction on EFL students' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing performance. The mixed-methods design involved both quantitative and qualitative data. Results suggested that the writing intervention was effective in improving students' writing quality, stance awareness, knowledge about writing, as well as stance deployment. The specific research questions are discussed drawing on both quantitative and qualitative findings.

7.3.1 Writing Score Gains

Table 7.3 summarises the key findings for the writing scores, showing that both the treatment and comparison groups significantly increased in the overall writing scores and stance scores (except for M3 stance score in the comparison group) from the pre-test to the post-test. While the writing intervention and the curriculum-based instruction both contributed to students' writing performance, the treatment group significantly outperformed the comparison group in terms of the overall writing scores, the overall stance scores, M1 and M2 stance scores in the post-test. This suggests that the explicit stance instruction provided for the treatment group supported students to become better stance-takers who could achieve better academic writing outcomes, than the comparison group, who had the curriculum-based instruction.

Table 7.3 Comparisons of Writing Scores between the Treatment and Comparison Groups

	Group	Pre-test		Post-test		*p*	
		M	*SD*	M	*SD*	Within group	Between groups in post-test
Overall writing score	Tre	68.65	8.17	76.83	5.93	< .001 (*d* = 1.177)	< .001 (*d* = 1.118)
	Con	65.36	8.36	68.16	7.76	.004 (*d* = .681)	
Overall stance score	Tre	11.46	4.89	18.88	4.82	< .001 (*d* = 1.313)	< .001 (*d* = 1.520)
	Con	10.09	3.41	12.02	4.51	.030 (*d* = .497)	
M1 stance	Tre	4.85	1.97	6.85	2.03	< .001 (*d* = .846)	< .001 (*d* = 1.272)
	Con	4.00	1.05	4.68	1.71	.021 (*d* = .534)	
M2 stance	Tre	1.69	1.76	6.29	2.60	< .001 (*r* = .822)	< .001 (*r* = .559)
	Con	1.14	.35	2.48	2.59	.044 (*r* = .429)	
M3 stance	Tre	4.92	2.90	5.73	1.89	.050 (*d* = .423)	
	Con	4.95	2.53	4.86	1.98		

Note. Only scores with statistically significant differences are presented. Tre = Treatment. Con = Comparison.

This finding aligns with a number of previous studies that have shown that explicit instruction is effective for students' learning of stance in writing (Chang, 2012; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Fordyce, 2014). The effectiveness of the intervention may be attributed to the design and implementation of writing intervention. As illustrated in Chapter Four, explicit stance instruction in the current study was operationalised based on the framework of Engagement system for metalanguage rule explanation. Students' stance performance was likely to benefit from consciously paying attention to stance features, as in previous studies which have shown that noticing facilitates adult learners' acquisition of language features (Schmidt, 1990; Takahashi, 2010). In addition, students' learning was scaffolded by authentic materials from expert writers, through which students were exposed to effective deployment of stance to develop arguments. Their intake from the instruction appeared to facilitate their own stance performance and

enhance their persuasive argumentation and writing quality (Charles, 2006; Crosthwaite, Cheung, & Jiang, 2017; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Wingate, 2012). This supposition will be further discussed later in 7.3.3 with the quantitative and qualitative results of stance deployment.

Interestingly, the M1 and M2 stance scores of the students in the comparison group also increased with a medium effect size. As the comparison group was also provided with the basic knowledge of genre of introduction, the gains in stance scores might be attributed to students' acquisition of the required rhetorical steps in introduction. After the genre introduction they may have realise that they were expected to introduce previous studies (Move 1 step 2) or indicate research gaps (Move 2) that they did not consider in the pre-test. It is therefore possible that the increased stance scores for the comparison group were the result of inclusion of genre steps missing in the pre-test, rather than of stance deployment. This could be corroborated by the small magnitude of increase in stance scores, as well as the results of stance deployment discussed later in 7.3.3.

7.3.2 Changes in Beliefs

7.3.2.1 Changes in writing beliefs

Quantitative results showed no significant difference in the two factors of writing beliefs after the writing intervention, both within and between the two groups. Though not statistically different, students in the treatment group (M = 3.80), in the post-test, reported a marginally higher level of transactional beliefs than students in the comparison group (M = 3.63) that was close to a level of significance (p = .055). This suggests that after the intervention students in the treatment group had a higher level of understanding of writing as a way to "critically construct the text by actively integrating

their own thinking into the process" (White & Bruning, 2005, p. 168). This finding was triangulated, and further elucidated, with qualitative results on transactional writing beliefs which included two subthemes: *active engagement* and *critical evaluation of others' views*.

The participants in the treatment group exhibited increased awareness of active engagement in writing in the post-intervention interview as reported in 6.2.1.3. For instance, both Ada and Dannielle from the treatment group articulated the necessity to actively integrate their own views into writing to convince putative readers. And the way they intended to achieve active engagement changed from through the enclosure of facts to including stance for convincing arguments. It is probable, too, that the explicit stance instruction encouraged students to take positions on propositions, which may have enhanced their active engagement in the writing process. It is also likely that students achieved a better understanding of idea-content development through analysing expert writing samples, which may have increased their self-confidence in personal involvement during the writing process (White and Bruning, 2005).

Additionally, participants from both groups expressed an increased awareness of critical evaluation of others' views in academic writing, as reported in 6.2.1.3. It is possible that students benefited from the instructional session on genre of introduction provided for both groups and became aware that previous studies should be referenced. For instance, Jing, from the comparison group said that she would build her opinions on other similar research. However, only students from the treatment group overtly exhibited a tendency for stance-taking when evaluating previous studies. For instance, Danielle, from the treatment group, mentioned that tentative stances should be used when citing others' views. In the instruction of stance-taking strategies, the inclusion of external sources in the writing intervention was encouraged, through which students not only became aware

of the importance of evaluation of previous views, but also learned of how to achieve their goal.

In summary, after the writing intervention, students in the treatment group had a better understanding of writing as engagement, which is consistent with Neely's (2014) finding that student writers gained enhanced view of writing as a way of communication in a semester's study. The lack of quantitative differences may be because of the short-term writing instruction provided. As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) argued, it often takes a longer time for psychological factors to evolve. The eight-week writing intervention may be insufficient in length to generate evidence of change in learners' beliefs that is statistically significant.

In contrast to the changes in transactional writing beliefs, the results revealed no statistical difference in transmissional writing beliefs, which were further triangulated by qualitative data from the multiple-case study, between the two groups after the writing intervention. This suggests that the explicit stance instruction did not much affect students' understanding of writing as a process of information transmission, possibly because the intervention posed a bigger impact on the process of writing rather than on the content of writing. As Baaijen et al. (2014) posited, transmissional beliefs are more concerned with the "source of content" in writing, while transactional beliefs are about the "process of writing" and the development of ideas (p. 82).

7.3.2.2 Changes in awareness and beliefs about authorial stance

Analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the multiple-case study showed that students expressed with increased awareness of stance after the writing intervention. Students from the treatment group explicitly referred to authorial stance, when articulating their opinions of academic writing and argumentation (see 6.2.1.3). The

results provide support for the effectiveness of the explicit stance instruction for improving stance awareness as reported in previous studies (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011, 2016; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2016). During the writing intervention, students were constantly exposed to the stance construct and input with both deductive and inductive activities that encourage an explicit focus on stance. As previous studies have emphasised, explicit intervention involving metalinguistic rule explanation is a direct way of getting students to notice targeted linguistic forms (Fordyce, 2014; Schmidt, 1990).

There were no statistically significant changes in beliefs about authorial stance after the period of writing intervention for either group. This was corroborated by the students' descriptive reports in multiple-case study which suggested that beliefs about the dichotomised stance types were largely unchanged (see section 6.2.2). These results may be due also to insufficient time for any evidence of significant changes in students' beliefs about stance, rooted in L1 culture, previous learning experiences, genre, or context, to become apparent (Hyland & Milton, 1997; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; Silva & Nicholls, 1993).

In the multiple-case study students mostly described stance in the epistemic domain at different times, especially concerning certainty and strengths of claims, using polarised descriptors (e.g., *strong/not strong*, *certain/uncertain*). This corroborates Chang's (2016) report that EFL doctoral students most frequently conceptualised stance as a linguistic construct referring to the strengths of claims, extent of precision, or promoting research. Chang (2016) argued that students lacked a robust understanding of stance and their beliefs were narrow in scope. Similarly, in the current study, students still considered stance as primarily a linguistic construct, and rarely discussed it from other perspectives,

such as attitudinal and dialogic perspective. The explicit stance instruction apparently did not change how students conceptualise stance.

Qualitative data from the multiple-case study further revealed that, after the writing intervention, participants from the treatment group reported a shift of preference for tentative stance to assertive stance in their own writing (see 6.2.2.3). Furthermore, they expressed a preference to use a mixture of assertive and tentative stances to construct convincing arguments for various rhetorical purposes. This suggests that students tended to deploy different stance types in a more purposeful way, indicating that they were becoming more confident in why, and how, to use stance resources. This could be due to that the explicit explanation of rules, and analytic tasks, through which students learned the dialogic effects of various stance types and started to notice the effective stance pattern in expert writings, had been effective. The findings suggest that students' understanding, especially of the functions of various stance types, improved, which may also have increased their self-confidence in the task performance.

7.3.3 Changes in Stance Deployment

The written texts of students in the treatment group exhibited both quantitative and qualitative changes in stance deployment after the writing intervention. The quantitative results identified statistically significant changes in the frequencies of monogloss, heterogloss, total expansion, as well as four subtypes (i.e., *proclaim: pronounce*, *proclaim: endorse*, *entertain* and *attribute*) in the written texts for the treatment group, whereas no significant difference was found in the texts for the comparison group over time. No significant difference, however, was detected in stance diversity both within each group and between the two groups in the post-test. Table 7.4 summarises the significant quantitative results identified in the comparisons of stance deployment.

Qualitative analyses further revealed that, after the writing intervention, the treatment group demonstrated improvement in the recurring stance patterns that were more effective, and supportive, for developing argumentation and introducing external voices.

