

# **Coaching a Student to Develop Coherence Based upon Topical Structure Analysis: A Case Study**

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## **Abstract**

This is a case study of Emily, an English major who has finished her studies in the three-year extension program at a technical college. She just took the entrance exam to two-year college leading to a BA degree. With high motivation in learning English, she wants to polish her writing skills so that she could do well in her studies in her future academic work. Her affective filter is low and she has an amiable personality to participate in the project.

The teacher-investigator helped her to diagnose her writing problems throughout the whole process. By supervising her to write and revise two essays, it is obvious that Emily needs teachers' scaffolding skills and she could do it much better after using the topic structure analysis (hereafter, TSA) as a tool to diagnose her own writing. In addition to the whole composing process, the teacher-investigator has found that Emily in fact is beginning to like writing and feels proud of her essays.

The case study was conducted and narrated by the teacher-investigator, who held conferences with Emily numerous times and had one-to-one conferencing on improving the essay. Taking data from Emily's notes of her language learning experiences, written records of each writing conference, the investigator's written recollections, as well as informal chatting between Emily and the teacher-investigator, this study reveals how topical structure analysis is situated in the composing processes of a typical intermediate-level Taiwanese student and how she adopted new learning strategies with which she finally learned how to develop coherence through this approach-topical structure analysis.

## **Introduction**

The development of ESL writing research and theories since the early 90s has shifted from the product approach to the process approach. Seen from a process perspective, writing is a "non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meanings" (Zamel, 1983, p. 165). The process approach probes what a writer does in the composing process. How to make the ideas coherent involves the cognitive process of writing.

ESL writing paradigm has also been highly influenced by the cognitive model (Flower and Hayes, 1981, 1983), which adds a cognitive perspective to the theoretical framework of the

process approach. According to the cognitive model, the process of writing is "a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate or organize during the act of composing" (Flower and Hayes, 1983, p. 366). Flower and Hayes assert that writing is a recursive process in which planning, evaluating, and revising interact with each other.

In order to explore the complexities of the cognitive process, many case studies have been designed and conducted to examine writing components, such as cohesion and coherence, grammar and sentence structure, and lexical and semantic features of rhetorical composition. According to Ulla Connor (1996), cohesion is determined by lexical and grammatical intersentential relationships, while coherence focuses on the semantic relationships within texts. One of the most difficult areas in writing pedagogy is coherence, which is hard to acquire and not easy to teach, either. Some learners may have a good command of grammar knowledge but may have difficulty composing a well-organized essay. Writing, in fact, involves more than accuracy; it transmits information and self-expressions through the medium of language use. The concept of coherence should not be neglected in the writing curriculum.

The present study attempts to explore the cognitive process of composing multiple drafts based upon the same topic. Topical Structure Analysis is used as a means of arousing the subject's awareness of coherence after each draft. From draft to draft, the subject has gradually been aware of the significance of coherence and the researcher has made some observations of the whole composing process, particularly with reference to the use of Topical Structure Analysis.

## **Review of the Literature**

Lautamatti (1978), drawing from the theory of "theme" and "rheme" of the Prague school of linguistics, developed topical structure analysis (hereafter, TSA). According to his definition, topic ("theme") is what the sentence is about (main idea), whereas "rheme", or comment, is what is being said about the topic. This approach aims to explore the semantic relationships that exist between sentence topics and the discourse topics, progressively accumulating meaning. Regarded as an effective strategy for examining discourse coherence, TSA investigates how the discourse topic and subtopics are maneuvered to produce clarity in

compositional works.

Lautamatti identified three progressions as follows:

- (1) parallel progression (the topics are semantically co-referential);
- (2) sequential progression (the topics are always different and come out of the comment of the previous sentence); and
- (3) extended parallel progression (a parallel progression temporarily interrupted by a sequential progression).

Witte (1983) conducted a study in which his subjects were asked to revise a text, and then the revisions were submitted to topical structure analysis. The results of the study showed a significant difference between lower-rated revisions and higher-rated revisions based upon the patterns of topical structure development. Other researchers, such as Connor (1987), Schneider and Connor (1990), and Connor and Farmer (1990) applied topical structure analysis to the study of ESL/EFL writing, and confirmed that topical structure patterns are related to writing quality.

Connor (1996) regards topical structure analysis as an effective self-administered revision strategy for students to use along with quality teaching instruction and teacher/peer comments. Schneider and Connor (1991) collected a sample of essays written for the TOEFL's Test of Written English (TWE) and suggested that topical structure analysis correlated well with readers' judgments of writing quality.

