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A Duoethnography of a Chinese Pre-Service Teacher's Encounters with Young Learner Spelling Errors in the English Classroom

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Abstract: A large body of research has indicated that young second language (L2) learners often have problems with spelling, such as letter omission and mis-ordering. To give due attention to this issue, a duoethnographic study was undertaken by two researchers from different language education backgrounds. The data were collected by way of 18 conversations (86,213-word transcription). These transcribed conversations were then reconstructed in order to accurately present the dialogue that took place between the two researchers. The conversations centered around four themes related to young Chinese learners' English spelling issues, namely: the roles of a practicum mentor and supervisor; factors resulting in young learners' spelling issues; the relationship between spelling and reading; implications for future teaching. The findings of this study suggest that future English teachers of young learners should implement morphological instruction, encourage students to read more, instruct students on how to make and use word cards, and explain how delayed copying should be used for spelling practice. This duoethnography also suggests that mentors, supervisors, and pre-service teachers should engage in duoethnographic research in order to better understand mentoring, supervision, and teaching issues, whilst also promoting professional development.

Keywords: duoethnography; pre-service teachers; professional development; Chinese young learners; English spelling issues



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1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Previous research has found that, according to their teachers, young second language (L2) learners tend to make numerous and diverse English spelling mistakes (Li et al. 2012). As a vital part of vocabulary acquisition, learning correct spelling represents the ability to form words from letters (Horn 1969). Young second language learners face many challenges when learning how to spell English words. For example, two very common phenomena are letter omission and letter mis-ordering (Rimbar 2017). In first language (L1) acquisition, language is learned naturally from the language input in the environment (Ipek 2009). Young learners can master L1 easily and have far greater time at their disposal to develop mastery of their native language. In L2 acquisition, however, the process is more complicated as learners already have knowledge of their L1 (Meisel 2011). The biggest difference between L1 and L2 acquisition, which may lead to invariable interference, is the occurrence of what is termed transfer errors (Gass 1988). There is sometimes an L1 negative transfer to the L2, especially when the L1 and L2 orthography is different. This difference in orthography will impede learners' L2 word formation (Hamada and Koda 2011). There have been a number of studies that have investigated the negative effects that L1 orthography can have on an L2 orthography. For example, Barcroft (2004) set two experiments to examine young L2 learners' assessment of word meaning and form. He found that young learners performed well on word meaning assessments and poorly on

word form assessments. These results support the findings of previous studies that found that young L2 learners tend to have difficulty spelling words correctly. Although most vocabulary materials and activities attempt to improve learners' spelling skills, learning the meaning has been the focus, whereas form has often been neglected (Saigh and Schmitt 2012). As a result, young learners' spelling issues may result from teachers' imbalanced attention on word form and meaning (Saigh and Schmitt 2012). This is an important issue to consider since young L2 learners' misspelling may hamper their literacy development (Marinova-Todd and Hall 2013). As literacy development includes many language skills, "from text-driven visual processing to the top-down influence of real-world knowledge" (Martin 2017, p. 280), spelling plays a prominent role in affecting reading and writing proficiency. Thus, it is important to understand ways that can help young learners spell English words correctly in order to ensure their future language learning success.

According to the 2011 primary school curriculum published by the Chinese Ministry of Education, by the end of primary school, students should minimally acquire three knowledge aspects for 600–700 words (coinciding with level two of the nine levels of the English competence measurement). In other words, students must pronounce these words accurately (productive form), know their meanings (receptive meaning), and produce their spellings (productive form). However, each local Chinese province education bureau may require primary school students to acquire knowledge aspects of more than 700 words. In spelling tests, the most common mistakes are always letter omission and mis-ordering (Saigh and Schmitt 2012; Ishizaki 2018). Ding et al. (2018) found that the influence of Mandarin pinyin has impeded the development of English spelling produced by young Chinese learners. That is because the orthography of pinyin is similar to the letters used in the English alphabet, and there is likely to have been some interference for young Chinese learners of English. Moreover, Chinese young learners are more likely to misspell English words with similar forms. They may spell the word "read" as "raed", and the word "does" as "dose". This is due to the different orthographic knowledge required for Chinese and English and how these differences may impede each other (Martin 2017). Another factor that is responsible for Chinese young learners' misspelling of English words is the different processing method they use. Chinese learners tend to use whole-word strategies rather than phonological processing when spelling in English (Marinova-Todd and Hall 2013). A whole-word strategy means that when processing a word, learners usually see a word as a whole, without dividing it into several segments. However, English native speakers tend to divide words into segments when spelling (Nation 2008). Thus, this difference may lead to future difficulties for Chinese children when spelling English words (Marinova-Todd and Hall 2013). This is not an issue faced only by young learners in China. Young learners speaking Hebrew as an L1 in Israel, for example, were more likely to make mistakes with similar prefixes and suffixes (Laufer 1988). When inexperienced Chinese teachers face such difficulties, they often use repeated copying as a mechanism to address these common misspellings, and many just ignore it (He 2001). This is still an issue in the Chinese context. Chinese teachers need to start facing the issue and seek ways to figure out how to address it, since the current strategies they are using are ineffective.

1.2. Research Method: A Duoethnography

The researchers exploited a duoethnographic approach to examine the spelling issues faced by many Chinese young learners of English. "As a method of research, reflective practice and a pedagogical approach in the field of English language teaching" (Lawrence and Lowe 2020, p. 9), duoethnography plays a vital role in this study. Duoethnography is a promising English-language-teaching research methodology in which researchers "utilize dialogue to juxtapose their individual life histories in order to come to new understandings of the world" (Lawrence and Lowe 2020, p. 9). The conceptual framework of duoethnography is built on social justice, which aims to pursue positive social transformation. It emphasizes sharing meaning, making meaning, and transforming meaning intersubjectively between co-equals, rather than simply comprising one subject of a researcher's investiga-

tion (Lawrence and Lowe 2020). The two researchers engaged in multiple discussions on a central topic that were recorded for later analysis and dialogue reconstruction. Therefore, this study embraces a joint effort from two English teachers. One is a pre-service teacher; the other is a teacher trainer. It was believed that through the collaborative discourse by way of duoethnography, the two teachers would be able to address young Chinese learners' spelling issues, and this approach would provide the potential to resolve some of the issues they faced. The primary aim of this duoethnography was for the researchers to understand more about why young primary school students in China make English spelling errors. There were two secondary aims of the study. First, the pre-service teacher aimed to equip herself with the knowledge to address any spelling issues experienced by her future students when she becomes a formal teacher. Second, the teacher trainer aimed to equip himself with the knowledge to provide advice to other pre-service teachers that experience the same issues with primary students' spelling as did the pre-service teacher involved in the present duoethnography.

