CHAPTER FIVE

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter analyzes both Angela's and Bernice's pedagogical beliefs and practices on reading according to the three research questions that guide the present study. The reading instructional beliefs and practices would be discussed in the first section and how students have an effect on these teachers' beliefs and actions would be explained next. Finally, further implications from the study will be discussed.

5.1 Research Question One and Two

Question 1: What pedagogical beliefs do two junior high school English teachers hold toward reading instruction?

Question 2: How are these JHS English teachers' pedagogical beliefs about reading instruction shaped in the classroom context?

The introduction of Angela's and Bernice's pedagogical beliefs on reading instruction in the previous chapter has shown that there are some similarities and differences between them. For example, Angela and Bernice both agree the preparation of lessons enable them to present the materials more efficiently and systematically. However, Angela claims that reading instruction involves teaching both meanings and forms, while Bernice suggests the detailed acquisition of vocabulary and grammar to be the key to understanding texts. In other words, both teachers agree the significance of lesson planning and students' understanding of the instruction in class, but they articulated different beliefs on the design of instructional procedures and presentation of reading materials.

As for the prior preparation of reading texts, Angela and Bernice agree that the preparation should be about additional information of vocabulary and grammar related to the text, but they embrace different beliefs on the design of reading

instruction and its procedures. They supplement the idioms, collocation, or phrases related to new words and grammatical patterns from the textbook. While Angela prefers searching for information from the internet, Bernice synthesizes what she found useful from various reference books. Though their sources are of different origins, both are eager to present more information for students in addition to those printed in the textbook. However, they have different opinions about reading instruction procedures. Angela only keeps a general instruction procedure in mind which is subject to change, taking into account teacher-student interactions. Thus, though she claims her perplexity about the extent to which a teacher should prepare her lessons in advance, she actually only designs a broad plan to present her instruction during observed sessions. For Bernice, she follows the bottom-up reading process to plan her lessons because she regards learning vocabulary and grammatical patterns of texts in the textbook as the prerequisite for students' reading comprehension. If students familiarize with these components, the comprehension of a text would not be a difficult task.

In addition to the different beliefs about instructional procedures, both teachers' beliefs about reading instruction are different and in turn shape their in-class practices. Angela assists students to comprehend texts by means of top-down and bottom-up oriented activities while Bernice believes the bottom-up reading process to be more appropriate for the students. For example, Angela divides students into heterogeneous groups to discuss the meanings of short passages in the textbook and present their work on stage. Or they learn to find out the grammatical patterns inductively with Angela's assistance. That is, she plays as a resource person to offer immediate help and as a facilitator to encourage their performance. Her students, on the other hand, learn to make sense of their own learning by participating in these activities. Unlike Angela, most of Bernice's instructional time is used in the explanation and practice of

vocabulary and grammar during her reading instruction. She explains each new word and grammatical point with rich additional information while students keeps taking notes and memorize them for later quizzes and tests. She believes the more comprehensive knowledge of vocabulary and grammar students have, the more easily students are able to understand reading texts. In addition, Angela and Bernice also claim diverse views about students' reading skill development. Angela expects students not to restrict their English learning in the content of textbook only, but to enlarge their learning horizon. She distributed short articles about recent events or English songs for students as outside reading materials. Students would work individually to look up the unknown words and discuss in groups to capture general meanings. What is more, Angela also expects to develop students' ability to express own opinions about the texts. Thus, she would leave some instruction time for students to present their work. Bernice, on the other hand, expects to offer some reading strategy training by asking pre-reading and post-reading questions in the texts from the textbook and assigns reading exercises from reference books as homework.

Consistent with the previous studies, it seems that Angela and Bernice's different instruction styles have a lot to do with their education backgrounds. Bernice expects to develop students' reading strategies since she once took a reading strategy course in college, while Angela's use of various activities and incorporation of students' opinions in class may be related to the variety of instruction activities in her previous English teaching experience in children's English learning institute. Tsui (2003) synthesized previous studies and concludes that teacher's beliefs or conceptions of teaching could originate from their academic background, teacher education training, and previous learning and teaching experiences. Angela and Bernice are of different education background and thus may embrace different reading instructional beliefs.