Table 7.4 Summary of Findings in the Comparisons of Stance Deployment

Stance frequency	Treatment group				*p* Within	Comparison group (Post-test)		*p* Between groups
	Pre-test		Post-test					
	M	*SD*	M	*SD*	Treatment group	M	SD	
Heterogloss	45.79	14.75	54.98	19.07	.006 (*d* = .623)	40.01	16.63	.007 (*d* = .900)
Monogloss	54.21	14.75	45.02	19.07	.006 (*d* = .623)	59.99	16.63	.007 (*d* = .900)
Total expansion	14.28	9.80	23.82	13.49	.003 (*d* = .682)	10.65	7.94	< .001 (*d* = 1.660)
E	9.93	7.79	13.58	9.93	.114 (*d* = .335)	5.88	5.22	.002 (*d* = 1.476)
A	4.35	5.11	10.25	10.05	.002 (*r* = .627)	4.77	7.18	.020 (*r* = 343)
PE	2.80	3.64	5.36	6.14	.016 (*r* = .492)	2.78	3.31	.208
PP	9.73	7.24	6.77	7.91	.022 (*r* = .468)	11.15	6.38	.014 (*r* = .364)

Note. PP = proclaim: pronounce; PE = proclaim: endorse; A = attribute; E = entertain. Only the variables that significantly changed are presented.

7.3.3.1 Changes in stance frequencies and no change in diversity

General stance categories

After the writing intervention, statistically significant differences were detected between the two groups in the frequencies of the general stance categories. Analysis of the data showed that student writers in the treatment group, in the post-test, used significantly more heteroglossic and fewer monoglossic utterances than students in the comparison groups. Bakhtin's (1981) proposed that, from a dialogic perspective, a heteroglossic utterance construes a background made up of different points of view and value judgements. This finding indicates that the written texts from the treatment group involved more dialogically diverse propositions after the writing intervention, compared with the texts from the comparison group.

Further analysis found that the heteroglossic growth largely came from students' increased use of expansive stances, as indicated by evidence of increased frequency of total expansion in students' writing; that is, students were able to produce an increased number of sentences in a dialogically expansive manner. The improvement is meaningful as the underuse of expansive stances was frequently found as a salient drawback in L2 and novice student use of stance in writing (e.g., Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Hyland, 2012, 2016c; Hyland & Milton, 1997). Derewianka (2007) also reported that, in student academic writing in history, texts written by more advanced writers were marked by a greater use of dialogically expansive stance. The finding also aligns with the features found in high-rated student writing in other previous studies (e.g., Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Lancaster, 2014; Wu, 2007). For instance, Wu (2007) found that high-rated student scripts tended to involve more instances of heteroglossic clauses with dialogically expansive resources. Therefore, the finding suggests that, after the writing intervention, students in this study were more competent in academic writing.

During the explicit stance instruction, student writers, in this study, clearly acquired the functions of a dialogically expansive stance in academic writing and increasingly noticed its application and effectiveness from expert texts. They, appeared to acknowledge their previous underuse of expansive stances in the pre-test writing, made more attempts in post-test writing. Another explanation could be that as the students gradually recognised the complexity of alternative views in academic writing, they were prompted to use more mitigating strategy to be more precise in writing. As Aull and Lancaster (2014) found, successful upper-level students used more hedges than first-year students as they recognised their effects of establishing an academic stance that "projects precision and awareness of complexity" (p. 173). No significant change was observed for the frequency of contractive stances in total; it is possible that the writing

intervention impacted on a nuanced deployment or configuration of contractive stances, instead of increasing the frequency.

Stance subtypes

In regard to the stance subtypes, results showed that students in the treatment group applied significantly more instances of *entertain* than students in the comparison group in the post-test. Formulations of *entertain* indicate that the author's position is one of a number of possibilities, which are typically represented by modal expressions (e.g., *may*, *might*) or appearance-based verbs (e.g., *seem*) (Lancaster, 2014). This finding indicates that, for the treatment group, their writing encompassed more modal or circumstantial expressions to provide dialogic space for alternatives. After the intervention, it seems that the students possessed increased awareness of the importance of providing space for dialogic possibilities, through noticing the use of modality in the learning materials or from teacher's explicit explanations.

The frequency of *attribute*, another type of dialogic expansion, was also found to increase significantly in the treatment group and was statistically higher than in the comparison group in the post-test. According to Martin and White (2005), formulations of attribution disassociate the proposition from the authorial voice by attributing it to external sources. This finding reveals that students increasingly referred to external voices in their writing. Moreover, another type of stance concerning external sources, *proclaim: endorse*, also significantly increased in frequency within the treatment group in the post-test.

It is interesting to note that the frequency of *attribute* (M = 10.25) almost doubled that of *proclaim: endorse* (M = 5.36) in the post-test writing from the treatment group. This suggests that when dealing with external sources, students were more willing to keep

distance from the attributed material than to take responsibility for the endorsed proposition. As Martin and White (2005) explained, endorsed formulations construe the sourced propositions by the internal authorial voice as "maximally warrantable" (p. 126). Although they were more aware of the necessity to include external voices to support argumentation, they were cautious about taking authorial responsibility and preferred to stay authorially detached. This resonates Lee and Deakin's (2016) finding that Chinese ESL students resisted taking a strong writer identity and preferred to maintain a detached writing style. The results, in this study, also corroborate Lee et al.'s (2018) finding that, in L2 undergraduates' citation practices, students primarily used source texts for an attribution function and tended to adopt a non-committal stance that acknowledges or distances themselves from cited sources.

For the students in this study, a plausible reason for the outcomes could be that students lacked confidence in the validity of source materials and were afraid of being challenged. This assumption could be corroborated by the qualitative findings in the stance patterns for including external sources (see section 6.2.3.2), discussed later in 7.3.3.2. Students may also have been inclined to show deference to the authority of external sources due to their self-perceived peripheral status in the academic discipline. As Xie (2016) postulated, Chinese students tend to consider scholars, or published articles, as unchallengeable authority, so they prefer to take a neutral position to attribute external sources safely, instead of positively or negatively evaluating the voices. Another possible explanation of the results could be that student writers were affected by power relations with the putative reader, that is, their teacher, as the teacher would judge and evaluate their writing. Students may be motivated to protect themselves from criticism by "distancing themselves from their claims and to attempt to gain credibility" by attributing the claims to external sources (Koutsantoni, 2006, p. 32). Their position as a

detached authorial persona may also reflect the influence of traditional Chinese values of collectivism above individualism (Bloch & Chi, 1995).

Results also indicated that the written texts of students in the treatment group, after the writing intervention, exhibited a significant drop in the frequency of *proclaim: pronounce*; the frequency was found to be lower, statistically significantly, than that in the comparison group in the post-test. Martin and White (2005) pointed out that formulations of *proclaim: pronounce* involve explicit authorial interpolations to assert upon the credibility of the proposition with a more subjective voice, which may pose a threat to reader solidarity. The finding in this study, thus indicates that student writers in the treatment group deployed fewer subjective voices when assert the validity of propositions, which may contribute to better alignment with the reader and enhance writing quality, consistent with Wu (2007) reporting that high-rated student essays used *proclaim: pronounce* less frequently than low-rated essays. The drop in frequency of *proclaim: pronounce* may be attributed to students possessing a better understanding of its dialogic effects on putative readers. As found in Study One *proclaim: pronounce* was mostly enacted through intensifiers (discussed in 7.2.3.2), an alternative explanation is that students learned more stance linguistic expressions during the writing intervention and were capable of applying multiple stance options other than intensifiers.

Stance diversity

The treatment group did not show significant difference in stance diversity from the comparison group in the post-test, which indicates that there was no salient change in the number of different stance types adopted in student writing between the two groups. This may be due to that as students had already applied multiple stance types in the pre-test (mean values of stance diversity were 5.33 and 4.86, respectively), during the

writing intervention they might have put more effort into assessing and adjusting the application of various stance types in their own writing. Their writing, therefore, may have exhibited changes in stance frequencies and nuanced configuration, rather than diversity. As stance diversity was found to be a significant predictor for writing quality in Study One (discussed in 7.2.4), this result suggests further that the increase in the writing scores in the treatment group can be attributed to the improvement of nuanced deployment of stance, rather than stance diversity.

7.3.3.2 Changes in stance patterns

Overall pattern

Qualitative analysis of the written texts of the students from the treatment group, showed salient different overall stance patterns, compared with those from the comparison group, after the writing intervention. It was found that 45.8% of students in the treatment group were able to employ various contractive and expansive stances in alternation to construct an effective argumentation. For instance, the pattern in a sample text proceeded from countering common views, to attributing to external sources, to countering them by indicating the defects, and to proclaiming and entertaining the writer's own ideas (see *Example (3)* in section 6.2.3.1). Contractive and expansive stances were interwoven together in a "wave-like fashion" (Ryshina-Pankova, 2014, p. 295), creating a balance between acknowledging and estimating possible views, and proposing the writer's own opinions. This indicates that students had become more competent and strategic in establishing an intersubjective dialogue. As Lee (2008) pointed out, a successful writer displays a "dynamic shift" between the writer's own argument and persuasion (p. 259), which is achieved by the interweaving network of contractive and expansive stance options, of monoglossic and heteroglossic mode. The influence of multi-level analytic

tasks with authentic materials in the intervention may account for the positive results by which students were able to explore the making of stance meanings in the discoursal context. As found in Chang's (2012) study, learners frequently turned to the context to make sense of stance meanings. Students' attention may have been drawn to the stance pattern at the discourse level, which helped them to become more purposeful and strategic in manipulating dialogic space in the writing process.

In contrast, the overall stance patterns in written texts of the students in the comparison group, remained the same as in the pre-test, mainly involving monogloss with contractive stances, especially with *disclaim: counter* and *proclaim: pronounce* (see *Example (2)* in section 6.2.3.1). This indicates that students in the comparison group mainly relied on monogloss and contractive stances for the construction of argumentation, with rare instances of expansive stances. The repetitive use of the pattern projects a subjective position where the writer challenges dialogistic alternatives, conceding little room for negotiation. The putative readers could have been constantly surprised by the countering expectations or confronted with authorial emphases (Martin & White, 2005). Furthermore, the high proportion of monogloss and assertions indicates that the arguments were built on descriptive facts or the writer's own assertions, which may decrease the persuasive impact. Previous research has reported similar patterns in low-scoring student essays (e.g., Lee, 2008; Miller et al., 2014; Wu, 2007). The finding suggests that students' stance patterns of the comparison group were not effective and would undermine the overall argumentation. It further supports the previous supposition about gains in writing scores in section 7.3.1, that the increased stance scores in the comparison group were mainly the outcome of genre improvement rather than of changes in stance deployment.