2. Materials and Methods

This paper embodies a duoethnographic approach to create a dialogue around the central issues that have a bearing on Chinese young learners' misspellings. The researchers explored the factors contributing to Chinese young learners' misspelling of English words and obtained some sources of inspiration for future teaching. Duoethnography, as an emerging qualitative research methodology, was first proposed by Norris and Sawyer in 2004. Duoethnography plays a significant role in education, also acting as a form of reflective practice for educators by contrasting views and perspectives (Lawrence and Lowe 2020). Compared with autoethnography, in which primary data are a researcher's personal experience (Starfield 2020), duoethnography embraces two or more voices, providing multiple perspectives on an issue (Lawrence and Lowe 2020), so that it can add an element of objectivity. Moreover, as the data are presented in dialogue rather than by way of verbatim quotations, it makes for more readable content that is approachable to both practitioners and others who would not normally consume academic research.

Duoethnography has been applied across a variety of English Language Teaching (ELT) topics. Surrounding native-speakerism in ELT, Lowe and Lawrence (Lawrence and Lowe 2020) explored the concept of a hidden curriculum from a native speaker's norms and values. Rose and Montakantiwong (Rose and Montakantiwong 2018, p. 88) put teachers' voices first to discuss the "implementation of research-informed innovations into ELT classrooms". Diverse aspects, such as teacher creativity (Brereton and Kita 2020), understandings of the meaning of critical ELT, and the exploration of different experiences, successes, concerns, and obstacles as critical teachers (Nagashima and Hunter 2020), managing the "relationship between teachers and students" (Pinner and Ushioda 2020, p. 71), the professional development of novice teachers and experienced teachers (Smart and Cook 2020), questions about "special educational needs in EFL teacher development" (Kasperek and Turner 2020, p. 112), and other topics, have been explored using duoethnography.

Since "dialogue itself forms part of the data collection method," it can "take place either face-to-face or at a distance" (Lawrence and Lowe 2020, p. 12). The duoethnography in this study took place between October 2021 and June 2022. Because there were intermediate times when the University moved to online teaching due to COVID-19-related issues, some of the conversations took place online. In total, the researchers had fourteen online meetings and four face-to-face sessions lasting around 60 min each. The topic of these conversations focused on the sharing of teaching experiences, feelings about the role of mentors and supervisors, the phenomenon of Chinese young learners' misspelling, the findings related to the factors that resulted in the misspellings, and the teaching implications gathered from the reading of the published literature. These meetings were recorded in audio and then orthographically transcribed for analysis.

2.1. *The Context of the Study*

2.1.1. The Relationship between the Two Researchers

The relationship between the two researchers is that of a thesis supervisor and a thesis supervisee. The two researchers come from very different backgrounds and have different identities. Evelyn's identity is as a pre-service English teacher and master's student, and Barry's identity is as a supervisor and English teacher trainer.

2.1.2. Barry's Background

Barry was born and raised in Kentucky, U.S. This is also where he pursued an undergraduate course of study in English with a double minor in Creative Writing and Computer Information Systems. He went on to complete a master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. For three years he taught literacy skills to young learners and English as a second language to adults in the U.S., before moving to Taiwan to teach English language courses. Barry taught English language and teacher education courses in Taiwan for about twelve years, six of which he also spent simultaneously pursuing a PhD in Learning and Instruction. After twelve years of teaching in Taiwan, he moved to Macau to concentrate more on research; while his research program was diverse, it mostly involved studies related to second language acquisition and teacher education, especially in the areas of L2 vocabulary, L2 reading and writing, and computer-assisted language learning. At the time that this study began, he had been educating pre-service teachers in Macau for about six years and had supervised the teaching practicum for around 50 primary and secondary school English teachers. Most of his master's student supervision involved quantitative experimental studies; however, he found such studies less appealing and practical for pre-service and in-service teachers. Barry started looking into alternative research methodologies, especially those that would involve reflective practice, and came across duoethnography. Recently, higher management at the university approved of master's students engaging in practice-oriented reflective research to complete their theses. Barry felt that encouraging some of his potential supervisees to engage in duoethnography concerned with their previous or current teaching would be a mutually beneficial experience. He could learn more about the educational situations of his students, which could feed into his teacher education courses. At the same time, the supervisees could also obtain an alternative perspective of some of the problems or puzzles they were encountering in their English classrooms.

2.1.3. Evelyn's Background

Evelyn grew up and studied in Jiangsu Province, China. Before her graduation from Jiangsu Normal University, she was admitted into a public primary school in Songjiang District, Shanghai, serving as a pre-service English teacher. She taught Grade Three English from March 2021 to June 2021. In her practicum, she marked students' homework and exercises; maintained the order of her class; attended other teachers' lectures to observe and take comprehensive notes; designed her lesson plans and gave lessons to students sporadically. Due to the conflict between her desire to learn more about English education and the reality that she had learned little from her recent practicum, she left China to go to the University of Macau to study for a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on English language education. This program has two different options for completing a master's thesis. One is a traditional research-based Master of Philosophy thesis; the other is a more practice-oriented reflection. So, after she approached Barry as a potential supervisor, Evelyn found that she would like to pursue a more practical approach to completing her thesis. At that time, Barry had just finished reading some interesting studies related to duoethnography. The researchers agreed that it would be a good opportunity for both of them to learn about each other through the completion of this project. Evelyn thought that this might be helpful for her future if she was to continue to pursue a career in English teaching.

2.2. Research Questions

Through some informal discussions, the researchers soon formed strong ties with each other. The researchers shared some views on some educational issues and then decided to explore some solutions to young Chinese learners' spelling issues through reflective practice. Duoethnography allowed the researchers to forge a new way to be heard and cultivate a deeper understanding of teaching (Farrell 2015). The use of duoethnography acknowledged that their vast differences in terms of language background, gender, age, working experience, among others could encourage their communication and reflection (Sawyer and Norris 2013). The present duoethnography aimed to answer the following three research questions.

1. What prevented Evelyn from addressing the Chinese primary school students' spelling issues?
2. What are the factors that resulted in Chinese primary school students' English spelling issues?
3. What should Evelyn do if she encounters Chinese primary school students who experience similar spelling issues?

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

In order to investigate Chinese young learners' English spelling issues, the researchers engaged in several discussions over a two-month period between October 2021 and June 2022, using both online and face-to-face meetings. A large store of data consisting of 86,213 words was collected. These data were then reconstructed into dialogues according to different themes. This allowed for the jumbled and overlapping conversations to be presented in a clear, concise, and linear fashion (Sawyer and Norris 2013). Most of the text of the dialogues is taken verbatim from the discussions, whilst some of it is reconstructed. All of the text accurately represents the themes of the interactions that took place. Thus, the research questions were a result of the dialogues surrounding the topic of enquiry selected by Evelyn. So, instead of having a concrete research question from the beginning of the duoethnographic study, the research questions became clearer as the foci of the dialogues continued to become clearer.