On the other hand, both Angela and Bernice's claimed beliefs about how to teach

reading only partially realized in their daily instruction when it comes to students'

contextual issues. For example, Angela believes meanings and components of a text

are equally significant, but she emphasizes the teaching of grammatical patterns when

students' monthly achievement test is approaching. That is, in her mind, she believes

that students' performance on the monthly examination is more important than their

understanding of the texts. Just as Angela said in the interviews, "[the monthly test]

will test students when to use be-verb or auxiliary, but will not test how much they

understand the text" (pre-observation interview 021009). The scores that students get

on the monthly examination are what their parents care about, and Angela accepts this

reality and revises her instruction approaches. This over-emphasis on students'

examination pressure is also shown in Bernice's reading instructional beliefs. Her

claim of emphasizing vocabulary and grammar learning is reinforced by the focus of

monthly examination. What is more, it seems to give Bernice a good reason to explain

why she only allocates several minutes in class to ask pre-reading and post-reading

comprehension questions though she believes this could develop students' reading

skills. According to Borg (2003), the contextual factors, such as students, school, or

curriculum may modify the beliefs or lead to the inconsistency between beliefs and

actions. Freeman (2000) also proposed that instructional activities are composed of

the teacher and learners as co-participants in the context of classroom or community.

Table 5.1 shows that both teachers claim to devise their reading instruction

approaches according to her beliefs, but students' specific contextual issues in fact

make them modify their in-class practices. This incongruence between the teachers'

articulated beliefs and actions are to be discussed further in the next sections.

Table 5.1 The two teachers' pedagogical beliefs on reading instruction

	Angela	Bernice
Preparation of Lesson		
(1) Content of lesson	・ Supplement textbook-related phrases or usages	・ Supplement textbook-related phrases or usages
(2) Reading instruction procedure	・ Impromptu responses in class are more important.	・ Follow the bottom-up oriented procedure
Instruction of Lesson		
(1) Reading comprehension process	・ Meanings and forms of texts are equally important to understand texts. ・ Emphasize students' in-class performance ・ Teachers as facilitators and resource persons	・ Components of texts are important to understand texts. ・ Encourage students to answer teachers' questions ・ Teachers as authority and presenter of knowledge
(2) Reading skill development	・ Expand English reading from outside reading materials	・ Reading strategies help reading comprehension.

5.2 Research Question Three

Question 3: How does students' involvement impact these English teachers'

pedagogical beliefs and practices on reading instruction?

Students as members in the teaching and learning process do have their impacts

on how Angela and Bernice present the instructional contents. According to the data

from interviews and classroom observation, several interesting issues related to

students are found in both teachers' reading instruction. For example, students' high or

low participation in instructional activities in turn reshapes a teacher's reading

instruction in class. Students' sharp differences in their English proficiency levels

enable Angela to adjust her instructional contents in class. These issues include

students' participation in class, students' comprehension of reading instruction,

students' diverse English proficiency and their examination pressure.

5.2.1 Students' participation in class

Both Angela and Bernice think of students' participation as the most significant issue to influence their teaching, but they hold different expectations for students' participation. Angela devises various activities to encourage students' opinions in class since she believes in the shared power between the teacher and her students. Students may work either individually (e.g., diary-writing) or in groups (e.g., group translation task). However, she would appoint students by means of drawing lots to answer her questions or present their work. That is, any student who is drawn by Angela has to present his answers or work no matter the answer is correct or not. This contradicts with Angela's belief about half-teacher centeredness and half-student centeredness since students are forced to join these activities. On the other hand, Bernice prefers more teacher-dominant interactions with students, so she uses pre-reading or post-reading questions related to the content of texts or previous authentic experiences to encourage voluntary students' responses in class. Students are expected to actively answer questions and at the same time maintain their discipline. Students in her classes seem to have more power to decide whether they want to join the activity, which opposes against Bernice's stated beliefs in the traditional teacher's dominance. That is, during the observed sessions, students in both teachers' classes have opportunities to join learning activities, but Angela's classes seem to be controlled by her while Bernice's students have more power to decide their own learning.