Patterns for including external voices

Qualitative analysis indicated that students in the treatment group showed improvement in the way they included external voices after the writing intervention, compared with students from the comparison group. Students in the comparison group continued the pattern in the pre-test that was a combination of monogloss with either *proclaim: endorse* or *attribute* (see *Example (8)* in section 6.2.3.2), in which the external voices were simply listed without further interpretation. This indicates that external voices were included only as follow-up evidence for the preceding claim. In contrast, some of students (37.5%) in the treatment group started to deploy a pattern of monogloss with either *proclaim: endorse* or *attribute*, followed by contractive stances, after the writing intervention (see *Example (9)* in section 6.2.3.2). Rather than only listing the source texts as supporting evidence, the external voices were presented together with interpretations using contractive stances to express authorial opinions. Lee (2008) argued that attributed utterances in successful student writing should achieve two rhetorical purposes, "to support the claim or averral that precedes retrospectively and to contextualize the claim that follows prospectively" (p. 258). The result indicates that students in the treatment group performed better in the post-test writing in achieving these two purposes, especially in the contextualising the following claim.

This finding also implies that students, in the treatment group, had greater personal involvement in the writing process after the writing intervention. According to Galbraith's (2009) dual-process model of writing, only including external voices without further illustration features the knowledge-retrieval process. While writing that invites external voices with the writer's personal explanation to form arguments manifests the knowledge-constituting process, in which new content generated shows the development of writer's understanding. It appears that students from the treatment

group had greater active engagement and involvement in integrating source text with personal opinions to construct convincing arguments. This was also consistent with the finding of Miller et al. (2014) that high-scoring students were more effective in incorporating the source text into the development of arguments. The finding could be because constant exposures to experts' writing in the intervention raised students' awareness of how to construct persuasive argumentation.

In addition to the patterns, the results showed that after the writing intervention, students in the treatment group tended to endorse external voices less in direct quotations (18.2%) and more by using diverse stance markers to paraphrase and integrate propositions, whereas direct quotations remained dominant in the texts by the comparison group (91.7%). White (2015) explained that inserted extra-vocalisation, that is, direct quotations in this study, granted maximal degrees of externalisation with minimal internalisation for dialogic negotiation. The results, therefore, suggests that students in the comparison group, relying on direct quotations, declined to take the authorial responsibility for the viewpoint. Whereas after the writing intervention, students in the treatment group took more authorial responsibility in endorsing external viewpoints, which helped to integrate the external voices with their own opinions. As the multiple voices were better interwoven, the texts became more interactive, dialogic, and persuasive (Lee, 2008). A reason for the finding may be that as students gained increased dialogic awareness as shown in the interviews, they learnt from authentic materials how to incorporate external voices effectively. This finding also resonates with previous studies that as students' transactional writing beliefs increased (as discussed in 7.3.2.1), they could integrate information better from multiple sources (Cuevas et al., 2016; Mateos et al., 2011).

Another interesting finding is that students from both groups sustained the key feature of attributing utterances to ambiguous sources (the treatment group: 71.4%; the comparison group: 73.7%), although the frequency of *attribute* significantly increased in the post-test writing from the treatment group as discussed earlier in 7.3.3.1. Attributed formulations, as Martin and White (2005) elucidated, disassociate the propositions from the internal authorial voice to external sources. However, as the origins of the external sources were not clearly provided (for instance, by using hearsay structures: *it is said, some educators thought,* see *Example (6)* in section 6.2.3.2), it is likely that these attributions may reduce the reliability and credibility of the propositions in arguments. This result is similar to Kwon et al.'s (2018) finding that L2 undergraduate writers prefer to attribute to external sources through uncited generalization or vague references. The current finding might be due to students' lack of source materials, or literature indexing techniques, for the academic task, so that they were constrained by their limited reference resources when they attempted to invite external voices. As Cumming et al. (2016) argued, prior knowledge and experience may influence students' performance in writing with sources. Likewise, Helms-Park and Stapleton (2003), and Stapleton (2002), emphasise content knowledge in the context of novice L2 writing. As they suggested, it is helpful to "highlight the value of ideas and the reasoned support" for L2 novice writers (Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003, p. 256). This might explain students' propensity to use *attribute* rather than *proclaim: endorse* as detected in quantitative results (see 7.3.3.1). Because of their frequent reference to ambiguous sources, it might be safer for them to stay neutral through attribute, rather than expressing strong commitment by endorsing, as they may not have been sure about the validity of the proposition. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that if the intervention is implemented, together with appropriate source inputs, with a longer period of time,

students might achieve a more salient improvement in the construction of convincing arguments. As Fordyce (2014) mentioned, follow-up input and practice are needed for the noticed forms to be stored in long-term memory. Instruction in indexing and referencing skills would also be helpful for students to collect "raw materials" for stance-taking and to include these external sources using adequate and appropriate academic conventions.

7.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the major findings of the current research within a wider context of key empirical studies and theoretical perspectives. Analysis and discussion of results obtained in Study One indicate that the relationships between beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality are mixed and complex, which could be affected by multiple factors concerning L1 background, previous learning experiences, task genre, or context. These results further reveal the necessity to enhance students' knowledge concerning writing and stance for better stance-taking and writing outcomes.

The discussion of results in Study Two indicates that the explicit stance instruction was effective in improving student writers' stance awareness, knowledge of writing process, stance deployment and overall writing quality, which further supports previous investigations (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2016; Fordyce, 2014). The effectiveness could be attributed to the instruction overtly drawing students' attention to stance features and providing them with opportunities to learn from authentic materials within the context. The finding further indicates that it is helpful to provide additional source inputs or reference skills to better facilitate students' learning of writing while implementing explicit stance instruction.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the two main studies. Then the contributions and implications of the current research are proposed in terms of theoretical, methodological and pedagogical perspectives, followed by the limitations of this research and recommendations for future studies. Finally, A conclusion is provided in the end.

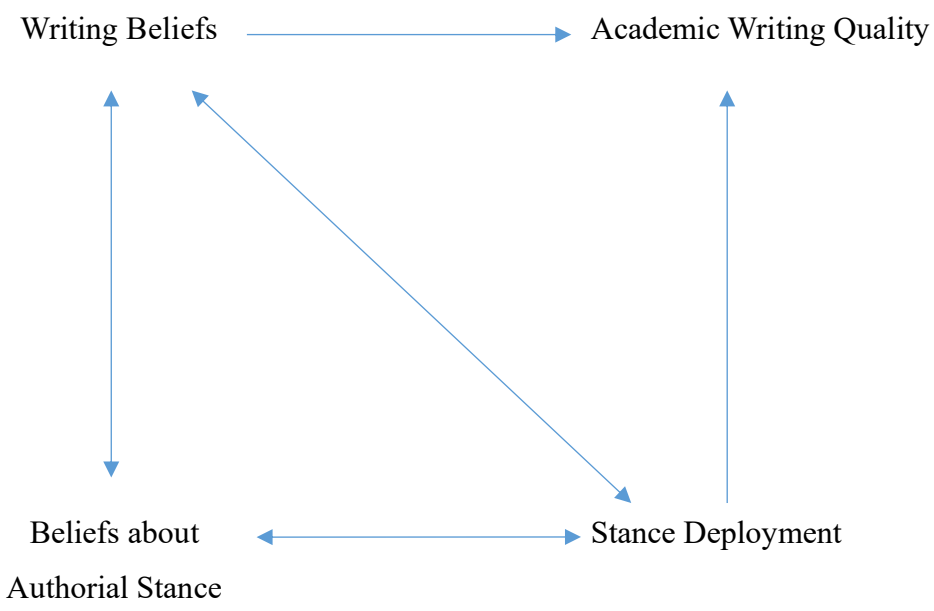
8.1 Summary of Major Findings

This empirical research encompasses a preparatory study for instrument validation and two main studies. Study One investigated the relationships between student writers' beliefs about writing and stance, stance deployment, and writing quality in an academic setting in an EFL context in China. Study Two was a quasi-experimental intervention study evaluating the effects of explicit stance instruction on student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality in an EFL context. Findings from the two main studies are summarised with a general conclusion for each study.

8.1.1 Beliefs about Writing and Stance, Stance Deployment, and Writing Quality

Findings from Study One indicate that the relationships between EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and academic writing quality are complex and intertwined. Figure 8.1 presents the visualised interrelationships among the variables.

Figure 8.1 Interrelationships among Beliefs, Stance Deployment and Academic Writing Quality



The Chinese EFL students reported a higher level of transactional writing beliefs than transmissional beliefs, indicating their high level of affective and cognitive engagement in writing. In terms of beliefs about stance, they expressed a higher level of preference for dialogic contraction than for dialogic expansion, suggesting that they had more positive attitudes toward assertive stances than tentative stance. Students' beliefs about authorial stance, both preference for dialogic contraction and for dialogic expansion, were positively correlated with transactional beliefs about writing.

Students' writing beliefs and beliefs about stance were associated with the frequencies of various stance types, especially dialogically contractive stances, deployed in their writing. This suggests that students' beliefs play a key role in the composition process and lead to different usage of stance resources. The evidence of an unclear relationship between students' beliefs and use of expansive stances suggests that students may lack

a robust understanding of stance and need more support in stance-taking in the writing instruction.

In regard to students' texts, only the diversity of stance types and the frequency of one stance type, *disclaim: counter*, were found to be positively correlated with overall writing quality, indicating that various stance resources may contribute to academic writing quality collectively rather than individually.

High-scoring students reported a higher level of transactional writing beliefs and preference for dialogic contraction than low-scoring students. While students' writing proficiency was identified as a factor affecting reported beliefs, it had little impact on the frequencies and diversity of different stance types. Students at this level, regardless of writing proficiency, tended to underuse stance expressions, which may be influenced by their lack of stance awareness and knowledge.

Transactional writing beliefs and the diversity of stance types were identified as significant predictors for academic writing quality. This was evidence that students' academic writing performance was affected by their transactional view of writing and the variety of stance types used, indicating the need to support students with a range of stance resources for achieving better academic writing.

These results indicate a complex interrelationship between the aforementioned variables. The two beliefs, investigated in this research, writing beliefs and beliefs about stance, do not work in isolation; a variety of psychological factors, context, or learning experience may affect stance deployment and academic writing quality. To be a successful stance-takers, students need a better understanding of writing and of the dialogic effects that stance features can generate in writing.

8.1.2 Explicit Stance Instruction

Study Two demonstrated that the explicit stance instruction improved EFL student writers' awareness of stance, understanding of writing, and stance deployment, which contributed to better academic writing quality. During the writing intervention, students in the treatment group were provided with opportunities to learn the rules and stance features in various tasks and activities, which helped them notice and deploy stance resources more effectively in academic writing.

In particular, after the writing intervention, students in the treatment group reported an improved awareness and understanding of authorial stance. Although they still conceptualised stance as a linguistic construct referring to the strengths of claims or extent of precision, they reported a better understanding of the dialogic effects of stance and tended to actively deploy various stance types to fulfil different rhetorical purposes.