Data analysis for duoethnography is intentionally open and ambiguous (Sawyer and Norris 2013). Thus, researchers that engage in a duoethnographic study may approach data analysis differently. Duoethnography requires the researchers to repeatedly reflect on their dialogues in a recursive fashion to stay alert for identification of potential emergent research questions and themes that develop (Sawyer and Norris 2013). Some researchers might even "perceive coding as an abhorrent act incompatible with newer interpretivist qualitative research methodologies" (Saldaña 2016, p. 70). While the process we undertook could somewhat be considered as *themeing* the data (Saldaña 2016), it was not structured as would happen with more established qualitative research methods. We were constantly re-reading our dialogues and revisiting the previous transcripts to further discuss our previous claims or explanations given to each other about topics under discussion. We read and edited previously drafted dialogues together by marking out parts we felt were irrelevant or off topic and at other times noting areas that we should elaborate or discuss in detail at our next meeting. Sometimes this process required both of us to go off alone and independently read the literature and then bring those published studies back to discuss and debate with one another about how what we read could explain certain phenomenon experienced by Evelyn. Thus, the themes were negotiated based on what we felt were most salient to the issue of spelling errors in the Chinese primary school English classroom. In addition, through the discussions with one another, the emerging theme of the roles of a practicum mentor and supervisor surfaced as it was one of the significant factors that reduced Evelyn's self-efficacy to deal with the issues she encountered when teaching primary students English.

3. Results and Discussion

We have generated four themes related to our three research questions. The first theme is used to answer the first research question, discussing why Evelyn's practicum prevented her from addressing the Chinese primary school students' spelling issues. The second theme answers the second research question, explaining the dominant reasons for Chinese primary school students' English spelling issues. The third theme also answers the second question, further discussing the factors resulting in Chinese primary school students' English spelling issues. The last theme is used to answer the first and third research questions. The last theme summarizes some teaching implications that may inspire teachers in addressing young English L2 learners' spelling issues. Based on the researchers' previous teaching experiences, four overarching themes are presented. In order to ensure objectivity, the literature is interwoven in the dialogues in lieu of doing a literature review (Sawyer and Norris 2013). In other words, instead of making particular claims and interpretations of the results supported by research findings, these claims and interpretations are integrated into the reconstructed dialogues of the two researchers with the supporting literature presented as part and parcel of the dialogues. In the first theme, previous teaching experiences are shared. Next, is a discussion of the roles of the practicum mentor and supervisor, the relationship between pre-service teachers and their mentors, and the comparison of the responsibilities of supervisors and mentors. The second theme explores the factors that lead to Chinese young learners' English spelling issues. Due to the nature of this methodology, the theme emerged from the interactions between the researchers. After the second theme, the methodology of duoethnography allowed for the exploration of this relationship through additional discussion. This also helped the researchers to build a substantial body of knowledge about the relationship between spelling and reading. After each subsequent discussion, the researchers finally addressed the issues concerning Chinese young learners' English spelling issues. As a result, in the final theme, the researchers offer some implications for future teaching practice. Furthermore, they highlight their understanding and their growth, derived from the process of duoethnography.

3.1. Theme One: The Roles of a Practicum Mentor and Supervisor

This theme is used to answer our first research question. In the first theme, the researchers opted to begin with their personal experiences, setting a foundation for the discussion about how they perceive the roles of supervisor and mentor, and the factors that impact their respective relationships with pre-service teachers. Because Evelyn had just finished her practicum and was dissatisfied with the guidance given by her mentor and supervisor, she wanted to find out more about the roles of mentor and supervisor. Barry had already conducted research on pre-service teachers' development. As for Evelyn, she had not considered the topic of pre-service teachers' development before this duoethnography. Therefore, after their first chat, the researchers gained greater mutual understanding; the type of supervision Evelyn received and Barry usually provided, and how Evelyn's learning experience in China might be quite different from other students who received their teacher training in Macau. As a result, Evelyn garnered a better understanding of the roles of mentors and supervisors. Through their deep discussions, the researchers explored the key characteristics of effective mentors and supervisors.

Evelyn: I would like to start our conversation by sharing my previous teaching experiences. At that time, I was a pre-service teacher. During my practicum, I found that many of my students had difficulty with spelling. For example, they might spell the word "read" as "raed". I thought it was similar with the word "does," which may be spelled as "dose." I was puzzled, and I tried to figure out why learners make these kinds of spelling errors; however, my solutions were unsatisfactory.

Barry: Well, which grade did you teach? Did you teach any other classes that had the same problems? And you said your solutions were unsatisfactory; what did you do to solve this problem?

Evelyn: I taught two Grade Three classes; both of them had this spelling issue. When I encountered this phenomenon for the first time, I consulted other teachers, including my mentor. They also noticed it, but they paid little attention to it, assuming it was down to students' lack of practice and ascribed it to carelessness.

Barry: Actually, I am curious about your work in that primary school. As a pre-service teacher, you would have had a compulsory practicum before your graduation. And in this way, you may have had a mentor in your primary school and a supervisor in your university to give you some guidance.

Evelyn: Yes, I conducted my teaching practicum in a primary school in Songjiang District, Shanghai. Here, let me explain it to you, although it may be a little complicated. In China, we usually have two options for finding a school to engage in a teaching practicum. Before my graduation, I looked for a teaching job. If I already had an offer before graduating, I would go to that school for my teaching practicum. For those who didn't yet have a job, they would be assigned to different schools which have a cooperative arrangement with the university. For me, I had already secured a job, so I wasn't assigned one by the university. And as a result, I was assigned a supervisor who I had never met before. Maybe the university thought that we would receive suitable guidance from our mentors in the local schools. And after my practicum, the university organized a three-person committee for each trainee teacher to be judged on his or her practicum performance. One of the three was required to be our assigned supervisor. These supervisors graded our performance based on some of the internship materials we handed in, like teaching plans and observation notes. Finally, we arranged an internship defense in which we were required to introduce our teaching experiences and to prove that we completed the practicum. For us, it was just going through the motions, as nearly all of my classmates copied materials downloaded from the Internet. It may sound ridiculous, but it is an existing malady. Besides this defense, each of us had a mentor from the local school to evaluate our performance. They were usually experienced mentors in a school with a good proven track record of performance in teaching or management. We usually built connections with them in pairs. We also helped our mentors to deal with some daily administrative issues as well. It was a mutually beneficial relationship.