The findings of the present case study will also have practical implications for the teaching and learning of ESL/EFL writing. Instead of focusing only on lexical and sentential level instructions, writing teachers and researchers can draw on the findings of topical structure analysis, and orient their instructions and research to the discourse level.

## **Methodology**

### ***Subject***

The subject of the study, Emily, also the researcher-teacher's student, participated in this study voluntarily. She has received English education in formal schooling for 6 years and she never went to any cram school for intensive English sessions. Due to her interest in English, she continued to major in English in the three-year extension program at a technical college in Taipei. Generally speaking, Emily has very high motivation to learn English and performs best academically in class.

She passed the intermediate-level GEPT (General English Proficiency Test), exhibiting the intermediate level in overall proficiency level. The majority of the courses she took at school were English-related subjects, including four-skilled language courses and other applied English courses, such as *Language and Culture*, *Business English*, and *English for Tourism*. *English Writing* was a two-semester required course and was taught in the third year of this program. She had no previous writing experience nor had any teacher given explicit instruction in composing or writing. She is not very interested in Chinese writing. She thinks the *English Writing* course is acceptable, but not with particular enthusiasm. The most difficult area for her to write is lack of ideas. Emily thinks that writing well means that you can write correct English with accurate grammar, and has a lot of insights into the topics and can write with graceful diction and language. She will consult the electronic dictionary occasionally and will use paper dictionaries once in a while.

### ***Procedure***

The study was conducted from late February 2004 to late May 2004 within three months. The teacher-investigator had an out-of-class session with Emily. We met once a week, each for 2–3 hours.

Emily initially came to my office to discuss the problems and difficulties she had. The teacher-investigator asked about her preferences for learning and any relevant English learning experience, especially previous writing experience. For regular meetings, she came to my office and wrote essays as indicated. The teacher-investigator could observe her while she was composing. When she said she could not write any single word, the teacher-investigator just asked her to write and not to be bothered by any organizational problems. As

long as she started writing, she would come up with more ideas. In terms of feedback sessions, the teacher-investigator gave her oral feedback instead of written feedback because the student–teacher conferencing works more efficiently (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998).

### ***Tasks***

Emily was asked to write three topics based upon the rhetorical modes–narration and description but only two topics were examined in this study. The purpose of choosing the modes was because students in the early writing stage are apt to start writing about this genre and it is easier to express one's own ideas. In addition, previous studies (Connor, 1996; Schneider and Connor, 1990) all focused on expository writing and this study aims to explore the feasibility of applying TSA to narration and description.

As a practice of the genre, Emily wrote *An Unforgettable Experience*. To refrain from too many different genres or difficulties of composing a specific topic, in this genre-specific study, she was requested to produce multiple drafts of the two topics–*An Embarrassing Experience* and *An Important Person in My Life*. With previous training on how to perform a topic structure analysis, Emily was taught how to analyze the topical subject and the comment in a sentence. Then, she was asked to check the diagram of each draft. Details will be described later.

### **Results & Discussions**

When exploring the composing process, it is inevitable to engage in a number of factors, not just focusing on one single point. Some aspects of writing will be discussed where appropriate. There are two topics discussed here–first, *An Embarrassing Experience*; and second, *An Important Person in My Life*. The teacher-investigator will describe the main difficulties, limitations, and benefits during the composing processes and discuss the role of TSA in terms of coherence in writing.

#### ***Topic 1: An Embarrassing Experience***

### The composing process

For topic 1, Emily seemed to be very familiar with the topic; she immediately began to write without spending too much time brainstorming. The teacher-investigator noticed that she did not even write any outline. She said that she did not have the habit of constructing the outline or brainstorming by writing down any notes even though the teacher–investigator spent a lot of time giving instructions in this aspect. No matter what the teacher–investigator taught in class, she would do something else in her composing process. She thought that writing is a linear thing; she did not realize that writing could be recursive until the teacher–investigator asked her to revise again and again. According to her L1 writing experience, she never revised her essays at all. It was not easy to revise the essays dramatically when she was always requested to handwrite on a lined paper.

She finished her first draft in 30 minutes and she felt satisfied with it because she had stated the main points in a very coherent way. But she felt that the sentence structures were too simple: that is, there was no grace or elegance in her writing. In response to this, the teacher-investigator gave her some guidelines on how to combine sentences in order to write sentences more cohesively.