Moreover, students in the treatment group reported an enhanced understanding of academic writing as a process involving active engagement and critical evaluation. During the writing intervention students were encouraged to take positions in their writing and became more aware of the importance of personal engagement in the writing process. As a result of the instruction on stance-taking strategies for referring to external voices, they also had a clearer idea of how to evaluate previous studies with appropriate stances.

There were also substantial differences in frequencies and patterns of stance in writing from the two groups in the post-test. The texts of the students from the treatment group tended to be more heteroglossic and dialogically expansive after the writing intervention, which means that they included more utterances that recognise and engage with dialogistic background (Martin & White, 2005). Students also deployed fewer

intensifiers, featuring a contractive and subjective voice, to assert the credibility of propositions, due to their deeper understanding of reader alignment and acquisition of multiple stance options. Students from the treatment group were observed to make more effort to include references to external voices in their writing. However, they remained cautious about taking authorial responsibility and preferred to stay neutral and authorially detached. Students may have lacked confidence in the validity of the information, as they mostly attributed their assertions to ambiguous sources.

In regard to stance patterns, there was evidence that students in the treatment group started to build arguments through a "dynamic shift" integrating various contractive and expansive stances (Lee, 2008, p. 259); more instances in their writing involving external voices were presented together with personal interpretation or viewpoints, and less through direct quotations. These findings suggest that, after the writing intervention, students incorporated external and personal views into the development of arguments more effectively. It can be concluded that students in the treatment group were more capable of more effective stance-taking to establish convincing argumentation than the students in the comparison group.

As a result, after the writing intervention, students in the treatment group outperformed students in the comparison group in the academic writing quality. As both groups were provided with the introductory session of genre knowledge, the result rules out the possibility that instruction on genre may have contributed to the greater improvement in treatment group students' writing quality. As they were more active and effective in stance-taking, it is evident that their improved stance deployment contributed to better writing quality.

Stated succinctly, the findings in Study Two provide empirical evidence for the effectiveness of explicit stance instruction in improving student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and writing outcomes. The results provide robust evidence that the intervention helped students to become aware of stance, enhance the understanding of the dialogic effects of stance, improve knowledge about writing process, and develop a better usage of stance resources for effective argumentation. Furthermore, the intervention study provides valuable information about the feasibility and effectiveness of incorporating explicit stance instruction into the EAP writing instruction for university students at advanced stage.

8.2 Contributions and Implications

8.2.1 Theoretical Contributions and Implications

This research has several theoretical contributions and implications. The research as a whole, drawing on both social-interactive (i.e., dialogism) and sociocognitive theoretical perspectives, enriches an understanding of student writers' stance-taking behaviours in an academic setting. This study also provides further evidence for the applicability of the two theoretical perspectives to the fields of second language writing and learning in an EFL context.

The first theoretical implication is related to the application of dialogism in the development and validation of the questionnaire BASQ. The questionnaire draws on the Engagement system for the assessment of students' beliefs about authorial stance; the results provide preliminary evidence for a two-factor model, which aligns with the two broad categories of heteroglossia in the framework, dividing student writers' beliefs about authorial stance into preference for dialogic contraction and for dialogic expansion. Together with Study One, the results provide empirical support for a dialogic

approach to stance investigation and expands the application of the Engagement system to the assessment of students' beliefs about stance and the relationship with stance deployment in an EFL academic context. Additionally, the successful application of the Engagement system in Study Two provides practical evidence for its applicability as a pedagogical affordance. There is also evidence of its power in elucidating stance performance, especially of nuanced stance patterns in academic argumentation, of which there has been little investigation previously.

Secondly, in terms of sociocognitive perspective, the investigations of relationships in Study One lend empirical support to the sociocognitive nature of stance deployment, in which human behaviour, personal factors (i.e., beliefs), and environmental events operate in triadic reciprocity to determine each other (Bandura, 1986, 1999). The results reflect Bandura's (1986) view of the importance of beliefs in accounting for corresponding behaviours and extend its application to two less investigated types of beliefs at different levels of specificity. The findings also contribute to a better understanding of factors which may influence students' ineffective stance performance and emphasise the importance of raising awareness of stance in writing instruction (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Charles, 2007a). The findings in Study One, collectively, reveal the complex relationships between beliefs, stance deployment, and writing quality, which exemplify the previous claims about the complexity of writing (e.g., Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; Zhang, 2013).

In addition to the two overarching theoretical perspectives, there is empirical evidence from Study Two for the contribution of stance patterns to writing quality. As scholars have advocated (e.g., Miller et al., 2014; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014), effective and less effective stance deployment not only differs in terms of the presence of certain stance

types, but also in the order and interplay of various types. Thus, this finding also provides further support for a qualitative approach to investigations of stance.

8.2.2 Methodological Contributions and Implications

From a methodological perspective, the current research also makes several contributions and implications. Firstly, the newly developed questionnaire (i.e., BASQ) for the measurement of students' beliefs about authorial stance provides a tool for future investigation in this field. Additionally, the validation of the questionnaire provided evidence for the dichotomised operationalisation of stance construct, suggested in previous studies (e.g., Chang, 2016; Chang & Tsai, 2014), rendering support for a reductionist approach for simplifying the highly complex concept to communicate with participants more effectively.

The current research provides a range of methodological choices that could be useful in the investigation of students' beliefs and stance deployment. It employed mixed-methods designs in both Study One and Study Two with different combinations of methods. Study One involved an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design in which word frequency analysis was used as a qualitative follow-up analysis of the quantitative results. Study Two was a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, in which beliefs and stance deployment were examined both quantitatively and qualitatively. Students' beliefs were interpreted by drawing on self-reported questionnaires together with semi-structured interviews and writing journals. While stance deployment was examined with both quantitative frequencies and diversity of types as well as qualitative recurring patterns. The combination of the variety of methods helps to triangulate data sources and neutralise the weakness of each form of data (Creswell, 2014). Particularly, it has demonstrated how the nuanced differences of stance patterns in students' texts can be

revealed, which provides some methodological insights in response to previous advocacy for the qualitative exploration for stance deployment (e.g., Miller et al., 2014; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014; Yoon & Römer, 2020).

8.2.3 Pedagogical Implications

Several pedagogical implications concerning the academic writing instruction for EFL undergraduate students can be drawn from the findings of the current research. Firstly, the investigations of the complex relationships between students' beliefs and deployment of stance, along with previous studies on authorial stance (e.g., Aull et al., 2017; Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Charles, 2007a; Lancaster, 2014; Lee & Deakin, 2016; Ryshina-Pankova, 2014; Wu, 2006, 2007), emphasise the need for teachers to raise students' awareness of authorial stance in teaching writing.

Secondly, as a number of scholars have advocated, there is a concerted need for explicit instruction on authorial stance in writing classroom (e.g., Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011, 2016; Crosthwaite & Jiang, 2017; Hyland, 2005b; Li & Wharton, 2012). This study provides empirical support for the effectiveness of explicit stance instruction to improve student writers' awareness and deployment of stance, as well as boosting their overall academic writing quality. Specifically, students exhibited progress in some of the commonly found challenges for students in stance-taking, such as overuse of monogloss, underuse of expansive stances, authorial detachment, and overuse of assertive stance.

Informed by the current research findings, several pedagogical practices might be adapted to benefit students' learning of stance. Firstly, the current findings suggest that teachers should pay more attention to elucidating the dialogic and interactive nature of writing. The functions and usefulness of various stance resources, as well as using authentic texts by professional writers could be useful in raising students' awareness of

why and how to use stance features strategically to improve academic writing quality. Including a dialogic perspective could also help to bridge the gap between assertive and tentative stance in students' understanding as they become increasingly aware of the dialogic nature underlying various positionings. Authentic texts could provide students with opportunities to learn the role of stance within the context of discourse, to make sense of individual stance meaning, notice the flow of stance features in discourse, and to learn how to manage dialogic space to fulfil rhetorical purposes. The current research also indicates that students lack a robust understanding of stance, especially in terms of expansive stance, suggesting that teachers need to place greater emphases on this aspect in the instruction.

It is recommended also that stance instruction should be complemented by genre knowledge and input of source materials for academic writing. The competence to effectively deploy stance features involves both an awareness of rhetorical purposes and an ability to appropriately manage the resources for interpersonal effects. As Xie (2016) posited, as students gradually possess a clear understanding of the nature of function of the target academic genre, they might be more aware that they are expected to take evaluative positions when referring to external voices. The current findings also reveal that student writers tend to use ambiguous source in attributions because they have limited storage of source materials. It could be helpful, therefore, to include more external sources to facilitate their stance learning and teach indexing skills for literature searches, so that students could have the "raw materials" for position-taking. A recommendation of the current research, therefore, is that EAP instruction should be a combination of instruction on genre knowledge and stance, with additional input of source materials, to develop students' capability for effective stance-taking in academic writing.

Moreover, teachers should provide consistent feedback to make stance features more visible for students as they attempt to include stance in their writing, especially for students with relatively low proficiency. As Lee and Deakin (2016) pointed out, this may help students "mark their stance more mindfully and engage with readers more meaningfully" in their own writing (p. 32). By doing so, teachers could enhance students "rhetorical sophistication" to engage them interactively in their academic writing (Lee & Deakin, 2016, p. 32).

8.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Several limitations need to be mentioned so that recommendations for future research in related fields can be made. Firstly, the development and validation of the questionnaire BASQ was based on the sample of participants in one academic discipline in the EFL context of China. Although the sample size was acceptable, the findings should be interpreted with this limitation in mind. Future studies are recommended for further exploring the application of BASQ in other disciplines or contexts. In doing so, the effects of wording on participants' preconception in the given context should be considered. For instance, the meanings of the terms "assertive" and "tentative" are culturally loaded, which may vary in different contexts. Alternative terms that could be advised for use in future research are "contractive" and "expansive".

In addition, the validation process elicited two broad categories of heteroglossia from the dialogic perspective: preference for dialogic contraction and for dialogic expansion. Further efforts could be granted to improve the scale with an expanded theoretical scope, for example, by including a monoglossic dimension. Another recommendation for future research is relating to the removed factor, Factor 3, in the validation process, as reported in section 5.1.1.1. As the factor indicates a similar positive feeling toward

dialogic contraction as Factor 1, future studies could be conducted to look further into whether student writers' preference for contractive stances is affected by other factors, such as genre or context, to understand the results better.