Barry: Basically, you just had a mentor in the local school. All right, so I think it is a little different from the system here. Here, and in many other places, you have both a supervisor at the university and a mentor at the local school. You can see the mentor every day. Your mentor will keep you up to date with what is currently going on at the school, or maybe about the students and other important information that you need to know. And then, the mentor sometimes gives you some helpful advice. Your supervisor, on the other hand, also trains you on how to become a better teacher. When you have problems, you can get support from both the mentor and your supervisor. So, the supervisor could give you advice, for example, on something about content knowledge, or provide you with some practical ideas on how to apply theory in the real classroom situations you face. Supervisors could also provide you with extra ideas or ask you to read more about certain topics that can be beneficial to your teaching. In addition, supervisors could teach you or train by scaffolding about different aspects of teaching. However, maybe it depends on the mentor, and whether the mentor has sufficient time to do this kind of thing.

Evelyn: Right, the supervisor's and mentor's roles vary a lot from each other. They shoulder different responsibilities. According to my knowledge, supervisors enjoy higher reputations over mentors. Supervisors provide us with more academic feedback, whilst mentors are experts in classroom practice. But recently, I found that the role of a mentor has gone through periods of development. As for me, at the first stage, my mentor would invite me to observe her class and teach me some key points, acting as a helper to develop my classroom practice (Grimmett et al. 2018). When I needed to have a class observation, my mentor helped me design the lesson, and we discussed how to improve it. However, some of my classmates were guided by both their mentors and supervisors. Their mentors and supervisors worked together to help them prepare their lessons more effectively.

I thought their mentors should establish a close relationship with the supervisors as colleagues (Grimmett et al. 2018). As my mentor was aiming to be promoted, she needed to meet several requirements. First, she needed to win a good prize in a teaching competition, and then she needed to write a teaching-oriented research paper, which was to be published in the local practitioner journal. Actually, she just talked about the promotion process, but she didn't give me any guidance on how I might also try to be promoted in the future. I think her role was probably the more supportive role for a pre-service teacher like me (Grimmett et al. 2018). I think she could have probably done a better job at providing me with more guidance in the expectations that I might have in the future as an in-service teacher, including how to get promoted.

Barry: It's a good idea that both mentors and supervisors are going through professional development. As I know, in the past, a mentor has been "associated with someone who might be a role model, providing help, or acting as a guide, advisor, or counselor" (Ellis et al. 2020, p. 3). As for teacher educators, traditionally, they "were considered the experts whose role was to help novices master new techniques and become better teachers through . . . showing" (Kourieos 2019, p. 273), or modeling (Richards 1998). In this way, knowledge was acquired through observation, instruction, and practice. Consequently, a more direct, assessing role of a supervisor has come about (Hobson et al. 2009). But now, in my supervision, I teach students how to write teaching plans, including how to construct learning objectives and how to write a lesson rationale. I introduce different techniques to students and recommend some resource books for them to read. Also, as an English teacher, I will also remind them if they make any kinds of language errors. Of course, I evaluate them and give some feedback. I am looking for their improvement, and I hope that their teaching can be more communicative so that they can teach students how to use the language, not just teach about the language. I think in this way, they are capable of thinking and reflecting on their own. Although mentors and supervisors differ a lot, if they work together to improve pre-service teachers, I think pre-service teachers can learn much more.

Evelyn: Yeah, I couldn't agree more. As you just mentioned, mentors and supervisors vary a lot. I want to share some of my personal feelings. In my experience, I felt that the relationship between my mentor and I was more easy-going. She acted like, what we say in Chinese, a "senior sister", providing me with various suggestions about teaching and even life. She expressed her feelings in a very relaxed tone. While my supervisor, who I didn't meet, didn't have any relationship with me at all. If I had been lucky enough to have had a relationship with him, I don't know whether he would have been willing to share his inner feelings with me or not. I think this distance might have led to the different kind of relationship I developed with him.

Barry: Well, as far as I know, there are many types of mentoring relationships. From what I remember, there are 16 types. However, there are three basic ones (Wang and Odell 2007). The first one focuses on "helping novices identify and resolve personal conflicts" to be more professional (Wang and Odell 2007, p. 475). For example, helping a pre-service teacher get accustomed to the work they need to do, like writing lesson plans, how to manage classes, and how to make a connection with the students' families. The second one supports pre-service teachers in "adjusting to the prevailing school culture and the norms of teaching through the development of specific techniques and skills aligned to their school contexts" (Cavanagh and King 2020, p. 288). For this one, I think a mentor's role is to help pre-service teachers cultivate the belief of self-development and the awareness of school culture. For example, mentors can work with pre-service teachers to design a good lesson plan and give some feedback. The last one is to engage novice teachers and mentors in collaborative inquiry with equal participation. For example, mentors and pre-service teachers can work together on some research and reflect on teaching problems to seek improvement. From my point of view, I think whether a good relationship develops between a mentor and a pre-service teacher depends on what they both want from the relationship. Mentors wanting to help pre-service teachers to become good teachers, and

pre-service teachers wanting to become good teachers, make all the difference. So, what do you think causes a good relationship to form between a mentor and a pre-service teacher?

Evelyn: I think a good relationship between a mentor and a pre-service teacher embodies several factors, including the knowledge gap and a problematic mentoring relationship. For me, if my mentor has a weaker subject-matter knowledge than me, it could lead to an imbalanced relationship because in this way, I may hold a skeptical view about what he or she says. Also, the perspectives on approaches of mentoring matter as well. For me, I tended to be calm and paid greater attention to those problematic students in my class, while my mentor played an active role in her class, using magic and different games and songs to draw students' interest. Our teaching styles were totally different. Both of us held different viewpoints regarding teaching and it could have led to conflicts. As for the relationship between a supervisor and a pre-service teacher, traditional approaches have been increasingly criticized for ignoring pre-service teachers' "needs" and imposing a "limited impact on career and professional practice" (Kourieos 2019, p. 273). Accordingly, these relationships have also turned to become more collaborative in nature. Thus, this change inevitably leads to a dual role for supervisors; that is to say, they need to shoulder the role of a mentor, as well as a supportive, empowering, and nonjudgmental role (Kourieos 2019).

Barry: Do you think your relationship with your mentor in the local school was good? What kind of relationship do you think you had? When you have some problems or issues, like this spelling issue, did you go to her for help? And, when you went to her for help, what happened? What did she do?

Evelyn: I think I had a good relationship with my mentor. She was willing to invite me to observe her lessons and spared no effort to help me design content for my observation lessons. However, due to the limited time and tedious things unrelated to teaching, such as collecting information for the vaccination schedule, she was swamped. I talked with her, and she told me she had also encountered children's spelling issues. Moreover, she said that it may be because of their family backgrounds that some students lacked care from their parents, and they did their homework in tutorial schools. Alternatively, she said it may have resulted from their attitude or incompetence.

Barry: It doesn't seem as if your mentor was teaching you much. So, do you have any thoughts about your ideal mentor and supervisor or what your expectations are of them?