### Using TSA as revision strategy

For the second draft, she filled in more information by explaining her own experience more clearly since Chinese is a high context language whereas English uses low–context communication (Hall, 1989). The second TSA diagram looked rather similar to the first one, because she knew that she did not add too many things. For the third draft, she realized that it would be much better to expand the ideas based upon the low/high context concept, so she provided more information. By evaluating the coherence diagram, she was aware of the difference between parallel progression and extended progression. Realizing the significance of the progression patterns in essays, Emily thought that it would be better if she could add some information after parallel progressions so that the meaning would be complete.

According to her feedback on doing the TSA coherence diagram, during the process she would have to find out the "topic" of each sentence; that is, the main idea of each sentence so that she could have a better flow of the essay. Even though the diagram may not be a

foolproof way to check coherence; however, by explaining the three different ways of presenting ideas in an essay, Emily thought that it was beneficial for her to develop coherence in this regard. However, the teacher-investigator observed that it was not easy for Emily to determine the topical subjects; sometimes, TSA may not be as effective as it appears. Emily would ask for teacher's help to re-evaluate the coherence diagram; she was also uncertain about what she did in the diagram in certain sentences.

Generally speaking, since this topic is more familiar to Emily, it is easier for her to revise the organizational patterns of the essay. The first and second draft followed parallel progressions more than the third draft, which utilized more extended parallel progressions. By doing so, the third draft provides more content as Emily added more details about the experience.

## ***Topic 2 An Important Person in My Life***

### The composing process

In terms of topic familiarity, Emily felt that it was very difficult to think of one person to write about. Then I asked her to read an article in *Writing from Within*, a writing textbook which has an article with the same title. She read it and obtained some ideas and then she also chose her father as the subject. For this topic, she spent 20 minutes brainstorming without even writing down any notes because she did not know what to start with. The teacher-investigator asked her to freewrite anything in her mind and just ignored the organization. She felt more comfortable afterwards and wrote about her father without interruptions. However, she became frustrated since she thought she was getting nowhere in the freewriting process.

On reflection, she said that she did not know what she wrote about because she did not know how to end the essay and she said that she had digressed too far from the main topic. In the following meeting, she requested an opportunity to rewrite so she sat down and began to brainstorm the topic. Even though she knew that she did not do it well, she still free-wrote what was in her mind.

### Using TSA as revision strategy

She drew a coherence diagram based upon her second draft. According to the TSA diagram,

she realized that in fact she had written a lot of parallel constructions and some of the ideas were repeating again and again. While she was writing, she didn't realize that these ideas were similar. Based upon the findings, the teacher-investigator re-checked the diagram and revised it together with Emily. The process took one hour or so because of a lot of time was spent on fixing jumbled sentences and eliminating repetition. The coherence diagram of the second draft had some parallel progression patterns and extended parallel progression patterns, which were regarded as rather good writings (Connor, 1996), but the whole essay was rated quite incoherently according to the teacher-investigator's comments. Nevertheless, Emily had a better idea from the new diagram and started to work on her third draft.

### *Some generalizations of writing the two topics and using the TSA approach*

It is not easy to determine the differences between the topical subject and the grammatical subject because in narration and description modes personal pronouns are often used to state the ideas. At this point, it is not easy to differentiate the meaning directly from non-expository essays. Some observations about the cognitive process can be reported here. She never wrote an outline nor did she want to jot down any notes. She is more aware of the major thing (topic) of her sentences and the cohesion part. For example, she would focus on whether or not she has developed the previous ideas clearly.

As to the findings of the multiple drafts, it is evident that by using the TSA approach, Emily has produced much more word counts draft by draft and even more words per T-Unit. From Table 1, it is noticeable that Emily liked to produce parallel progression patterns without extending her points of view too much. However, for these two different topics, the final products produced more extended parallel progression patterns. This implies that Emily may have a better understanding of how to develop ideas and stick to the main topics.

*Table 1: A comparison of the results of the two topics*

	Topic 1			Topic 2		
	Draft 1	Draft 2	Draft 3	Draft 1	Draft 2	Draft 3
Word count	176	238	455	272	335	399

T-Unit Count	13	14	26	18	15	19
Words per T-Unit	13.54	17	17.5	15.1	22.3	21
Parallel	7	9	10	14	7	8
Extended Parallel	2	2	8		1	6
Sequential	1	1	1	3	3	1

## Discussions

Generally speaking, from the case study of Emily, the researcher realized that freewriting would be a good strategy to get students to write down any ideas even though the process writing approach does not emphasize such method. In addition, Emily may have been influenced by her L1 composing habit of not revising the draft she has written. It seems that the composing habit is still dominated by L1 cognitive process. There were some special features the teacher-investigator would like to point out. Even though the teacher-researcher spent a lot of time preaching the concept of prewriting such as brainstorming and gathering ideas, she did not make use of them during the process of the actual writing. She was not aware that writing is a recursive process; instead, according to her L1 experience, writing is a linear process.