Secondly, the current research focused on the relationships between two beliefs and stance deployment, but given the complexity of EFL writing, it is possible that these domain-specific beliefs may influence performance together with other beliefs, such as epistemic beliefs or self-efficacy beliefs (Chen & Zhang, 2019; Mateos et al., 2011; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; Teng & Zhang, 2016b; Zhang, 2013). It is recommended that future studies involve other beliefs systems to investigate further the influence of constellations of beliefs on stance and writing performance. Further studies could also examine EFL student writers' retrospective responses to specific stance decisions in their own writing, such as by using discourse-based interviews (e.g., Lancaster, 2016b), which may offer additional insights into the relationship between beliefs and deployment of stance. Another recommendation is concerned with the finding about beliefs about stance, that the two factors were found to be independent, suggesting that students might hold various configurations of stance beliefs (e.g., high dialogic contraction—high dialogic expansion, high dialogic contraction—low dialogic expansion). Future research therefore, is recommended to examine the influence of different configurations of stance beliefs on writing performance, as often found in research on beliefs (e.g., Schraw, 2000; White & Bruning, 2005).

Another limitation is that the current investigations on the relationships between EFL student writers' beliefs and deployment of stance in Study One primarily drew on quantitative data. Future studies could investigate the relationship between student writers' beliefs with stance patterns, qualitatively, to establish a deeper understanding of EFL students' stance-taking in an academic writing task.

In regard to the texts that the current research targeted, due to various constraints, the academic texts for analysis were taken only from the introduction sections of undergraduate theses. As stance deployment also acts as an essential role in other academic genre and thesis sections, such as the literature review and discussion sections (e.g., Cheng & Unsworth, 2016; Shen et al., 2019; Xie, 2016), future research could focus on student texts in these and other aspects of academic texts that have not been investigated in this study. Another limitation is that, due to practical considerations, the current research used after-class assignments for collecting written texts and allowed students to decide their own topic according to their research interests. Thus, the writing scores may not reliably represent students' academic writing competence, as it may be influenced by time allocation, topic differences, or possible appropriation of others' texts. Future studies should investigate stance-taking performance in timed academic writing tasks in class.

Although positive results were obtained from the intervention study, the current research examined only the short-term effectiveness of explicit stance instruction by using pre- and post-tests. Further intervention studies could be conducted to examine the long-term effects of instruction to observe the maintenance of the stance gains by including delayed post-tests (e.g., Fordyce, 2014), and provide richer data on, and insight into, the effects of explicit stance instruction on student writers' stance deployment and academic writing performance.

8.4 Conclusion

This thesis has reported two studies. Study One investigated the relationships between EFL students' writing beliefs, beliefs about authorial stance, stance deployment, and academic writing quality, informed by Bakhtin's (1981) dialogism and Bandura's (1996)

sociocognitive theory. Study Two evaluated the effectiveness of an explicit instruction of stance, framed from the dialogic perspective, on EFL student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and academic writing quality. The findings show that student writers' beliefs, stance deployment, and writing quality are involved in a complex interrelationship, and that the explicit stance instruction had positive effects on students' stance awareness, understanding of writing, stance deployment, and overall writing quality.

The two studies have theoretical and methodological implications, as well as insights for EAP teaching and learning. They provide information and evidence for a better understanding of student writers' stance deployment in academic writing and its influencing factors. Furthermore, teachers are offered possibilities for incorporating instruction on stance in their classroom teaching to help students improve stance deployment. The studies may also provide insights for researchers and teachers, in other contexts, into how student writers understand and deploy authorial stance for fostering better stance-taking in their academic writing.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Jacobs et al.'s (1981) ESL Composition Profile

ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE

STUDENT DATE TOPIC

SCORE	LEVEL	CRITERIA	COMMENTS
CONTENT	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable • substantive • thorough development of thesis • relevant to assigned topic	
	26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject • adequate range • limited development of thesis • mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail	
	21-17	FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject • little substance • inadequate development of topic	
	16-13	VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject • non-substantive • not pertinent • OR not enough to evaluate	
ORGANIZATION	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression • ideas clearly stated/supported • succinct • well-organized • logical sequencing • cohesive	
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy • loosely organized but main ideas stand out • limited support • logical but incomplete sequencing	
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent • ideas confused or disconnected • lacks logical sequencing and development	
	9-7	VERY POOR: does not communicate • no organization • OR not enough to evaluate	
VOCABULARY	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range • effective word/idiom choice and usage • word form mastery • appropriate register	
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range • occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage *but meaning not obscured*	
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range • frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage • *meaning confused or obscured*	
	9-7	VERY POOR: essentially translation • little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form • OR not enough to evaluate	
LANGUAGE USE	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions • few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions	
	21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions • minor problems in complex constructions • several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions *but meaning seldom obscured*	
	17-11	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions • frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions • *meaning confused or obscured*	
	10-5	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules • dominated by errors • does not communicate • OR not enough to evaluate	
MECHANICS	5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions • few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing	
	4	GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing *but meaning not obscured*	
	3	FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • poor handwriting • *meaning confused or obscured*	
	2	VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions • dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • handwriting illegible • OR not enough to evaluate	

TOTAL SCORE READER COMMENTS

Appendix B: Stance Rating Scale

Instruction: Evaluate the extent to which the writer's stance deployment effectively fulfil the rhetorical purposes of each move.

Move 1-3 in Introduction

Move 1: Establishing the territory

a. by showing that the general research area is important, central, problematic
b. by introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area

Move2: Establishing a niche

by indicating a research gap or by extending previous knowledge

Move 3: Presenting the present work

a. by outlining purposes or stating the nature of the present research
b. by listing research questions or hypotheses
c. by stating the value of the present research
d. by outlining the structure of the paper

Evaluation scale for stance deployment:

Score	Level	Criteria
Move 1	10-8	Mixture of monogloss and heterogloss to give background; Use endorse or attribute to establish research field; Use entertain to suggest possibility; Use counter.
	7-4	More monogloss than heterogloss to give background; Use counter; Limited endorse or attribute; Limited entertain; Or obscure establishment of research field.
	3-1	Monogloss dominant; Less or no heterogloss; Fact-reporting or narrative-like; No endorse or attribute; No entertain; Or Move 1 absent.
Move 2	10-8	Clear indication of research gaps; Heterogloss more than monogloss; Use counter or deny; Less or no pronounce; Use endorse or attribute.
	7-4	Obscure indication of research gaps; Limited heterogloss; Use pronounce; Less or no counter or deny.
	3-1	Monogloss dominant; Use pronounce; Or Move 2 absent.
Move 3	10-8	Monogloss dominant; Clear description of the research goal or structure.
	7-4	Dense or obscure description of the research goal or structure; Use pronounce; Monogloss more than heterogloss.
	3-1	Move 3 under-developed or absent.

Options of stance deployment:

Monogloss Bare assertion. A sentence which does not employ any heteroglossic resources.

E.g. Different cultures have caused many conflicts.

Heterogloss **disclaim: deny** A sentence which directly rejects a contrary position.

E.g. Different cultures do *not* cause many conflicts.

disclaim: counter A sentence which presents the current proposition as replacing a contrary position.

E.g. *But* it also has some problems.

proclaim: concur A sentence which overtly announces the reader as agreeing with the proposition.

E.g. *As we all know*, English learning websites are widely used.

proclaim: pronounce A sentence which involves explicit writer commitment.

E.g. *I contend* that a telephone call to a person who has been robbed takes only a couple of minutes.

proclaim: endorse A sentence which expresses the writer's alignment with the external voice.

E.g. *Sociologists find out* that there is a close relationship between home education and juvenile delinquency.

entertain A sentence which acknowledges the current proposition as one of the possibilities, commonly through the use of modals.

E.g. Through lexical error analysis, they *may* have a clear mind about categories of errors they made in writing.

attribute A sentence in which the writer disassociates the proposition to an external source.

E.g. *According to* the survey, learners are more willing to find answers on the Internet in order to save time.

Appendix C Interview Protocol

Part I: Background Information 背景信息

1. Have you taken any English academic writing classes before?
   你是否上过关于英语学术写作的课程？
2. Have you ever written a piece of English academic writing?
   你是否有英语学术写作的经历？
3. What's your academic interest?
   你感兴趣的研究方向是什么？

Part II: Understanding of Academic Writing 关于学术写作的理解

1. What is a piece of academic writing?
   你认为什么是学术写作？
2. What do you think successful academic writing should look like?
   你认为成功的学术写作是什么样子的？
3. What is the purpose of arguments in academic writing?
   学术写作中论述的目的是什么？
4. What is an effective argument in academic writing?
   在学术写作中，怎样的论述是有效的？
5. How should the author express his or her own opinion in the academic writing?
   在学术写作中，作者应该如何发表自己的看法？

Part III: Text Reading and Response 文本阅读和反馈

(Students read two versions of an academic introduction 阅读两个版本的学术论文引言)

1. Which one do you think is more convincing?
   你认为哪个更有说服力？
2. What is your opinion about the differences of the two texts?
   你认为两篇引言有什么不同？
3. How would you express your view in your own academic writing?
   你在学术写作中会如何表达自己的观点？

Appendix D Writing Journal Prompts

Instruction: In the journal, you can write anything related to the following aspects. There is no word limit. You can write either in English or in Chinese.

1) What did you learn in the English writing class this week? What is useful for your English writing?
2) Your opinions, attitudes or feelings about English writing or academic writing;
3) Problems you encounter in your English writing;
4) How to make your arguments sound convincing;
5) How to express your own opinions in English writing;
6) What do you want to learn more about English academic writing?
7) What suggestions you get from teachers or other students on academic writing.
8) Anything else that is related to your English writing.

Please send your weekly journal within two days after each class to the researcher through WeChat or email: zhang.lu@auckland.ac.nz. Thank you for your cooperation!

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Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form for Faculty Dean

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
(Faculty Dean)

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

Research Introduction
My name is Lu Zhang, a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting research on Chinese EFL students' beliefs, deployment, and learning of authorial stance in English academic writing.

This Project
Rationale and Aims
Authorial stance refers to the writer's opinion toward the issues he or she proposes. It is regarded as a key in achieving a convincing argument and successful academic writing. Research has identified ineffective stance deployment in EFL students' academic writing, which greatly compromises the persuasiveness of the writer's argumentation. So this study aims to explore students' beliefs and deployment of stance, and provide affordance for their learning in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing classroom.

Duration
This project will continue for 6 months from October, 2017 to March, 2018, consisting of two studies. Study One (10/2017-3/2018) is a survey study, intending to explore the relationships between EFL students' beliefs, stance deployment, and writing quality. Study Two (11/2017-12/2017) is a quasi-experimental study involving a multiple-case study, which aims to implement and evaluate the effects of an 8-week explicit stance instruction in the EAP writing classroom.