Evelyn: Yeah, although we had a pretty good relationship, I didn't learn a lot. So, my ideal mentor can push my development. I think an ideal mentor's primary task is to facilitate pre-service teacher's learning (Kourieos 2019). That is to say, mentors need to "develop a disposition and professional knowledge in mentoring... providing pre-service teachers with direction and support" in teaching and managing their classes (Zuilkowski et al. 2021). Second, I think an effective relationship with pre-service teachers is necessary (Kourieos 2019). Lastly, as we discussed before, I think a collaborative relationship between mentors and pre-service teachers is what I am looking for (Kourieos 2019). However, mentors are often burdened with numerous tasks, and they will assign more work that they don't want to do to pre-service teachers. Over the long term, this will destroy their collaborative relationship. As for supervisors, I think they need to be equipped with theoretical knowledge and to give instructions to us when we encounter something confusing or difficult. For example, when I told you about those problems, you asked me to read something to dig out some ideas. Furthermore, if they can create more opportunities to practice and give us some feedback accordingly, we can be more practical and competitive.

This dialogue revolved around the spelling issue and then dealt with the role of mentors and supervisors. This discussion deepened Evelyn's perspectives on the roles of mentors and supervisors, especially in their different responsibilities. In China, the relationship between mentors and supervisors, and the responsibility they need to take, are quite different from what is typical in Macau. Despite the different experiences and identities of the two researchers, through exchanging their different understanding of mentors' and supervisors' roles and analyzing their respective relationships with pre-service teachers and other factors, they identified that both mentors and supervisors are shifting towards more

collaborative, supportive roles. The researchers also discussed the fact that mentors need to pick up the slack if supervisors are not putting in sufficient effort. However, even if mentors do more, they may not teach pre-service teachers well and neglect to teach pre-service teachers everything they will need to know. Furthermore, mentors and pre-service teachers have a mutual impact on each other. “A mentor’s perception and mindset significantly impacts teacher learning” (Ellis et al. 2020, p. 5). The same goes for pre-service teachers.

3.2. Theme Two: Factors Resulting in Young Learners’ Spelling Issues

This theme answers our second question. In the second theme, when the researchers moved to the exploration of the factors affecting Chinese young English learners’ spelling issues, they found that it can be ascribed to three broad reasons. The three reasons are as follows: the impact of L1 on L2 orthographic knowledge; teaching strategies; learning strategies. The discussion revealed that Chinese young English learners’ spelling issues were also linked to their reading skills. Therefore, the researchers attempted to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between spelling and other related skills in order to further unpack these spelling issues.

Evelyn: My mentor proposed that Chinese young learners’ English spelling issues mainly resulted from their being too young and unable to understand the structure of words. So, they needed to copy more words to enhance memorization.

Barry: I think she thought that to teach English means to teach about English. If someone says something like, “the students are too young”, it probably means that those students cannot learn about language. For example, they may not understand grammar or how to talk about grammar because it is too difficult for them. Nevertheless, kids from a very young age can use language when they are playing games, communicating with each other, and saying some essential words. They just use language, but they cannot analyze language (Barnett 1998; Cameron 2001). So, we can say they cannot learn about language. However, if a teacher just wants to teach kids to talk about language, this is actually teaching them how to use metalanguage. So, I’m just wondering, maybe it was because of the school. What did kids do in the English classroom? Did they ever use English to communicate? Did they ever write or speak in English?

Evelyn: They sat there to obey the rules, and the teacher taught them, and they repeated what the teacher said. Then there may have been some activities designed for repetition and enhancing their memorization of phrases or collocations. After class, they were assigned homework, like repeated copying or completing the tasks in an exercise textbook.

Barry: Yeah, so it seems like they were learning about language. Think about it the same way a person goes about taking a swimming class. Somebody could show you pictures of water and talk about the kinds of clothes you need to wear if you go swimming. But, if you never put on those clothes and never try to swim, you will never be able to swim. The same goes for language learning. If you just ask them to talk about the language or memorize some parts of the language, but never use the language, then it will be very difficult for them to spell (Cameron 2001). That is the kind of idea I am trying to understand in the context you taught before. Okay, so you’ve told me about how your mentor responded to those English spelling issues. So, what was your response to her? What did you try to do?

Evelyn: Actually, I searched and read some papers related to this issue. Let me summarize my findings: first, L2 orthographic knowledge is sometimes impacted by the L1 (Saigh and Schmitt 2012; Marinova-Todd and Hall 2013). “Orthographically, each Chinese character is a compilation of strokes organized in a square construction. For example, the character 大 [da4]<big> is constructed by putting the three strokes 一, 丿, and 丶 in a specific pattern” (Lau et al. 2022, p. 2). That is to say, Chinese learners are more likely to use a whole-word approach in their processing of L2 words regardless of whether it is L1 Chinese or L2 English. However, when learning English, they should take a morphological approach. This means that they should divide words into different segments (Zhao et al. 2017). Actually, I also found some resources that suggested that Chinese learners use

a visual approach when spelling English words, which doesn't really work well for the English language. By comparing different second language learners from various home language backgrounds, it was found that Chinese children used a visual approach when spelling in English, which may have limited their performance (Marinova-Todd and Hall 2013). The characteristics of a learner's L1 writing system, particularly the existence of vowel and consonant graphemes, impact the development of L2 orthographic knowledge and sensitivity to different types of word misspellings (Martin 2017). Other young learners besides L1 Chinese children have also faced similar problems dealing with vowels, which suggests that young learners may process English short and long vowels in a way similar to their L1 (Saigh and Schmitt 2012). As a result, this may affect their ability to spell and recognize English words.

Barry: Well, that is a surprising finding. The differences between English and Chinese may really pose some difficulties to learners. But I think if the teacher tried to teach students in a different way, and not just engaged the learners in repeated copying, it would have been better. You know, as we discussed before, as a supervisor, I usually introduce many pedagogical approaches, which are especially useful to English teachers, to my students. For example, when teaching spelling, teachers can use photos, videos, or gestures to help students memorize the spellings of words. To further help students transfer knowledge from their short-term to long-term memory, teachers should expose students to each word multiple times through different activities (Nation 2008).

Evelyn: Yep. According to the resources I have found, the teaching strategies employed by teachers might have resulted in the young Chinese learners' spelling issues (Ding et al. 2018). It was revealed that formal schooling often teaches English words by putting an emphasis on rote memorization and repetitive practice (Ding et al. 2018). But actually, this strategy doesn't really work (Ding et al. 2018). By helping children analyze minimal meaning units, using explicit instruction on morphology might be better for them (Zhao et al. 2017). However, schools in China lack explicit instruction on English morphology; this is likely because they are applying strategies used in the Chinese classroom to English instruction (Zhao et al. 2017). So, the typical teachers' approach leads to Chinese children heavily relying on rote memorization for learning both Chinese and English vocabulary. I hope teachers will take advantage of morphological awareness instruction in their classes. From my point of view, I think these kind of practices, such as asking students to look for the root words inside of a word, or asking students to make a singular word plural, practicing the pronunciation of words, and using minimal word pair instruction, all seem very simple and very effective.