It appears that when using the TSA approach, Emily and the teacher-investigator have dramatically different points of view, which will be reported below:

*Table 2: Perceptions of using TSA as a teaching strategy and as a revision strategy*

Perceptions	Advantages	Disadvantages
Emily	In terms of affective factors, she is more confident, and more interested to write when she knows how to develop her ideas.	She did not think she made too much progress because she still lacked the lexical items and the syntactical constructions looked relatively the same. However, In terms of visual stimulus, coherence or cohesion is not easy to perceive, especially for intermediate students.
Teacher- investigator	The teacher-investigator observed that she could revise her ideas dramatically, especially when she write an unfamiliar topic and did not know how to organize the ideas.	It is not feasible to ask students to do the TSA as part of writing curriculum because of the complexities. However, it would be rather effective if there is a one-on-one student-teacher conference.

## Conclusions

The most important implication of this case study is to see how topical structure analysis helps an intermediate student revise her drafts and to what extent Emily could benefit from this approach. Previous studies all examined expository genre; however, this study aims to focus on an intermediate-level student so narration and description genres are used. It may not be easy to explore specific features by using TSA under genre-specific conditions. It is very hard to find a topical subject, especially in a narration and description genre because the most important thing is the "person" involved. At this point, the teacher-investigator think it could be more practical to develop the idea of sub-topics in order to help students discern the difference.

This case study is also an initial step towards understanding the composing process, especially the process of using TSA in the writing stage and the effects and limitations of using the approach. In the EFL context, we teachers always ask the students to follow all the steps of process writing approach. However, it begs a question: Are all the steps necessary for the learners to achieve better performance? A better way to empower students to write well is to provide as many methods as possible to encourage them to write from various perspectives. The rigid syllabus design may not satisfy every learner's needs.

The implications of conducting such research also explores the possibility of using TSA in the writing classroom—to what extent it can be a teaching strategy or a self-editing and revision strategy. In early studies, TSA was used as a way to diagnose students' coherence; however, this concept can be extended to beginning and intermediate level as a teaching strategy to help develop students' coherence in writing. There are some developmental stages in the writing process; however, it is possible to incorporate some TSA strategies for students to understand the importance of coherence. It may not be a truism that TSA is only effective for advanced students.

A deeper understanding of some intrinsic relationships between topical structure development and such variables as topic familiarity and learner's linguistic competence reveals how TSA can be used to explore the writing process, particularly in terms of how a writer makes theoretical decisions regarding topic choice, and how coherence can be achieved through

topical development. This approach can also be a complementary way to sort out the ideas presented in the essay—especially when applied to longer chunk of project writing or thesis writing.

## About the Author

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## **Appendix A: An Embarrassing Experience (first draft)**

(1) Last summer, I went to visit a friend in Boston. (2) I stayed there for a month. (3) While my visiting there, I also met her roommate named Brad. (4) He was a little bit chubby guy but very friendly and humorous.

(5) One night, while my friend and I were watching TV, Brad was packing his stuff next to us. (6) Suddenly, the phone rang. (7) I responded right away and said "Pick up the phone." (8) But Brad just gave me a strong look and still didn't answer the phone. (9) I asked Brad why he didn't pick up the phone. (10) He smiled and seemed to realize something. (11) He said "I thought you said "pig on the floor" that's why I gave you a look and I was wondering how come you were so rude."

(12) Although he apologized for the misunderstanding, I will never forget this embarrassing experience. (13) And I guess I need to work hard on my pronounce in case next time I hurt other people' feeling again.

### **Topical Structure Analysis for the first draft**

- (1) I
- (2) I
- (3) I
- (4) He
- (5) Brad
- (6) The phone
- (7) I
- (8) Brad
- (9) I
- (10) He
- (11) He
- (12) I
- (13) I

## **Appendix B: An Embarrassing Experience (second draft)**

(1) Last summer, I went to visit a friend in Boston where I stayed for a month. (2) While I was there, I also met her roommate named Brad, who was a little bit chubby but very friendly and humorous.