However, students' responses in classroom observation and later interviews reveal the real teacher-student interaction in class. Students in both of Angela's classes show preferences to join those activities, particularly the cooperative group work. Though some low achievers feel quite nervous when being selected, Angela's positive

feedback, regardless of the correctness of their answers, seems to give students more confidence to learn. That is, the students look passive in accepting Angela's teaching, but they are in fact encouraged to try out their performances and learn to be responsible for their own learning. Angela, on the surface, as the authority forces students to present their work, but in fact she serves as a facilitator to encourage students' performance and offer help when necessary. However, students' reactions in Bernice's classes display sharp differences. While students in Class C volunteer to reply Bernice's questions or even raise questions, students in Class D are generally used to staying quiet. Though sometimes Class C's discussion deviates from Bernice's original instructional topics, she still admires their high participation in class. As for students in Class D, only a small number of students participate in the activities while most of them choose not to respond in class. In short, Angela's students, who are forced to join activities, enjoy in the learning process instead. On the contrary, most students in Bernice's classes, who have more power in their learning, choose not participate in Bernice's instructional activities.

Furthermore, both teachers claim that students' different participation styles shape their instruction in return. They propose that students' interest in those instructional activities encourage them to share more information with students while students' low participation or boring faces only enables them to teach what they plan in advance. However, students with different learning background may have different learning styles, which impacts how they react to the teachers' instruction in class. For example, most students in Class D may get used to replying the teacher only when the teacher calls their names. For example, Bernice believes students' high participation to be voluntary responses, but this may not be appropriate for all her students. It is of course impractical for a single teacher to devise different instructional approaches to meet different needs of her students or classes since a junior high school teacher often

have three to four classes of students. Nevertheless, it is unreasonable for a teacher to define students' behaviors in class only through her beliefs in high participation. That is, students in each class do create a specific teaching situation; however, it is questionable that whether the teachers in the present study do make little modification to deal with the context.

5.2.2 Students' comprehension of instruction

After the comparison of the two teachers' pedagogical beliefs and their students' views about teaching focus, the gap between the two teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices seems more obvious. Angela devises both top-down and bottom-up oriented reading instruction in Lesson One, but she emphasized the teaching and learning of components in texts of Lesson Two. This enables her students to believe learning of the vocabulary and grammar is more important, which is inconsistent with her intention of instruction. Bernice assumes the advantages of reading strategies for students, but only three to five minutes in each instructional period (45 minutes) are used for the reading strategy training. Her students thus have little ideas about the purposes of those reading comprehension questions. This contradiction or discrepancy between the two teachers' beliefs and actions sounds frustrating to the teachers, but this compromise seems to embrace students' specific learning context.

Both Angela's and Bernice's reading instruction enable their students to emphasize learning of vocabulary and grammar. Angela allocated more time on the teaching of vocabulary and grammatical patterns in Lesson Two compared with her teaching focus in Lesson One since the focus of the achievement test is to assess students' memorization and knowledge of these forms. Moreover, she holds a belief that helping students to perform better on the examination is also a teachers' responsibility. For Angela, this compromise is a natural response toward her specific working context. Just as Angela, Bernice allocated much time on the teaching of

vocabulary and grammar while the emphasis of reading strategy has been reduced to minimum. This leads to the discrepancy between her claimed beliefs and actions, but it meets her students' current needs. This change of her instruction contradicts with her reading instructional beliefs, but it incorporates students' immediate learning needs and has impacts on students' learning focus. Students after the instruction do emphasize learning of vocabulary and grammar.

However, what makes both teachers different is their attitudes toward the inconsistency between their pedagogical beliefs and actions. Angela felt guilty about her hurrying pace of instruction in Lesson Two and reducing the interaction with students in class. In the last interview, Angela reflected that she would have followed her ideal reading instruction design in Lesson Two if she had planned her pace of instructional progress in advance. That is, she does critically examine her teaching in Lesson Two and expects herself to plan her instruction procedure in more detail. However, Bernice seems to get used to this discrepancy. She regards this as inevitable result. Moreover, her belief in the significance of learning vocabulary and grammar is reinforced by the focus of monthly achievement tests; thus the relatively less instruction time on reading strategy instruction is the necessary solution. In other words, she accepts this situation and is willing to teach in the same way. In conclusion, while Bernice directly accepts the compromise, Angela is eager to find another balance among her pedagogical beliefs, in-class practices and students' needs.

5.2.3 Students' diverse English proficiency

Students with different English proficiency are a common issue for English teachers in Taiwan. Both Angela and Bernice offer additional information and make-up quizzes to meet high- and low-achievers' different needs. For high-achievers, they supply additional information, such as outside reading materials or additional grammatical knowledge since the students have acquired the information in the

textbook. As for low achievers, both teachers utilize make-up quizzes to push them to work harder. Students unable to reach teachers' assigned criteria about vocabulary or grammar focus from the textbook are supposed to take make-up quizzes. However, the better grades students get on make-up quizzes do not encourage them to work harder and be more responsible for their learning.

