

THE EFFECT OF WRITTEN AND ORAL TEACHER FEEDBACK ON  
PRE-INTERMEDIATE STUDENT REVISIONS IN A PROCESS-ORIENTED EFL  
WRITING CLASS

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BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

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WRITING CLASS

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on pre-intermediate student revisions in a process-oriented English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class and investigates the effect of written and oral teacher feedback. Specifically, the research questions are: (1) Does written and oral teacher feedback have an impact on pre-intermediate student revisions in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, to what extent? (2) Does writing multiple drafts in a process-oriented writing class have an impact on the overall writing quality? If so, to what extent? (3) Does teacher feedback in a process-oriented EFL writing class have an impact on students' opinions about writing? If so, what are students' perceptions of the type and amount of teacher feedback they received between first and final drafts? How much attention did they pay to each type of teacher feedback?

The teacher-researcher investigated the possible effects of teacher feedback on student revisions during the drafting process of one single writing topic. 16 students produced three drafts each: first and second drafts plus a final draft. The teacher's written feedback procedures across draft one and draft two involved indirect-coded feedback for form-focused errors and teacher commentary for meaning-focused errors. Her oral feedback was given on across draft two and draft three in one-to-one writing conferences held with individual students. The students produced their second drafts on the basis of written teacher feedback and their final drafts on the basis of writing conference input. The researcher analysed 48 essays in detail: counting grammatical errors, evaluating content revisions, and categorizing the types of errors. As a result of written feedback, all students significantly improved their grammatical accuracy and in terms of content the students were able to make positive minimal and substantive revisions to some extent. The revisions in

surface and content changes accounted for the majority of the revisions. As a result of oral feedback, all students improved significantly in grammatical accuracy and they often acted on the conference input by making positive minimal and substantive revisions. Content and stylistic changes made up the highest percentage. Multiple drafting led to improvement in overall writing quality. The students thought that process-oriented approach had a profound impact on their opinions about second language writing and raised their awareness of composition skills.

## KISA ÖZET

Bu çalışma eğitim dili İngilizce olan ve yazıya süreç olarak bakan yaklaşımın kullanıldığı orta düzey öncesi öğrencilerinin bulunduğu bir kompozisyon sınıfında öğrencilerin yazılarını yeniden yazma becerileri üzerine odaklanmakla birlikte öğretmenin yazılı ve sözlü geri dönütünün de etkisini araştırır.

Aşağıda bu çalışmanın araştırma soruları verilmiştir:

- 1) Eğitim dili İngilizce olan ve yazıya süreç olarak bakan yaklaşımın kullanıldığı kompozisyon sınıfında, öğretmenin yazılı ve sözlü geri dönütünün öğrencilerin yeniden yazma becerileri üstünde etkisi var mıdır? Eğer varsa, bu etki ne ölçüdedir?
- 2) Böyle bir sınıfta birden fazla müsvedde yazmanın kompozisyonun bütününe etkisi var mıdır? Eğer varsa, ne ölçüdedir?
- 3) Böyle bir sınıfta öğretmenin geri dönütünün öğrencilerin yazı yazmayla ilgili görüşlerine etkisi nedir? Eğer varsa, öğrencilerin ilk ve son müsveddeler arasında öğretmenden aldıkları geri dönütün çeşidi ve miktarı konusundaki görüşleri nelerdir? Öğrenciler öğretmenin farklı tipteki geri dönütüne ne derece dikkat ediyorlar?

Araştırmacı-öğretmen geri dönütün öğrencilerin yeniden yazma becerisindeki olası etkilerini bir kompozisyon konusu üzerinde incelemiştir. 16 öğrencinin her biri üçer müsvedde yazmıştır: birinci ve ikinci müsvedde ve son müsvedde. Öğretmenin müsvedde 1 ve müsvedde 2 arasında verdiği yazılı geri dönüt iki türdedir. Birincisi dolaylı ve kodlu olup öğrencinin dilbilgisi hatalarına yöneliktir. İkincisi öğrencinin anlamla ilgili hatalarına yönelik yapılan yorumlardır. Öğretmenin sözlü geri dönütü ise müsvedde 2 ve son müsvedde arasında herdir öğrenciyle yazısı üstünde gerçekleştirilen birebir konferanslarda verilmiştir. Öğrenciler ikinci müsveddelerini