Barry: That's a good point. I think teachers can also change their teaching strategies. But teachers also need to make sure they train their students to apply some learning strategies as well. Using certain learning strategies can also improve their performance. Take repeated copying as an example, it may have some positive influence on students' English spelling if it's used properly (Nation 2008). The students may already have been familiar with the strategy of copying from learning Chinese because kids are learning Chinese using memorization strategies from a young age. But with Chinese, they just use repeated copying without trying hard enough to retrieve the information (Ipek 2009). I think that the degree to which teachers are open, or not, to totally changing their classroom activities is of great importance. But, if we tell teachers how they might improve on the activities they're already using, then they might be more willing to make those minimal adjustments. So, we already know that teachers use copying in class to teach Chinese, and even English, but this approach is not so effective with English. So, the way to improve the effectiveness of copying would be to try to ask them to use delayed copying. Delayed copying trains students to look at the whole word; then ask them to turn over the book or look away; then encourage them to write the word by recalling its form. Then, when they have finished, let them test the correctness of their spelling (Hill 1969). I have also introduced this method to my student teachers, which has proved to be effective in both Chinese and English vocabulary learning (Lo et al. 2018).

Evelyn: I also think that delayed copying is a good learning strategy. During my teaching experience, I found that some students who received high scores usually employed their own effective strategies. I observed one boy who usually practiced by using delayed copying. He wrote several sentences that included some key words. And his practice really worked. He received the first place for every test.

To sum up, the factors resulting in young Chinese learners' English spelling issues are: the impact of L1 on L2 orthographic knowledge; teaching strategies; learning strategies. The solutions to the spelling issue are to conduct explicit morphological instruction, encourage teachers to make changes in their teaching strategies, and guide students to use more effective learning strategies. This dialogue addresses the factors that impact Chinese young learners' English spelling issues. The dominant reason for this issue, as revealed by a range of studies discussed above, was the learners' processing strategies. Aspects of the impact of L1 on L2 orthographic knowledge, teaching methods, and students' vocabulary learning strategies were discussed which inspired the researchers to explore some solutions to improve Chinese young learners' English spelling skills.

3.3. Theme Three: The Relationship between Spelling and Reading

This theme was also used to answer our second research question. This theme emerged from reading some papers that proposed that spelling and reading may mutually impact each other. Therefore, the researchers discussed their relationship to further explore the factors related to spelling issues. In addition, the researchers also attempted to propose some teaching strategies to improve Chinese young learners' English spelling. The researchers discussed whether the reason for the variation in students' performance was due to some of the students attending an elective class at the primary school where Evelyn completed her practicum. This discussion highlighted the need for primary school students to have their reading skills developed so that it may promote their spelling skills. At the same time, the researchers drew some implications for teaching from the reviewed literature.

Evelyn: I found that there were some classes of students where they seemed to be performing a little bit better than in other classes. I wasn't sure if it was because they received additional instruction in English or whether the teachers were doing something different in those classes.

Barry: What did the teachers do?

Evelyn: This primary school had two different types of English classes. One type of class was compulsory; the other was elective. For the elective classes, the headmaster was in charge of teaching them and had selected the type of book to be used in those classes. Among the materials were extensive reading books. These books required that the learners engage in different types of reading tasks, and through the completion of these extra reading tasks, they would encounter new words in varied contexts (Krashen 2013).

Barry: Actually, for young second language learners, input is very important (Krashen 1989). As learners have acquired their first language naturally, when they learn their second language, the process is different (Meisel 2011). Therefore, providing sufficient language input can help promote young learners' second language learning. Also, since they are very young learners, teachers should be focusing on the oral forms of the words first, as experts have pointed out that written forms should be introduced later on when their reading and writing skills are being developed (Cameron 2001). So, at a later stage, spelling and reading can promote each other. In that primary school, it seems that the elective course contained a lot of reading practice, and probably that reading practice could have led to improved performance in those learners. As I know, using story books has a two-fold benefit. First, they draw in young learners' interest, and second, they strengthen language learning by putting new words in context (Cameron 2001). Do you think there could be some relationship between all of the reading that these students were engaged in and their spelling issues? Maybe the increased reading was related to improved spelling.

Evelyn: Well, in the past, I did think the elective course was a way for students to improve, but I didn't think about it in such a deep way. However, now I'm in total agreement

with you. Spelling and reading can mutually benefit each other. In fact, I've gained some knowledge about this through my reading (Li et al. 2012). After reading some papers, I found that many researchers have tried to understand the connection between spelling and reading (e.g., Krashen 2013). This research is practical because it provides some suggestions for teachers. As you mentioned before, input is very important. The input hypothesis holds that "we acquire language by understanding messages" (Krashen 1989, p. 440). To be more specific, the language input must be comprehensible for language acquisition to take place (Krashen 1989). "More comprehensible input, in the form of reading is associated with greater competence in vocabulary and spelling" (Krashen 1989, p. 441). Some studies have also confirmed that leisure reading leads to better results on spelling tests. Although the elective course contained many reading elements, I don't think that the school really took advantage of that course. Take myself as an example. I just followed the teaching routine, and after students finished reading, I always asked them to try to underline some words or to copy some new words from their reading materials to their notebooks. I did this because I thought it would strengthen their memorization. I wasn't really aware of the idea of comprehensible input. I think it was mentioned in one of my classes, but the professor didn't really teach me how I could practically apply it. So, I didn't think about comprehensible input when teaching, or whether learners should be interested in the reading materials and how this interest could lead to better reading ability and better spelling (Krashen 1989). Now I understand that reading can give learners the chance to be exposed to the written forms of words. The more often that learners encounter the words, the more consistently they will be able to spell those words (Nation 2008). In the future I will not ignore that comprehensible input can inspire greater interest in learning than drill and practice, which will typically result in poor learner performance (Krashen 1989). Regardless of whether the learners focus on spelling when reading or not, they often pick up new words and their spellings incidentally from reading (Reynolds 2020).

Barry: Alright, so we can conclude that spelling and vocabulary can be developed in a second language by reading, and if the learners have a better performance in spelling, it can also promote reading (Krashen 2013). Since we have figured out the relationship between spelling and reading, I think the pedagogical implications are obvious. We are using a hard way to teach vocabulary and spelling, as well as the rest of language. Although we know that conscious learning is effective, I think incidental learning also needs to be promoted (Rodgers 2015). Although it sounds simple, teachers can just encourage students to do a lot of reading, especially free voluntary reading (Krashen 1989). One hour of leisure reading can be equal to half an hour of drilling (Krashen 1989). The leisure reading will be more pleasant for students. If both drilling and reading can yield quite similar results, we should probably be promoting the one that students enjoy most.