Angela and Bernice try hard to help slow learners catch up with others, and Angela herself also adapts her beliefs to students' specific learning situation. Bernice perceives students' low academic performance as their lack of responsibility on own learning; thus, the make-up quiz may be an approach to force students to learn. However, as she said in the interview, students get the habit of reviewing only before make-up quizzes. That is, their performances on make-up quizzes aim to reach Bernice's requirement, but students themselves seem not learn to be responsible for their learning. Angela, in addition to make-up quizzes, adjusts her instruction immediately, such as decreasing the task difficulty or designing group work, to increase low achievers' participation in class. With the collaborative support of other class members and Angela, their hard-working is appreciated. Moreover, she adopts different instruction strategies to present learning materials and some low achievers, according to her, may have surprising performance and gain more confidence in English learning.

Both teachers keep students' diverse English proficiency in mind, but their attitudes toward students' responsibility of learning influence their reading instruction in class. Of course, most of their instructional preparation tends to target at high-achievers and some high achievers do express their preference to learn the additional information. However, while Bernice only sets up remedial tests and quizzes to force slow learners to catch up with others, Angela does try other approaches to encourage the low-achievers. The effectiveness of these approaches

may be questionable, but she at least adopts different measures to deal with this student contextual issues.

5.2.4 Students' examination pressure

Both Angela and Bernice believe that one of a teacher's responsibilities is to help students release the examination pressure and enable them to perform better on tests. Different focuses that monthly achievement tests and the high school entrance examination have have been recognized by both Angela and Bernice, but they utilized different approaches to deal with the issue.

Both teachers agree the impacts that the monthly examinations bring on their reading instruction. As mentioned above, Angela's pedagogical beliefs on reading instruction differ from the focus of monthly achievement tests, so she adapts her teaching to meet the examination trend. What is more, she proposed that her reading instructional design would be different when these students are seniors and have to face the pressure from the entrance examination. That is, she would modify her pedagogical practices depending on different teaching and learning contexts. On the contrary, Bernice claims that she would insist on her reading instructional beliefs. Her belief on the emphasis of vocabulary and grammar in reading instruction generally coincides with the focus of monthly tests, which strengthen her beliefs about the benefits her vocabulary and grammar teaching could bring. However, she supposes her reading instruction would stay the same even when students become seniors in the next year. At the same time, she uses more reading comprehension exercises as students' homework to deal with the entrance examination. Those exercises from the reference books are designed according to the test types from the entrance examination. She expects students to develop reading proficiency by means of these exercises. However, she has little time to assure whether students practice these exercises or not, which makes the effectiveness of this method questionable.

Table 5.2 compares both teachers' articulated beliefs and practices on reading and how student issues interact with their instructional behaviors. Both teachers implement different instruction procedures to help students' performance on tests. While Angela keeps flexible attitude to modify her reading instructional approaches to respond to the specific environment where different examination focus creates, Bernice insists on the benefits that her pedagogical beliefs could bring to students. The consistency between Bernice's claimed beliefs and actions appears fascinating, but it is questionable that students do develop their reading comprehension ability by means of her instruction.

Table 5.2 Comparisons of Angela's and Bernice's beliefs, practices, and students'
performance in reading instruction

	Angela	Bernice
Students' participation in class		
(1) Teacher's articulated belief	・ Students' opinions about texts should be incorporated.	・ Teacher-dominant participation can control Ss' discipline at the same time.
(2) Teacher's practice	・ Various individual or group tasks ・ Appoint students to present their work	・ design pre- and post-reading questions ・ welcome students' voluntary responses
(3) Ss' performance	・ enjoy the discussion	・ have little impression
Students' comprehension of instruction		
(1) Teacher's articulated belief	・ Meanings and forms of texts are important to understand texts. ・ Forms (vocab. & Gr.) are the test focuses	・ Components of texts are important to understand texts. ・ Reading strategies help reading comprehension.
(2) Teacher's practice	・ L1: focus both meanings and forms L2: focus on vocab. & Gr.	・ Focus on vocab. & Gr. in L1 & L2 ・ Ask pre- and post-reading questions
(3) Ss' performance	・ Emphasize learning of vocabulary and Grammar	・ Emphasize learning of vocabulary and Grammar
Students' diverse English proficiency		
(1) Teachers' articulated beliefs	・ Focus on high achievers' needs ・ Make adjustments for slow learners	・ Focus on high achievers' needs ・ Make adjustments for slow learners
(2) Teacher's practice	・ Select outside reading articles ・ Heterogeneous groups ・ Vocab. make-up quizzes for	・ Offer additional information about new words ・ Make-up quizzes (vocab.) for slow learners