öğretmenin yazılı geri dönütü doğrultusunda son müsveddelerini ise yazıları üstünde birebir gerçekleştirilen konferanslardan gelen bilgi doğrultusunda yazmışlardır. Araştırmacı 48 kompozisyonu detaylı olarak analiz etmiştir: dilbilgisi hatalarını saymış, içerikle ilgili düzeltmeleri değerlendirmiş ve hata tiplerini sınıflandırmıştır. Yazılı geri dönütün sonunda, tüm öğrenciler dilbilgilerini yeniden yazdıkları müsveddede önemli derecede düzeltebilmişlerdir. İçerik açısından olumlu yönde küçük veya büyük düzeltmeleri ancak belli bir ölçüde yapmışlardır. Kompozisyonlarda öğrencilerin yaptığı değişikliklerin büyük bir çoğunluğunu dilbilgisi ve içerikle ilgili düzeltmeler teşkil etmektedir. Öğretmenin sözlü geri dönütünün sonunda öğrenciler son müsveddede dilbilgilerini önemli derecede düzeltebilmişlerdir. Ayrıca yazıları üstünde öğretmenle gerçekleştirilen birebir konferanslardan elde ettikleri bilgiyi sıklıkla son müsveddede uygulamış ve olumlu yönde küçük veya büyük düzeltmeler yapmışlardır. İçerik ve kelimeyle ilgili değişiklikler en büyük yüzdeyi teşkil etmektedir. Birden fazla müsvedde yazmak kompozisyonun bütününe gelişmesini sağlamıştır. Öğrenciler süreç odaklı yaklaşımın ikinci dilde yazı yazma becerisiyle ilgili görüşlerinde çok etkili olduğunu düşünmüşler ve bu yaklaşım onlarda kompozisyon yazma becerileri konusunda farkındalıklarını arttırmıştır.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The present study concerns the implementation of process writing approach to the teaching of writing in a pre-intermediate EFL (English as a Foreign Language) class throughout the spring term of an academic year and the feedback procedures that the teacher has followed in the students' drafting process of an assigned writing topic.

Process writing pedagogies emerged as a result of resistance to traditional product-focused approach that Young (1978) called "current-traditional paradigm" in first language (L1) writing. This approach entailed "emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process; the analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, and punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, and emphasis); the preoccupation with the informal essay and the research paper; and so on (p. 31). In teaching, it was necessary to find an approach to help students understand their own composing processes. The writing-as-a-process approach, as a reaction to current traditional paradigm saved instruction from:

- "the three-or five-paragraph model;
- simplistic assumptions about the organization and ordering of information;
- the typical one-draft writing assignment
- the assumption that each student should be working alone, or only with the instructor on summative feedback;
- reliance on grammar/usage handbooks and lectures;
- linear composing based on outlining, writing, and editing;

and writing teachers from imposed and artificial writing topics” (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996,86).

The history of writing process approaches can be divided into four stages from the 1960s to the present: the expressive stage, the cognitive stage, the social stage, and the discourse community stage (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

1.The expressive stage:

Berlin (1987) and Faigley (1986) defined the goal of the expressive stage of the writing process as the production of writing that was fresh and spontaneous with integrity. Writers should be free and creative in expressing themselves. This movement depended on the pragmatic advice of good writers about the nature of writing and writing instruction. The approach was criticized as in theory and practice there was no guidance to distinguish lesser insights of good writers from better insights (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

2. The cognitive stage:

Janet Emig (1971) was the pioneer in approaching the writing process scientifically. She set forth the features of the case study approach in writing research, the think-aloud methodology, the study of pauses, the role of rereading in revision, and the number and type of revisions among writers (Faigley, 1986). However, her case study approach lacked a theoretical foundation (Hillocks, 1986; North, 1987). Therefore, researchers turned to cognitive science to work out a better framework for a writing model. The prominent teams of researchers working on the cognitive models of writing process are Flower and Hayes (1981a), and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987). The following have been the theses of cognitive processing models of writing:

- There is interaction and simultaneity in the composing processes;