Evelyn: So, what you're trying to say to me is that teachers should do all they can to encourage students to read more and facilitate more chances for them to read (Krashen 2013). If I am to continue to pursue a future in teaching, I would set up a reading corner filled with English books and ask the students to read during a set time each day. I guess I could also recommend some books for their parents to buy and keep at home or show them how they can find these books in the library. I think we need to offer them Chinese–English bilingual reading materials as well. That's because Chinese–English bilingual reading materials can be more comprehensible to young learners because they are developing their ability in both languages. Also, some researchers have found that reading bilingual books helps learners to retain their knowledge of new English words (Zhang and Webb 2019).

Barry: Yes, you can try to encourage them to read in these ways. But it doesn't mean that teachers shouldn't give guidance on how they complete the reading. Teachers can assign reading tasks and then set aside one lesson each week to discuss what they have read with the whole class (Day 2013). Besides, teachers can set up a reading contest to reward those who read the most books and organize a book club for students to work in groups to introduce what they have read (Day 2013).

Evelyn: Oh! In the primary school where I completed my practicum, there was an English drama class each week. I think this class could have been combined with the reading course. First, teachers could give students some story books with colorful pictures, and after they have read them, the teachers could then invite the students to act out the stories. Teachers can also add other types of post-reading activities as well (Day 2013). These activities can be individualized if the students are reading different books.

In this theme, the researchers discussed what teachers in the elective course did and discussed whether this elective course promoted the young learners' spelling. Through that discussion, the researchers found that the elective course included many reading elements. Evelyn and Barry went on to explore whether these elements made a difference. Through discussion and reading-related literature, the researchers concluded that spelling and reading mutually impact each other. As vocabulary and spelling can be developed in a second language through reading, encouraging students to engage in extensive reading can also be a good way to improve their general language proficiency (Krashen 2013). Therefore, the pedagogical implications were for teachers to encourage and make extensive reading a normal part of class, and to encourage learners to engage in reading-related activities.

3.4. Theme Four: Implications for Future Teaching

This theme is used to answer our third question and further supplement the answer to the first question. In the final theme, the researchers discussed certain kinds of activities that can be used in the classroom, as well as how difficult they might be to implement. For example, students can be encouraged to use word cards and delayed copying to improve their spelling. Teachers can also implement explicit morphological instruction. The researchers discussed how they grew as teachers and improved their own knowledge through the process of conducting this duoethnography. Evelyn has learned to be more independent, while Barry has gained a better understanding of how to train pre-service teachers from China.

Barry: If, in the future, you find that your students have this spelling issue, what will you do?

Evelyn: Besides what we discussed before about extensive reading, I think, pedagogically, implementing explicit morphological instruction is a good choice (Tong et al. 2009). We can help students divide words into different parts and teach them to analyze those parts. With such an approach to teaching different word parts, students can gain a better understanding of the structure of words (Nation 2013). The approach has been shown to be effective by many scholars (e.g., Tong et al. 2009). Explicit morphological instruction effectively enhances word decoding, spelling, and vocabulary (Tong et al. 2009).

Barry: That's right. Explicit morphological instruction is a good way. But I think there are some other approaches worth discussing. If you are doing some kind of drilling, you need to let the learners feel like they're playing a game (Gee 2013). For example, when you ask them to detect whether two words you've read out are the same or different, you can set it up as if it's a game, with points and teams. Teaching spelling rules is rather boring, and I'm not sure whether your learners can absorb these rules. If it's presented as a game, learners will be interested and learn the knowledge via the game play (Gee 2013).

Evelyn: Yeah, I agree with you. This is very important for learning English words. English words are made up of affixes and stems, and these are derived from French, Latin, or Greek (Nation 2008). Therefore, young learners need to become familiar with how to form English words using prefixes, suffixes, and roots as early as possible, since this mastery could help them learn more words and comprehend texts better (Kieffer and Box 2013). Learners who understand how words are formed by joining suffixes, prefixes, and roots have a greater breadth of vocabulary knowledge (Nation 2013; Kieffer and Box 2013). Building up connections and making a summary may help learners understand the meaning of words and notice the regularity in their spelling. So, helping young learners to practice these kinds of things in class will, of course, help them with their spelling, and it

will also help to raise their awareness (Zhao et al. 2017). For example, when we are teaching these things to the learners, we can also tell them a word's part of speech. We can teach students that -tion occurs at the end of nouns, so when they encounter some words that end with this suffix, they may know that these words are nouns. This is just one more piece of information that the learners can use to help them ensure they are spelling words correctly. If they acquire this knowledge, it will also help them to guess the meanings of some unknown words they encounter when reading (Kieffer and Lesaux 2007).

Barry: These are all very good points. So, analyzing and breaking up words into their component parts can improve learners' spelling and inferencing skills (He 2001). All of these are really good activities that we can do with young learners, especially when they're at the age of the students you taught before because they are ready to read English (Nation 2013). When teachers are explaining affixes and parts of speech, they can also explain how different words can be grouped into a word family. A word family refers to how words with different forms, but related meanings, are similar to each other (Carlisle and Katz 2006). For example, writer; written; writing; writes; rewrite. So, teachers need to try to teach the learners about this concept of a word family, and if they encounter unfamiliar words while reading, they can use the skill of associating the related forms to infer meaning (Johnston 1999).

Evelyn: I think learners also need to make some changes in their learning strategies and studying habits. As you mentioned before, I also think using word cards is an effective strategy for memorizing new vocabulary and improving spelling.

Barry: Yes, but we also need to train learners in how to use vocabulary word cards correctly (Nation 2008). The first thing is that young learners have to focus on the 2000 most-frequently-used English words (Nation 2013). These words can be studied using word cards. A simpler way is to teach the learners to put the L1 on one side and the L2 on the other. When they look at the L1, they will try to retrieve the form which is the spelling of the L2 word. And when they look at the L2, they need to retrieve the meaning of the word. So, the learners need to do both of these things, while making sure that the use of the English word cards is spaced, not massed (Cameron 2001). These are some basic strategies we can use to teach young learners if they want to use word cards to study the spellings or meanings of new words.