	slow learners	
	・ Serve as a resource person and facilitator	
(3)Ss' performance	・ High achievers expand English learning horizon. ・ Low achievers are impressed by the discussion with peers. ・ Make-up quizzes are of little help for slow learners.	・ High achievers like additional information of new words. ・ Make-up quizzes are of little help for slow learners.

Students' examination pressure

(1) Teacher's articulated belief	・ Helping students learn what will be tested is teachers' responsibility.	・ Helping students learn what will be tested is teachers' responsibility.
(2) Teacher's practice	・ Emphasize Gr. sections in quizzes and tests ・ Change reading instruction approaches in Ss' third year	・ Quizzes on vocab. and Gr. knowledge ・ Emphasize Gr. sections in tests and quizzes ・ Assign reading comprehension exercises to Ss as homework
(3) Ss' performance	・ Emphasize learning of Gr. & vocab. ・ Unable to investigate in the present study	・ Emphasize learning of Gr. & vocab. ・ Unable to check students' practices on the homework

5.3 Implication from the Study

After the comparison of Angela's and Bernice's pedagogical beliefs on reading instruction, it can be concluded that these teachers do present their instruction according to their beliefs in certain ways. However, the specific context where they work leads to the incongruence between their beliefs and actions in class. Among various contextual factors, Borko and Shavelson (1990, as cited in Nien, 2002) proposed that the information about students is the most significant one to influence teachers' practices. That is, the contextual issues especially those related to students such as students' different learning styles or English proficiency levels seem to make teachers' pedagogical beliefs situated and contextualized. Moreover, these two teachers' different responses to the contexts seem to imply their different beliefs about their roles and teacher-student interaction.

5.3.1 Teachers' pedagogical beliefs as situated knowledge

The teacher's pedagogical beliefs could be considered as situated knowledge, which incorporates the specificities of context where the teacher work and reason. Borg (2003) proposed a framework of teacher cognition (see Figure 1) to explain the interrelationship among teachers' cognition or beliefs, their in-class practices and contextual factors, such as students, parents or mandated curriculums. Both teachers' pedagogical beliefs on reading instruction can be explained on the basis of this framework. As the example shown in the modified Borg's model in Figure 2, Bernice believes acquiring some reading strategies is helpful for students' reading skills, but she distributed little instructional time on this due to the grammatical focus of students' monthly achievement tests. Angela believes students should focus on meanings and forms of a text at the same time while she emphasized the teaching of grammar under the pressure of coming examination. In short, the specific context, students' examination focus, is embedded into both teachers' practices and they in

turn modify their beliefs to meet students' needs. This is similar with the "situated" nature of teacher beliefs, which has long been discussed by many researchers (e.g., Lave, 1988; Leinhardt, 1988; Tsui, 2003).
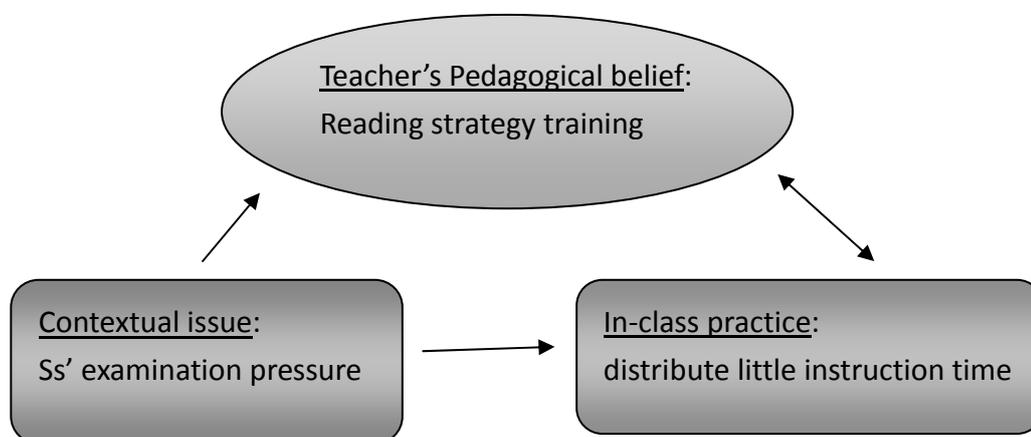