(3) One night, while my friend and I were watching TV in the living room, Brad was packing his stuff next to us. (4) Suddenly, the phone rang and my friend just had gone to the bathroom. (5) So I looked at Brad and said "pick up the phone." (6) But Brad just gave me a strange look and still didn't answer the phone. (7) Out of curiosity, I asked Brad why he did not pick up the phone. (8) Then he smiled at me and seemed to realize something. (9) He said "I thought you said "pig on the floor," that's why I gave you a look and I was wondering how come you were so rude." (10) When I heard what he said, I felt terribly embarrassed. (11) I didn't know my pronunciation could be that bad. (12) But I was glad that I had asked him what was going on, otherwise he would probably always think I was a rude person.

(13) Although he apologized for the misunderstanding, I will never forget this embarrassing experience. (14) And I guess I need to work hard on my pronunciation in case I hurt other people's feelings again.

### Topical Structure Analysis for the second draft

- (1) I
- (2) I
- (3) Brad
- (4) The phone
- (5) I
- (6) Brad
- (7) I
- (8) He
- (9) He
- (10) I
- (11) I
- (12) I
- (13) I
- (14) I

### Appendix C: An Embarrassing Experience (third draft)

(1) Last summer, I went to visit a friend in Boston where I stayed for a month. (2) Although it was not my first time visiting Boston, still for me, things there seemed to be very interesting, for instance, the people, the language, the customs...etc. (3) Speaking of people, during my visit, I also met my friend's roommate named Brad, who was a little bit chubby but very friendly and humorous. (4) He was a Native American and a totally Bostonian. (5) Since he happened to be very familiar with the city, he sometimes would be my tour guide to show me around the city when my friend was occupied. (6) Therefore, Brad and I have become good friends, too. (7) However, the language differences somehow still brought us some problems in communication. (8) And the misunderstanding had made me a joke.

(9) I remember that one night while I was watching TV in the living room, Brad was packing his stuff next to me. (10) Suddenly, the phone rang and after it had rung for a few tinkles, I looked at Brad and said, " Pick up the phone." (11) At that moment I thought he was too concentrate on packing his stuff to hear the phone rang. (12) And the reason I did not answer the phone was that I thought it would not be polite to answer other people's phone at their house. (13) But Brad just frowned at me instead of answering the phone. (14) For a short

period of time, the room was silent. (15) I didn't know what he was thinking but I was wondering what happened. (16) Out of curiosity, I asked Brad why he didn't pick up the phone. (17) Then he seemed to realize something and smiled at me. (18) He said, " I thought you said "pig on floor," that's why I frowned at you and I was wondering how come you were so rude." (19) When I heard what he said, I felt terribly embarrassed. (20) Because I mispronounced "pick" as "pig" had made him feel being insulted. (21) He thought I was making fun on his appearance. (22) I always thought my English was OK, until that moment I finally realized how bad my pronunciation was. (23) But I was glad that I had asked him what was going on, otherwise he would probably always think I was a rude person because of my mispronunciation.

(24) Although he apologized for the misunderstanding, I will never forget this embarrassing experience. (25) As the result, it has stimulated me to further efforts on English learning. (26) And I also have determined to work hard on my pronunciation in case I hurt other people's feelings again.

### Topical Structure Analysis for the third draft

- (1) I
- (2) Things
- (3) I
- (4) He
- (5) He
- (6) Brad and I
- (7) The language difference
- (8) Misunderstanding
- (9) I
- (10) The phone
- (11) I
- (12) I
- (13) Brad
- (14) The room
- (15) I
- (16) I
- (17) He
- (18) He
- (19) I
- (20) Mispronunciation
- (21) He
- (22) I
- (23) I
- (24) I
- (25) Misunderstanding
- (26) I

### Appendix D: An Important Person in My Life (first draft)

(1) My father, a strict and a stubborn man but yet a reliable and a responsible father. (2) In my childhood memory, I remember that I didn't get along with my father very well. (3) In fact, I

could say that I hated him. (4) I blamed him for divorcing from my mother, which was running our family. (5) Although I didn't understand the fact between he and my mother, I still blamed him.

(6) My relationship with my father was so bad that I moved out right away when I was in high school. (7) He never said anything about my misbehavior but still supplied everything that I needed. (8) At that time, I took everything for granted; I thought he was trying to make up with what he had done. (9) I think I was too young to be grateful. (10) However, a terribly accident happened and it has changed my thought.