Benefits
It is anticipated that the findings from this project will provide empirical evidence of the influence of EFL students' beliefs on their ineffective academic writing, and shed new light on

EAP writing instruction. It will be beneficial to Chinese EFL learners' awareness and grasp of authorial stance, which will strengthen their English academic writing and facilitate their academic achievement in the future. The participating teachers will receive opportunities to enhance their understanding of EAP writing instruction.

Invitation to Participate

I am seeking your permission to get access to students in your faculty to participate in a survey study (one questionnaire survey and one written text submission) and a quasi-experimental study (8-week treatment and post-tests). I am also asking for your permission to invite teachers in your faculty to participate in writing instruction.

To facilitate my research I am asking that you:

- Provide permission for my study to take place in your faculty.
- Allow me to seek help from the secretary of your faculty to approach students and invite them to participate in the research project on my behalf, and pass on the Participant Information Sheets (PIS) and Consent Forms (CF).
- Provide an assurance that students' participation in the research project is voluntary and their participation, non-participation or withdrawal will have no effect on their grades or the relationship with the university.
- Provide an assurance that teachers' participation in the research project is voluntary and their participation, non-participation or withdrawal will have no effect on their career or the relationship with the faculty.

Project Procedures

Study One: Survey Study (10/2017-3/2018)

If you grant me access to your faculty and students, I would like to firstly invite Year 3 and Year 4 English-major undergraduate students to complete a questionnaire survey that focuses on their beliefs about stance and academic writing. It will take each student 20 minutes to complete the survey. Secondly, Year 4 students will be further invited to voluntarily submit a piece of English academic writing, i.e., their BA thesis introduction. Their writing will be collected with their consent within the following week after the survey. The questionnaires and written texts are anonymous and data will be kept confidential.

Study Two: Quasi-Experimental Study and Multiple-Case Study (11/2017-12/2017)

Study Two is a quasi-experimental design which will implement and evaluate an 8-week explicit instruction of authorial stance within the EAP writing classroom. Year 3 English-major student participants from two intact classes will be randomly assigned into a treatment group and a comparison group. They will complete the questionnaire survey of beliefs about writing and stance, and an academic writing assignment, prior to and after the writing treatment. It will take each student 20 minutes to complete the survey and one week of time will be granted for them to finish the writing assignment. One teacher participant will be voluntarily recruited from those who are responsible for the EAP writing course during the research period. The teacher will be invited to join the teaching of both groups of students, and he or she will be trained by the researcher with the instruction content and methods for the writing treatment. The treatment group will be provided with the writing treatment, while the comparison group will receive the curriculum-based instruction. In order to ensure that participants in the comparison group are not disadvantaged, they will be provided with the same writing treatment by the teacher after the research project. All the resources used in this project will be provided to them.

Two students from each group will be invited to a multiple-case study which aims to capture the changes in student participants' beliefs about stance and academic writing. They will be interviewed both prior to and after the treatment and will be invited to complete weekly writing journals during the period of time. Each interview will be audio-recorded and will occur on the faculty premises, at a time suitable for each participant. In the interview, participants can refuse to answer any questions, and may request the recording to be stopped anytime without having to give any reasons. Weekly journal will take 20 minutes for each participant every week. After data collection, the researcher will transcribe and translate all the recordings and journal entries. Participants will receive a copy of transcript for review, editing, deletion, and final approval.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of participants will be guaranteed. As the questionnaire survey and the submission of written texts in Study One are anonymous, each participant will be given a unique identification code to link the questionnaire and the written text they provide. This coding information is kept separately from the data, and can only be accessed by the researcher. For Study Two, the identity of participants as well as any information of participants that is shared with the researcher will remain confidential. However, due to the characteristics of the teaching experiment in this study, the identity of participants is inevitable to be known to all other participants in the same class. The researcher will remind participants of this risk and try to keep their records private as required by law. All participants will give their informed consent not to disclose the identity of other participants to any third parties in the Consent Forms. They will also be provided an identification code as part of the research project, and I will use this identification code rather than their names on study records. This information will only be known to the researcher. Pseudonyms will be used for participants in multiple-case study to protect their identity. Any identifying information about the university and the faculty will be removed. No identifiable information will be released to a third party.

Participants' Rights to Withdraw

Through the Participant Information Sheets and the Consent Forms, participants will be informed of the purpose and procedure of the current research, and they will be made aware that they are completely voluntary and entitled to withdraw either themselves or any data provided by them without giving any reasons within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway.

Data Storage, Retention, Destruction and Future Use

The collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland after data collection, and electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After six years, all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital information will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices. The collected data will be primarily presented in the researcher's PhD thesis and may also be used for future academic publications or conference presentations.

Thank you for sharing your time to read this information sheet. If you have any inquiries or questions, please feel free to contact anyone in the following contact list.

Yours sincerely,

Lu Zhang

Contact details

Researcher	Main supervisor	Co-supervisor
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You may also contact the head of the School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Associate Professor Helen Hedges at h.hedges@auckland.ac.nz or +64 9 373 7999 ext 48606.

For any queries regarding ethical concerns, you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland, 1142, New Zealand. Telephone: 09 373-7999 ext. 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

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Symonds Street, Auckland 1135
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CONSENT FORM
(Faculty Dean)
This form will be held for a period of six years

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and have understood the nature of the research being undertaken by Lu Zhang. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to provide research sites.
- I agree to allow the department secretary to help with this research.
- I agree to allow undergraduate students to join this research.
- I agree to allow teachers to join this research.
- I understand that participation in this research project is voluntary.
- I assure that participation, non-participation or withdrawal will not affect students' grades or the relationship with the university.
- I assure that participation, non-participation or withdrawal will not affect teachers' career or the relationship with the faculty.
- I allow the researcher to place a drop-box in the office of the secretary for the participants to return consent forms, questionnaires and writing papers.
- I understand that participants can withdraw from the writing tests anytime without having to give any reasons.
- I understand that participants will be asked to write or use a unique identification number on their questionnaires and written texts. The coding information will only be known to the researcher. Participants' anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed.
- I understand that interviews will be audio-recorded individually.
- I understand that participants can refuse to answer any questions in the interview, and may request the recording to be stopped anytime without having to give any reasons.

- I understand that the researcher will conduct and transcribe the audio-recording of the interviews individually, and a copy of them will be provided to the participants individually for review, editing, deletion, and final approval.
- I understand that the researcher will conduct a quasi-experimental study.
- I understand that due to the characteristics of the teaching experiment in Study Two, the identity of participants is inevitable to be known to all other participants in the same class. The identity of participants will remain confidential. All participants will give their informed consent not to disclose the identity of other participants to any third parties in the CFs.
- I understand that participants in the comparison group in the quasi-experimental study will not be disadvantaged. Students will be provided with the treatment instruction and the teacher will be offered training by the researcher after the study. All the resources used in this research will be provided to them.
- I understand that the researcher will collect, transcribe and translate the journal entries individually, and a copy of them will be provided to the participants individually for review, editing, deletion, and final approval.
- I understand that participants have the right to withdraw either themselves or any data provided by them without giving any reason within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway.
- I understand that the data collected from the research will be used for the researcher's PhD thesis, and may be used for conference presentations and journal publications.
- I understand that the collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland. Electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After six years, all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital files will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices.
- I understand that if the information provided by participants is reported/published, confidentiality is assured and pseudonyms will be used to protect participants' identity.
- I understand that any identifying details about the university and faculty will be removed.
- I understand that no identifying information will be disclosed to a third party or the public.
- I wish to receive a copy of the research findings by email_____.

I therefore give my informed consent for the research project ("Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Students' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing") to be carried out in my faculty and give permission for you to approach students to request their participation.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____ Email: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

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Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form for Students in Study One

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
(Students in Study One)

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

Research Introduction
My name is Lu Zhang, a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting research on Chinese EFL students' beliefs, deployment, and learning of authorial stance in English academic writing.

This Project
Rationale and Aims
Authorial stance refers to the writer's opinion toward the issues he or she proposes. It is regarded as a key in achieving a convincing argument and successful academic writing. Research has identified ineffective stance deployment in EFL students' academic writing, which greatly compromises the persuasiveness of the writer's argumentation. So this study aims to explore students' beliefs and deployment of stance, and provide affordance for their learning in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing classroom.

Duration
This project will continue for 6 months from October, 2017 to March, 2018, consisting of two studies. Study One (10/2017-3/2018) is a survey study, intending to explore the relationships between EFL students' beliefs, stance deployment, and writing quality.

Benefits
It is anticipated that participation in this project would improve your awareness of authorial stance, which will provide affordance to your argumentation to achieve better academic writing. You can learn how to take your own position and make your sentences more convincing. This experience is beneficial for your writing of essays or thesis in the near future.

Invitation to Participate

You are cordially invited to participate in Study One of the research. Your participation will contribute to the understanding of authorial stance and EFL student academic writing, and shed new light on EAP writing instruction. Your faculty Dean has provided an assurance that your participation, non-participation or withdrawal will not affect your grades or relationship with the university.

Project Procedures

If you consent to participate, you will be invited to complete:

- *Questionnaire.* One questionnaire survey about beliefs about authorial stance and of academic writing will be given to you, which will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The questionnaires will be distributed by the department secretary and you can return your completed questionnaires to the drop-box set in the secretary's office.
- *English academic written text collection.* If you are a Year 4 student, you will be further invited to voluntarily submit a piece of English academic writing, i.e., the introduction section of your BA thesis or thesis proposal. If you consent, you can submit the text papers to the drop-box set in the secretary's office within the following week after completing the survey. Your written texts are only for research purposes and are not related to your course or university performance.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of participants will be guaranteed during the whole research process. For Study One, questionnaires and written texts will be collected anonymously. You will be given a unique identification code to link the questionnaire and the written text submitted. This coding information is kept separately from the data, and can only be accessed by the researcher. Any identifying information about the university and the faculty will be removed. No identifiable information will be released to a third party.

Participants' Rights to Withdraw

Through the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form, you will be informed of the purpose and procedure of the current research, and you will be made aware that you are completely voluntary and entitled to withdraw either yourselves or any data you provided without giving any reasons within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway. Your faculty Dean has given an assurance that your participation, non-participation or withdrawal will not affect your grades or relationship with the university.

Data Storage, Retention, Destruction and Future Use

The collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland after data collection, and electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After six years, all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital information will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices. The collected data will be primarily presented in the researcher's PhD thesis and may also be used for future academic publications or conference presentations.

Thank you for sharing your time to read this information sheet. If you have any inquiries or questions, please feel free to contact anyone in the following contact list.