Figure 2. Modified Borg's model in terms of Bernice's case

Teacher pedagogical beliefs can be explained as situated knowledge, which emphasizes the specific context where teachers work and how they understand the specific context of work and respond to the context (Tsui, 2003). According to Leinhardt (1988), "situated knowledge is contextually developed knowledge that is accessed and used in a way that makes use of characteristic features of the environment as solution tools" (p.146). That is, teacher knowledge or beliefs, in addition to their knowledge of the subject matter, such as the reading process or strategies, includes her own understanding and responses toward the specificities of the contexts, such as who the students are or the physical environment of the school (Leinhardt, 1988; Tsui, 2003). For example, Bernice saw higher participation among students in Class C, and in turn came up with more information immediately to share with them. Angela grasped students' expressions of understanding in Class A, which enables her to teach more than what she originally planned. Both of them take into account their students' particular situation, and modify their practices to respond to

the situation. That is, the specificities about students and these teachers' pedagogical beliefs interact with each other to construct a unique teaching and learning context in their classrooms.

During the process of responding to the particular situations, it seems that Angela reaches a better balance between students' specificities and her in-class actions. Angela expects to encourage students' participation, and thus randomly assigns students to participate in her teaching activities and present their work. She keeps in mind students' diverse English proficiency levels; therefore she adopts make-up quizzes as well as reduces the difficulty of learning tasks for slow learners. She at the same time serves as a facilitator to offer assistance and encouragement. Students in later interviews displayed their preference to join these learning activities, implying that her beliefs have been achieved. They seem to be more confident in learning English and try harder to make sense of their learning. On the contrary, Bernice designs several pre-reading and post-reading questions to elicit students' voluntary responses, aiming to arouse students' participation in class. However, it leaves little impression on students. She expects slow learners to catch up with others by means of the make-up quiz, but they proposed this method of little help. According to Tsui (2003), in addition to the ability to interact with the specific context, an expert teacher perceives "the possibility that can be opened up for the effective achievement of instructional objectives" (p.254). Angela sees other alternatives to encourage students' participation, such as designing various activities and offering immediate assistance and encouragement. Students, though they do not participate voluntarily, do display their enjoyment in those activities. Bernice, on the other hand, seems unable to respond to her students' specific situations effectively though she understands their significance.

Moreover, Angela even makes use of her contextual characteristics to reflect

upon her previous practices. Reflective thinking is said to play a significant role in teacher's efficacy (e.g., Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992; Pultorak, 1993; Lin, 2002). Angela expresses her perplexities about the extent of which she should plan her reading instruction procedure since students' reactions in class are taken into consideration as well. Also, she reflects her overemphasis on grammar and hurrying pace of teaching in Lesson Two, which reduce much time for her interaction with students. Though she regarded this compromise as a result of limited instruction time before students' monthly achievement test, she believes this could change if she has more precise teaching progress. This confirms with Bereiter and Scardmalia's (1993) conception of expertise, suggesting that an expert's knowledge, besides its context-specific nature, should also enables him to "gain strength from the situation" (p.53). Tsui(2003) also emphasized that a teacher should reflect her experience deliberately to develop her expertise in teaching. Angela does reflect her previous teaching experience in terms of the current teaching context, such as students' in-class responses and their coming examination, and expects to figure out other ways to transcend these constraints to reach her original instructional goals.

5.3.2 Teachers' pedagogical beliefs and teacher's role

Both teachers do take their students' issues into consideration when presenting their reading instruction and it seems to imply their assumption about their roles in teaching at the same time. Learners' and teachers' views about their relationship and roles have an impact on how much students could acquire skills (Ho & Crookall, 1995). Wright (1987) also proposed that a language teacher's role relies on her beliefs about language and learning. What pedagogical beliefs a teacher holds has impacts on how they present their images in class. Angela, who believes in the significance of incorporating students' opinions, serves as the authority to control students' participation and presentation in the learning process while Bernice emphasizing

teacher-centered interactions only holds a relaxed attitude and asks for students'
voluntary responses. It seems that Angela holds the image of authority to decide
students' learning while Bernice expects make a balance between teacher-centered
instruction and students' in-class participation and thus give students more power to
decide their own learning process.