(11) When I was in the second year of high school, my father had a terribly car accident which almost killed him. (12) He was in hospital for about 3 years. (13) Coming in and out the emergency room seemed to be a usual thing. (14) He was hurt so badly that some doctors even said that he probably didn't have the chance. (15) But he had made it through his strong will. (16) Sometime when I saw the pain in his eyes, I wondered why he didn't just let go and then he didn't have to suffer. (17) I remember I asked him the question when he was better. (18) He told me that "because of our family."

### Topical Structure Analysis for the first draft

- (1) My father
- (2) I
- (3) I
- (4) I
- (5) I
- (6) Our relationship
- (7) Misbehavior
- (8) I
- (9) I
- (10) Accident
- (11) I
- (12) He
- (13) Emergency room
- (14) He
- (15) He
- (16) I
- (17) I
- (18) He

### Appendix E: An Important Person in My Life (second draft)

(1) Once I was told an expression "nothing comes for free." (2) My father, who has told me the expression, is a strict and stubborn man but also a man who practices what he preaches.

(3) My father comes from a small and poor country, where everyone had to work their tails off to earn a living. (4) Since my father is the oldest child in the family, he has much more responsibility than my other uncles have. (5) Therefore, my father started working when he was only eight. (6) My father must be proud of himself because he always likes to tell us that his "heroic deeds" about how he supported his brothers and sisters, how he started

from nothing to now what we got and all of those are gained by his own. (7) "Nothing comes for free" seems to be my father's most used phrase, and he also asks us to practice it.

(8) There doesn't have "pocket money" such thing in my family. (9) In my memory, every time when I asked for some money to buy toys, the answers are always "no." (10) My father always said, "if you help to do some house chores then you will get something in return." (11) Sometimes I did get some money in return but to me it wasn't pocket money, it was more likely to be "my salary." (12) I remember I have asked my father "why do I have to do thing to get my pocket money and other children that I know don't?" (13) He always answers "nothing comes for free," sometimes I really hate this expression. (14) As I grow older, I become to understand what my father's purpose is. (15) He wants us to learn that there isn't anything you can get for free; such as school work, if you want to get good grades you have to work hard to get it, as it replies in career or in any position, the principle is still the same.

### Topical structure analysis of the second draft

#### An Important Person

1. Expression
2. Father
3. Country/earn a living
4. Responsibility
5. Start work since 8
6. Heroic Deeds
7. The Expression
8. No pocket money
9. No toys
10. House chores
11. Salary
12. Why no pocket money?
13. Expression
14. Father's purpose
15. Father's principle

### Appendix F: An Important Person in My Life (third draft)

(1) "Nothing comes for free" is my father's most used phrase. (2) My father is a strict and stubborn person yet a man who not only practices what he preaches, but also demands us to do the same. (3) Because his strictness and stubbornness makes the communication very difficult, my relationship with him wasn't very closed as I remember. (4) However, my father is still an important person in my life.

(5) Being the oldest child in the family in the poor and small countryside, my father had much more responsibility than my other uncles had so he started working at eight. (6) My father must be proud of himself because he always likes to tell us that his "heroic deeds" about how he supported his brothers and sisters, how he started from nothing to now what we have and all of those are gained by his own. (7) By telling us his experience, he wants us not only to understand the expression but also demands us to practice it.

(8) In my memory, there isn't any turn called "pocket money." (9) Every time when I asked for some money to buy toys, the answers were always "no." (10) My father always said "if you help to do some house chores then you will get something in return." (11) Sometimes I

did get some money in return, but to me, it wasn't pocket money; it was more likely to be "my salary." (12) I remember I asked my father "why do I have to do thing to get my pocket money and other children that I know don't?" (13) He always answers "nothing comes for free," so sometimes I really hate this expression. (14) However, as I grow older, I become to understand what my father's purpose is. (15) He wants us to know that there isn't anything you can get for free. (16) For example, if you want to get good grades in your studies, you have to work hard to get it and as it applies in career or in any position, the principle is still the same.

(17) My father has set himself as an example to show me the expression, and asks me to practice it since we were kids. (18) I didn't realize that how influential this expression was to me until now. (19) Therefore, my father is an important person in my life.

### Topical structure analysis of the third draft

1. Phrase
2. Father
3. My relationship with him
4. Father
5. Father
6. Father
7. He
8. No pocket money
9. No toys
10. House chore
11. Salary
12. Do things
13. Expression
14. Father's purpose
15. He
16. One example
17. Father as an example
18. Expression
19. Father as an important person