Evelyn: Yes, all of these are really good techniques that a teacher in primary school can use to teach vocabulary and spelling. Another technique I want to use in the future is delayed copying (Nation 2013). Delayed copying can also help learners to practice the spelling of words. I can use this for teaching those words that I see most of my learners are having problems with. I can ask the learners to copy down the words on the left-hand side of the page from the board. After that, I will ask them to fold the paper in half. Then, they will need to look at the word before folding the paper back. Finally, they should try to write down the word from memory. This would be just like what happens when taking a test (Roth et al. 2014). I could also focus on specific words that follow the same sound spelling rule. For example, "ee" as in sheep, see, tree, three, etc. Focusing on words with the same sound spelling rule has been shown to also increase learners' phonological awareness (Yeung et al. 2013). This awareness has been linked to improved spelling.

Barry: So yeah, I think all of the things we have discussed today are very good techniques. But one thing that we need to remember is that these are very young learners. And these are kinds of learning strategies. Of course, some of these things can be done inside of the class, but we should also assign some of these activities for completion outside of class. A very important thing for you to do in the future would be to make sure that you train the learners in how to complete these kinds of activities outside of class. Whatever you do with them inside of class can also be transferred outside of class when they are completing homework assignments. I think it may be a great challenge to get the learners to use these strategies the way that they're intended. I can imagine that many of them may not know how to use word cards properly. For example, they might think that studying word cards

for an hour would be more effective than five minutes in the morning, five minutes in the afternoon, and five minutes at night. However, massed learning is not as effective.

Evelyn: Yes. I think teachers also need to understand that the way they taught before was not necessarily the most effective. I know some teachers may not see the benefit of doing the things we have discussed with their learners. Even though I know that all of these approaches will be very useful to my students, I'm still quite concerned about what others may think of my instructional choices. If I teach in this way and my colleagues are not teaching in the same way, I don't know what my school will think about me.

Barry: Yeah, I can totally understand you having this kind of apprehension. So, from our conversations, how do you think you might, at least, be able to make some small changes? And what do you think you've learned from this process?

Evelyn: I think what I have learned from this research is independence. Before, when I had any issues or any problems about my teaching, I would go to other teachers and ask them. Although I can still get some advice from them, I now have another way. I can do research on my own to try to understand the problem because, most likely, the problem I'm having, others must have also encountered before. So, I think I have learned how to be independent and not to solely rely on others for answers.

Barry: Yeah, I think you have really gained some new abilities through our interactions and discussions with each other. I now feel confident that if you are teaching students in the future and encounter an issue, you can figure out what you can do to make some changes to address that problem. I have also grown from our interactions. I really appreciate all that you have explained to me about how pre-service teachers are trained in China, and now I can better understand how I should help some of my future students when they come to me with any problems they're having in their teaching.

This dialogue illustrates the implications for future teaching, which may give some inspiration for teachers in how to address young English second language learners' spelling issues and some encouragement to explore further approaches to teaching. Explicit instruction guides further teaching, while posing a great challenge to teachers to offer students a "specific and systematic instruction in phonemic segmentation, blending, and manipulation from the early grades and continuing to middle school as new vocabulary is introduced" (Zhao et al. 2017, p. 192). The use of vocabulary word cards and delayed copying should be promoted, whilst ensuring that students have been adequately instructed to take advantage of them. Evelyn and Barry gained a lot from the process of duoethnography. Both researchers have grown; as Evelyn has become a more independent teacher, Barry has gained some insights that he will apply to his supervisory role in teacher education.

4. Conclusions

The lack of educational support provided by the practicum experience left Evelyn without the knowledge, resources, or self-efficacy to seek solutions to address the Chinese primary school students' spelling issues. Furthermore, the type of instruction received by the primary school students, especially the learning and teaching strategies emphasized in the classroom, were not the most effective at raising the learners' awareness of English word spelling. Through the engagement with the teacher trainer in conducting this duoethnography, Evelyn has not only acquired knowledge of how to appropriately address any spelling issues her future students may encounter, but has also gained a sense of agency and independence to tackle teaching challenges.

The researchers used duoethnography to explore the reasons for Chinese young learners English misspelling issues. Through a series of discussions and a literature review, the researchers ascribed learners' spelling issues to the impact of L1 orthographic knowledge, teaching strategies, and students' learning strategies. The young learners processing of L1 and L2 orthography may have led to their misspellings. In addition, teachers' previous limited training in learning strategies may have also resulted in those spelling issues. For example, the lack of explicit morphological instruction may have impeded learners' systematic learning of spelling rules. A typical approach of many teachers is to direct stu-

dents to copy words to practice spelling, while emphasizing rote memorization, without significant effect. As a result, students are not likely to analyze word structure and segment words. In the process of discussing these influential factors, the researchers found evidence in the literature of a relationship between reading and spelling. Teachers can encourage students to read more to increase their language input in place of the use of drilling. Simply put, the researchers agreed that implementing explicit morphological instruction, encouraging students to read more, making and using word cards, and using delayed copying could all lead to improvements in spelling.

Apart from exploring the factors that resulted in spelling issues, a pre-service teacher has grown in her independence. Through duoethnography, Evelyn has deepened her knowledge of the roles of a mentor and a supervisor. Evelyn also found confidence in her professional development through the process of understanding the reasons behind young Chinese learners spelling issues. By exploring the possible solutions to this problem, Evelyn learned a lot about how to help students achieve improvements in their English learning. In addition, Barry has gained a better understanding of how to train pre-service teachers from China. He now has a greater understanding of the relationships that students from China have usually had with their mentors and supervisors. Through the completion of this duoethnography, both researchers have also learned something about each other. This was made possible due to their different backgrounds, as duoethnography embraces two or more voices, helping us to learn something by way of multiple perspectives.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Duoethnography encourages self-growth and self-reflection through cooperation to solve a problem by way of discussion. It does not aim to discover and compare differences between the beliefs of the participants, but rather to discover ways to communicate and learn from each other (Grimmett et al. 2018). Whilst this study was able to find useful directions for future research, it also has some limitations.

All of the data detailed in this study were based on retrospective discussions. The duoethnography could have been strengthened if these discussions were guided by artifacts. For example, if the researchers had used some artifacts from Evelyn's teaching or examined the spelling errors that students had made, then what the researchers talked about could have helped the discussion or analysis. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, Evelyn could not reach those materials. Instead, more time was spent discussing the issues faced by Evelyn when she taught the young Chinese learners.

The researchers suggest that mentors, such as the one Evelyn described in her discussions with Barry, should be required to publish teacher research as part of the standard application process for promotion. Such mentors may find duoethnography relevant if they are able to engage in this kind of deep discussion with pre-service teachers. This may lead to them becoming better mentors. Likewise, the pre-service teachers, if provided this opportunity, will gain an understanding of the issues that they discuss with their mentors. For teaching practice, if supervisors also engage in duoethnography with their pre-service teachers, they may better understand the kind of situations and issues that are faced by pre-service teachers when they visit schools. Duoethnography is a very useful tool for examining these kinds of relationships between supervisors, mentors, and pre-service teachers.

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