However, the roles of teacher and students in both teachers' classes are not
shown up as mentioned above after detailed classroom observation and interviews
with students. Students in Bernice's classes, especially those from Class D, express
lack of interests to join in Bernice's activities though Bernice does not require them to
do so. They seem to get used to sitting at the desk and receive Bernice's instruction as
if they have little responsibility for own learning progress. This corresponds to the
tradition that foreign language teachers tend to play as a director or even an authority
to control the exchange of knowledge in class (Long & Porter, 1985). This is more
obvious in the Chinese educational context such as Taiwan where teacher's authority
and teacher-centeredness is emphasized (Littlewood, 1999; Scollen & Scollen, 1994).
Bernice expects to increase their participation and reduce her authoritative roles in the
teaching context; however, some of her students, particularly those in Class D still
tend to display this passive characteristic. In other words, these students in class look
like receivers to accept the knowledge presented by Bernice, but how much they
comprehend is questionable. Bernice used her beliefs about high participation to look
at her students, but she fails to take into account students' different learning styles and
previous learning experiences. Compared with Bernice, Angela seems to come up
with more successful methods to deal with students' "passivity" in Taiwan. She
requires that every student should present her work as long as he is selected. This
sounds teacher-centered on the surface. Nevertheless, students in Angela's classes
seemed to act more actively to construct their own learning while Angela only serves

as the facilitator and resource person to offer immediate assistance and positive feedback about students' performance.

This teacher-student relationship in Angela's classes sounds similar to the conception of learner autonomy, which emphasizes learner's "ability to take charge of their own learning" (Holec, 1981, p.3). Of course, there are still some differences from Holec's so-called proactive autonomy (Littlewood, 1999) suggesting learners are able to make all decisions about learning from choosing learning materials to evaluating the learning program. Junior high school students in Taiwan have little freedom to choose learning materials, design their own learning objectives, syllabuses, and curriculums. However, it appears that Angela's students learn to make sense of their learning, deal with the stress when accomplishing the task devised by her, and present their work either individually or collaboratively. This conforms to Littlewood's reactive autonomy (1999) which "enables learners to work autonomously to reach the goals" and the teacher has a role in defining appropriate learning objectives, selecting learning methods or even evaluating students' learning progress (p.75-76).

The concept of reactive autonomy approves of the facilitative role that the teacher could play in developing students' autonomous learning. Just as Holec proposed the key components of autonomy, "a concept of teaching or counseling as support" is one of necessary elements (1985, p.184, as cited in Benson, 1996). Voller (1997) also proposed that the teacher as a supporter or facilitator is the most constantly mentioned role in autonomous learning. In the present study, Angela seems to create a learning context where students could learn to exercise their learning responsibility in terms of various individual or cooperative learning tasks. Though she authoritatively assigns students to present their work due to students' passivity, she actually presents herself as a facilitator to help students acquire reading skills. In other

words, the teacher does have a role to help her students realize their responsibility for learning instead of leaving the responsibility solely to learners.

In summary, the particular instruction contexts where students' specificities come into play has impacts on Angela and Bernice' pedagogical beliefs on reading instruction, and in turn make their tacit instruction role explicit. A large number of previous studies have concluded that various contextual issues, such as curriculum, state policy or students' characteristics, are responsible for the inconsistency between teachers' pedagogical beliefs and their in-class practices. However, these contextual factors, just as those related to students in the current study, can be considered the filter for teachers to modify their beliefs to respond to the specific context where they work. During the process of modification, teachers learn to adjust their own beliefs and develop appropriate instructional roles, and thus figure out teaching activities more suitable for their students. That is, teachers not only play the role of guiding students' learning, but they are learning from the teaching context as well. Also, those particular teaching situations that Angela and Bernice face in the present study may occur in every teacher's working context. Each teacher may utilize different ways to face these situations; however, Angela and Bernice's cases may help a teacher reflect her own teaching and offer another direction to deal with their context of work.