Contact details

Researcher	Main supervisor	Co-supervisor
Lu Zhang School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland zhang.lu@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 21 024 31622	Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland lj.zhang@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48750	Dr Aaron John Wilson School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland aj.wilson@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48574

You may also contact the head of the School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Associate Professor Helen Hedges at h.hedges@aucklan.ac.nz or +64 9 373 7999 ext 48606.

If you are willing to participate in this research please sign the attached Consent from and put it in the drop-box at your faculty.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Lu Zhang

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142, New Zealand. Telephone 09 373-7999 ext. 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
NEW ZEALAND

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The University of Auckland
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New Zealand

CONSENT FORM
(Students in Study One)
This form will be held for a period of six years

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understood the nature of the research and why I have been invited to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to participate in the research.
- I understand I will be asked to answer one questionnaire survey and submit one English written text if I'm in Year 4.
- I understand that participation in this research project is completely voluntary.
- I understand that the dean has given the assurance that my participation, non-participation or withdrawal will have no effects on my grades or relationship with the university.
- I understand that the collection of questionnaires and written texts is anonymous. I will be given a unique identification code to write on the questionnaire and the text paper. This coding information is kept separately from the data, and can only be accessed by the researcher. Anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed.
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw either myself or any data provided by me without giving any reasons within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway.
- I understand that the data collected from the research will be used for the researcher's PhD thesis, and may be used for conference presentations and academic publications.

- I understand that the collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland after data collection, and electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After that time all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital files will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices.
- I understand that if the information provided by me is reported/published, confidentiality is assured and pseudonyms will be used to protect my identity.
- I understand that any identifying details about the university and faculty will be removed.
- I understand that no identifying information will be disclosed to a third party or the public.
- I wish to receive a copy of the research findings by email _____.

I therefore give my informed consent for the participation in Study One in the research project "Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Students' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing".

Name: _____ Signature: _____

University: _____ Faculty: _____

Date: _____ Email: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

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Appendix G: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form for Students in Study Two

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
(Students in Study Two)

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

Research Introduction

My name is Lu Zhang, a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting research on Chinese EFL students' beliefs, deployment, and learning of authorial stance in English academic writing.

This Project

Rationale and Aims

Authorial stance refers to the writer's opinion toward the issues he or she proposes. It is regarded as a key in achieving a convincing argument and successful academic writing. Research has identified ineffective stance deployment in EFL students' academic writing, which greatly compromises the persuasiveness of the writer's argumentation. So this study aims to explore students' beliefs and deployment of stance, and provide affordance for their learning in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing classroom.

Duration

This project will continue for 6 months from October, 2017 to March, 2018, consisting of two studies. Study Two (11/2017-12/2017) is a quasi-experimental study involving a multiple-case study, which aims to implement and evaluate the effects of an 8-week explicit stance instruction in the EAP writing classroom.

Benefits

It is anticipated that participation in this project could improve your awareness of authorial stance, which will provide affordance to your argumentation to achieve better academic writing. You can learn how to take your own position and make your sentences more convincing. This experience is beneficial for your writing of essays or thesis in the near future.

Invitation to Participate

You are cordially invited to participate in Study Two of the research. Your participation will contribute to the understanding of authorial stance and EFL student academic writing, and shed new light on the improvement of EAP writing instruction. Your faculty Dean has provided an assurance that your participation, non-participation or withdrawal will not affect your grades or relationship with the university.

Project Procedures

If you consent to participate, you will be invited to join in an 8-week EAP writing course. You will be assigned to one of two conditions (one treatment group and one comparison group) on a random basis. No matter which group you are in, you will be provided with writing instruction:

- *Writing instruction.* If you are assigned to the treatment group, you will receive an EAP writing treatment of explicit stance instruction (one session per week of 45 minutes per session). If you are assigned to the comparison group, you will receive curriculum-based EAP writing instruction. In order to avoid potentially disadvantage, the same writing treatment will be provided to the comparison group after the research project and all the students in the group are all welcome to join. The course material will be made available to all of you. If you do not take part in the intervention courses, you can be assured that you will not be disadvantaged by this and that there is no grade evaluation on the treatment.

All the students from the two group will be invited to complete:

- *Questionnaire*. One questionnaire survey about beliefs about authorial stance and of academic writing will be given to you both prior to and after the writing instruction. It will take 20 minutes to complete.
- *English academic writing assignment.* You will be given an English academic writing assignment prior to and after the 8-week writing instruction. You will be given one week of time to complete the writing. Your written texts are only for research purposes and are not related to your course or university performance.

Additionally, if you consent to participate in Study Two, two students from both groups will be invited to participate in a multiple-case study which involves:

- *Two interviews*. You will attend two one-on-one semi-structured interviews, prior to and after the 8-week EAP writing instruction. Each interview takes about 30 minutes and will occur on the faculty premises, at a time suitable for you. Questions will be asked about your understanding of English academic writing and authorial stance. The researcher will conduct, audio-record and transcribe each interview individually. During the interview, you can refuse to answer any questions, and may request the recording to be stopped temporarily or permanently anytime without giving a reason if you feel uncomfortable. You will be provided with a copy of the interview transcript afterward for review, editing, deletion, and final approval.
- *Weekly writing journals.* During the 8-week writing instruction, you will be invited to keep prompt-driven writing journals in either English or Chinese, in the form of either handwritings or electronic files. Each journal entry will take 20 minutes. Your journals will be collected privately by the researcher every week, which will be transcribed and translated by the researcher. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript afterward for review, editing, deletion, and final approval.

Upon completion of the multiple-case study, you will be given 100 RMB (NZ $20) supermarket gift card as a token of appreciation for your time in this research. The first two students in each of the two classes who volunteer to participate will be selected as the participants for the multiple-case study. If more students than required are recruited, a thank-you letter will be given to those who are not chosen and the reason will be clearly explained.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Your identity as well as any information of you that is shared with the researcher will remain confidential. In Study Two, you will be provided with an identification number as part of the research project, and the researcher will use this identification code rather than your names on study records. Your records will be kept confidential as required by law. However, due to the characteristics of the teaching experiment, the identity of you is inevitable to be known to all other participants in the same class. We kindly remind you of this risk, and all participants will give the informed consent not to disclose the identity of other participants to any third parties in the Consent Forms. If you participate in the multiple-case study, you will be provided a pseudonym as part of the research project, and this pseudonym will be used on study records rather than your name. All the coding information is kept separately from the data, and will only be known to the researcher. Any identifying information about the university and the faculty will be removed. No identifiable information will be released to a third party.

Participants' Rights to Withdraw

Through the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form, you will understand the purpose and procedure of the research, and you will be made aware that you are completely voluntary and entitled to withdraw either yourselves or any data you provided without giving any reasons within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway. The faculty Dean has given an assurance that participation or non-participation will not affect your grades or your relationship with the university.

Data Storage, Retention, Destruction and Future Use

The collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland after data collection, and electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After six years, all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital information will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices. The collected data will be primarily presented in the researcher's PhD thesis and may also be used for future academic publications or conference presentations.

Thank you for sharing your time to read this information sheet. If you have any inquiries or questions, please feel free to contact anyone in the following contact list.

If you are willing to participate in this research please sign the attached Consent from and put it in the drop-box at your faculty.

Yours sincerely,

Lu Zhang

Contact details

Researcher	Main supervisor	Co-supervisor
Lu Zhang School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland zhang.lu@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 21 024 31622 +86 13466875469	Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland lj.zhang@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48750	Dr Aaron John Wilson School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland aj.wilson@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48574

You may also contact the head of the School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Associate Professor Helen Hedges at h.hedges@aucklan.ac.nz or +64 9 373 7999 ext 48606.

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142, New Zealand. Telephone 09 373-7999 ext. 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

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New Zealand

CONSENT FORM
(Students in Study Two)

This form will be held for a period of six years

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understood the nature of the research and why I have been invited to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to participate in the research.
- I understand that participation in this research project is completely voluntary.
- I agree to be randomly assigned to either the treatment group or the comparison group.
- I understand I will be asked to complete questionnaires and writing assignments prior to and after the writing course.
- I understand that the faculty Dean has given the assurance that my participation, non-participation or withdrawal will have no effects on my grades or relationship with the university.
- I understand that I will be asked to use a unique identification number, which can only be known to the researcher, in my questionnaires and writing assignments. No identifiable information will be revealed to a third party. Confidentiality will be guaranteed.
- I understand that my identity is inevitable to be known to other participants in the same class due to the characteristics of classroom teaching, and that I can withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason.
- I agree that I will not disclose identities of any other participants in the group to any third parties.
- I understand that I will not be disadvantaged as participants in the comparison group. I will be provided with the same instruction by the teacher after the study. All the resources used in this research will be provided to me.
- I understand that I will not be disadvantaged by taking part in the treatment group. There is no grade evaluation on the intervention. And it will not affect my university performance.
- **I agree/don't agree to** attend the multiple-case study.

- I agree to be interviewed for the research.
- I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded individually.
- I understand that I can refuse to answer any questions in the interview, and may request the recording to be stopped anytime without having to give any reasons.
- I understand that the researcher will conduct and transcribe the audio-recording individually, and a copy of them will be provided to me individually for review, editing, deletion, and final approval.
- I understand I will be asked to keep prompt-driven journals every week for the research.
- I understand that the researcher will collect, transcribe and translate my journals, and a copy of them will be provided to me individually for review, editing, deletion, and final approval.
- I understand that the first two students in each of the two groups who volunteer to participate will be randomly selected as participants for the case study. If more students than required are recruited, a thank-you letter will be given to those who are not chosen and the reason will be clearly explained.
- I understand that if the information provided by me is reported/published, confidentiality is assured and pseudonyms will be used to protect my identity. I will not be identified personally.
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw either myself or any data provided by me without giving any reasons within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway.
- I understand that the data collected from the research will be used for the researcher's PhD thesis, and may be used for conference presentations and journal publications.
- I understand that the collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland after data collection, and electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After that time all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital files will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices.
- I understand that any identifying details about the university and faculty will be removed.
- I understand that no identifying information will be disclosed to a third party or the public.
- I wish to receive a copy of the research findings by email_____.

I therefore give my informed consent for the participation in Study Two in the research project "Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Students' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing".

Name: _____ Signature: _____

University: _____ Faculty: _____

Date: _____ Email: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

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New Zealand

Appendix H: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form for Teachers

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
(Teacher in Study Two)

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

Research Introduction

My name is Lu Zhang, a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting research on Chinese EFL students' beliefs, deployment, and learning of authorial stance in English academic writing.

This Project

Rationale and Aims

Authorial stance refers to the writer's opinion toward the issues he or she proposes. It is regarded as a key in achieving a convincing argument and successful academic writing. Research has identified ineffective stance deployment in EFL students' academic writing, which greatly compromises the persuasiveness of the writer's argumentation. So this study aims to explore students' beliefs and deployment of stance, and provide affordance for their learning in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing classroom.

Duration

This project will continue for 6 months from October, 2017 to March, 2018, consisting of two studies. Study Two (11/2017-12/2017) is a quasi-experimental study involving a multiple-case study, which aims to implement and evaluate the effects of an 8-week explicit stance instruction in the EAP writing classroom. In Study Two, teacher participants are needed to take part in the English academic writing instruction.

Benefits

As a key participant in this study, you will receive opportunities to refine and strengthen your understanding of EAP writing instruction. You will be able to do this by participating in the research in which you will be offered training by the researcher in how to teach authorial stance

explicitly to enhance students' EAP writing performance. There will be opportunities for you to discuss about teaching skills and EAP course design with the researcher. Additionally, you will be beneficial from the instruction about evaluating students' texts from the perspective of authorial stance, which will provide you insights on writing evaluation.

Invitation to Participate

If you are responsible for the EAP writing course during the research period, you are cordially invited to participate in the writing intervention in Study Two of the research. Your participation will contribute to the understanding of authorial stance and EAP writing instruction. Your faculty Dean has provided an assurance that your participation, non-participation or withdrawal will not affect your career or relationship with the faculty.

Project Procedures

If you consent to participate, you will teach two groups of student participants that randomly allocated to a treatment group (one intact class) and a comparison group (one intact class). During the research period, you will be invited to:

- *Give EAP writing instruction.* For the teaching for the treatment group, you will be provided three training sessions (two hours per session) of the EAP writing treatment (explicit instruction of authorial stance) by the researcher. From the training, you will familiarise with the instructional content and classroom activities in intervention. You will then teach the treatment group of students for 8 weeks accordingly (one session per week with 45 minutes each session). For the teaching in the comparison group, you will be expected to teach according curriculum-based schedule. In order to avoid potential disadvantages for students in the comparison group, you will provide the same writing treatment for them after the study. The course material will be made available and the researcher will be ready to answer any questions about course design and provide any help if you need. During the research period, both the treatment group and the comparison group will be observed on a random basis. The researcher will keep notes of instructional content and classroom activities. The observation is to ensure teaching fidelity and that you do not implement the training package in the comparison group during the research period.

In the class you are teaching, the following data will be collected from students:

- *Questionnaire.* One questionnaire survey will be given to students prior to and after the 8-week writing instruction. It will take 20 minutes for students to complete.
- *English academic writing assignment*. Students will be given an English academic writing assignment prior to and after the 8-week writing instruction. They will be given one week of time to complete the writing. Their written texts are only for research purposes and are not related to the course or university performance.

In order to express the researcher's gratitude for your time and knowledge in this research, the researcher volunteer to be a teaching assistance for the courses you are teaching this semester. The researcher could help to tutor or grade students' homework.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Your identity as well as any information of you that is shared with the researcher will remain confidential. Due to the characteristics of the teaching experiment in Study Two of the research,

the identity of you is inevitable to be known to all student participants in the same class. We kindly remind you of this risk. All participants will give their informed consent not to disclose the identity of other participants to any third parties in the CFs. You will be provided a pseudonym as part of the research project, and we will use this pseudonym rather than your name on study records. Your names and other facts that might point to you will not appear in any presentation or publication of this research. You will not be identified personally. Any identifying information about the university and the faculty will be removed. No identifiable information will be released to a third party.

Participants' Rights to Withdraw

Through the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form, you will understand the purpose and procedure of the research, and you will be made aware that you are completely voluntary and entitled to withdraw either yourselves or any data you provided without giving any reasons within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway. The faculty Dean has given assurance that participation or non-participation will not affect your career or your relationship with the faculty.

Data Storage, Retention, Destruction and Future Use

The collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland after data collection, and electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After six years, all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital information will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices. The collected data will be primarily presented in the researcher's PhD thesis and may also be used for future academic publications or conference presentations.

Thank you for sharing your time to read this information sheet. If you have any inquiries or questions, please feel free to contact anyone in the following contact list.

Yours sincerely,

Lu Zhang

Contact details

Researcher	Main supervisor	Co-supervisor
Lu Zhang School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland zhang.lu@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 21 024 31622 +86 13466875469	Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland lj.zhang@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48750	Dr Aaron John Wilson School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Auckland aj.wilson@auckland.ac.nz Ph: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48574

You may also contact the head of the School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Associate Professor Helen Hedges at h.hedges@aucklan.ac.nz or +64 9 373 7999 ext 48606.

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142, New Zealand. Telephone 09 373-7999 ext. 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
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CONSENT FORM
(Teacher in Study Two)

This form will be held for a period of six years

Project Title: Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Student Writers' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing

Name(s) of Researcher(s): Lu Zhang
Name of supervisor (s): Professor Lawrence Jun Zhang, Dr Aaron John Wilson

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understood the nature of the research and why I have been invited to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to participate in the research.
- I understand that participation in this research project is completely voluntary.
- I agree to teach both the treatment group and the comparison group.
- I understand that the faculty Dean has given the assurance that my participation, non-participation or withdrawal will have no effects on my career or relationship with the faculty.
- I understand that I will be provided training sessions of the EAP writing treatment by the researcher. I will then teach the treatment group accordingly.
- I understand that I will teach the comparison group with curriculum-based EAP writing instruction. Students will not be disadvantaged in the comparison group. I will provide the same writing treatment to them after the study. All the resources used in this research will be provided to them.
- I agree to help collect data from students in my classes, including the questionnaires and writing assignments.
- I understand that both the treatment group and the comparison group will be observed by the researcher on a random basis during the research period. The observation is to ensure teaching fidelity and that I do not implement the training package in the comparison group during the research period.
- I understand that my identity is inevitable to be known to student participants in the same class due to the characteristics of classroom teaching, and that I can withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason.
- I agree that I will not disclose identities of any other participants in the group to any third parties.

- I understand that I have the right to withdraw either myself or any data provided by me without giving any reasons within up to three weeks after the data collection is completed. After that time any withdrawal of data could not be possible as data analysis would be underway.
- I understand that the data collected from the research will be used for the researcher's PhD thesis, and may be used for conference presentations and journal publications.
- I understand that the collected Consent Forms and hard copy data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Auckland after data collection, and electronic data will be stored confidentially on the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. After that time all hard copy data will be shredded and the digital files will be deleted permanently from all electronic devices.
- I understand that if the information provided by me is reported/published, confidentiality is assured and pseudonyms will be used to protect my identity. I will not be identified personally.
- I understand that any identifying details about the university and faculty will be removed.
- I understand that no identifying information will be disclosed to a third party or the public.
- I wish to receive a copy of the research findings by email_____.

I therefore give my informed consent for the participation in Study Two in the research project "Fostering Effective Stance-taking: A Study of English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Students' Beliefs, Deployment, and Learning of Authorial Stance in English Academic Writing".

Name: _____ Signature: _____

University: _____ Faculty: _____

Date: _____ Email: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 15th Sep 2017 For (3) YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 019807.

Appendix I: Beliefs about Authorial Stance Questionnaire (BASQ)

In this questionnaire, we would like you to help us by answering the following questions concerning your understanding of stance in English academic writing. To start with, there are some concepts that are helpful:

Stance, or voice, refers to your opinion or attitude toward the issues you propose. To take your stance, you need to express what you think, not just what you know. Stance can be generally divided into two kinds: assertive and tentative stance. **Assertive stance (A)** expresses opinions in a strong and definite manner, while **tentative stance (T)** tends to be not definite. Here are two examples for them, in which stance words are *italicised* (斜体):

(1) The entry of woman into managerial positions has been *profoundly* slower. In South Africa, for example, gender discrimination in the workplace has been outlawed *only* recently. Similarly, in Taiwan there is anti-discrimination legislation, but it is *indeed* recent origin. Women *obviously* receive less frequent promotions than their male counterparts.	(2) The issue of women's work-related stress has received *some* attention, beginning in the 1980s. However, the results of the research in this area *tended to be inconclusive*. Future researchers *can be advised not to* spend time debating the nature of sex occupational stress relationship when it is now a salient issue.

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following items by simply ticking (✓) the corresponding number from 1 to 5. Please give your answers sincerely and do not leave out any of the items. Thank you very much for your help.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Items	1	2	3	4	5
2. An assertive text sounds like the writer is sure about what he or she is doing.					
4. I should be assertive and certain in writing since I have done the research.					
8. Assertive expressions are absolute so that they can arouse critics.					
9. A strong stance can support my claims better.					
10. A strong stance seems more certain, thus more academic and serious.					
11. Tentative expressions are more academic and precise, because no one can be 100% sure.					

12. A strong stance makes my research or report seem more valuable.					
13. A strong stance reflects that the writer is confident.					
15. A strong stance makes me feel that the writer is aggressive.					
16. A weak stance sounds humble and cautious.					
17. A strong stance is subjective and makes me feel that the writer is expressing personal opinions.					
18. A strong stance is more convincing.					
19. Tentative expressions are more convincing, because they are more polite and objective.					
21. I will use a strong stance when expressing my own opinions.					
22. I need to use strong stances when I want to persuade the reader.					
24. Tentative expressions allow more room for writers to argue for a point.					
27. Tentative expressions are better, because they leave some space for other views.					

Appendix J: The Finalised Writing Beliefs Inventory (WBI) (17 items)

In this inventory, we would like you to help us by answering the following questions concerning your writing beliefs. You could tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following items by simply ticking (✓) the corresponding number from 1 to 5. Please give your answers sincerely and do not leave out any of the items. Thanks for your help.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Items	1	2	3	4	5
2. Writing's main purpose is to give other people information.					
3. A primary goal of writing should be to have to make as few changes as possible.					
4. Writing should focus around the information in books and articles.					
5. The key to successful writing is accurately reporting what authorities think.					
6. The most important reason to write is to report what authorities think about a subject.					
7. Writing requires going back over it to improve what has been written.					
9. It's important to develop a distinctive writing style.					
10. Good writers stick closely to the information they have about a topic.					
11. Good writing involves editing it many times.					
12. Writing often involves peek experiences.					
13. Writing helps me understand better what I'm thinking about.					
14. I always feel that just one more revision will improve my writing.					
15. Writing helps me see the complexity of ideas.					
16. My thoughts and ideas become clearer to me as I write and rewrite.					
17. Writers' views should show through in their writing.					
18. Writing is often an emotional experience.					
19. Writers need to immerse themselves in their writing.					