- As an activity, the composing process is goal-directed;
- The way expert writers compose is different from that of inexperienced writers (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

### 3. The social stage:

Feeling restraint by limitations of cognitive psychology and its research methods, a group of researchers turned to sociolinguistics, socially-based rhetoric and the sociology of science. These researchers point out that writing-as-a-process does not address the social context which defines the writing purposes of language classes as well as the real world. Cooper (1989), Faigley (1986), and Witte (1992) argued that writing should be viewed from the perspective of a social context (classroom, other students, interactions among the teacher and students, the world outside the classroom) and not just a written text of an individual (e.g. a Vygotskian perspective). From the point of view of Vygotsky's language theories, learning to write is based on an apprenticeship in which the student works with a more knowledgeable person on the skills and knowledge necessary to perform a writing task. Under the guidance and monitoring of the teacher, students learn by appropriating the teacher's objectives for writing and the appropriate language forms during the writing process and through feedback. This appropriation occurs in what Vygotsky calls "the zone of proximal development" (ZPD) (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). ZPD refers to the potential area of development that is situated between the learner's actual development and his area of non-development and social interaction, i.e. the interaction between the expert (the teacher) and the apprentice (the student) which help students transfer the skills that are in the ZPD. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) point out that researchers' conclusion that in ZPD there is a transfer of learnt writing skills across tasks, purposes, genres, and topics is an inaccurate inference. Rather, learning

to internalise writing purposes and tasks are dependent on extensive practice and guidance.

In short, the social context approach

- requires interactive roles of experts and peers;
- focuses on purposeful writing tasks;
- focuses on integration of language skills in the accomplishment of any task;
- attaches importance to practising writing tasks and goals that students need to learn rather than a transfer of writing skills across tasks, topics, and genres (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

#### 4. The discourse community stage:

The notion of discourse community is a perspective of the social context. Discourse community includes writers, readers, texts, and social contexts in their normal interaction rather than an unnatural separated relation between writer and reader (Rafoth, 1988). In the language classroom, this view resulted in the following practices: introducing students to discourse communities so that they can write with a purpose in the academic setting, the faculty's involvement in teaching writing across the curriculum, and the development of content-based writing courses where writing is used as the means to interact with the material and other students (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

#### The purpose of this study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of written and oral teacher feedback on pre-intermediate student revisions in a process-oriented EFL writing class. Specifically, the teacher-researcher aimed at finding how, first of all, her written feedback on the language and ideas would affect the way a student rewrote his/her first draft (D1) on a given writing topic. On this second draft (D2),

the teacher gave oral feedback to the student in a one-to-one writing conference to which both the teacher and the student came prepared to discuss the incorrect revisions of the D2 and ways of correcting them. The teacher then had the student produce the final draft by acting on the conference input. The student wrote the final draft and handed in both the D2 and the final draft to the teacher. This time the teacher compared the D2 and the final draft to see the changes made by the student between the D2 and the final draft. At the end of this process, the teacher returned the D2 and the final draft to the student.

#### Significance of this study

This particular research is significant for the simple reason that it would be of utmost use to the teacher-researcher's feedback procedures in her own writing classes in the future. The motive for this research lies in the teacher-researcher's need to equip a class of 20 pre-intermediate students with effective invention, drafting, and revising strategies and help them develop metacognitive awareness of the writing strategies they use during the writing process. Also, the teacher-researcher aimed to support students' writing efforts through feedback procedures fostered by the process approach, encourage them to continue their studies in writing, bring the writing activity to completion, and help them feel good and enthusiastic about their writing.

In this study, the teacher-researcher's experiential background in teaching writing has shown her that having followed a product-based approach has not created confident L2 writers but writers who are strictly-bound to rhetorics of a certain discourse type and who shy away from any type different from the ones covered in class. Also, this approach has not helped her as a teacher to develop a clear

understanding of her students' writing abilities since many of them have exhibited varying performance from one written product to the other.

### Definition of terms

Process-oriented approach to the teaching of writing or writing-as-a-process approach: An approach in the teaching of writing skill where emphasis is placed on writing as a 'process' rather than as a finished final product, meaning making, invention and the use of multiple drafting where substantive revision and teacher feedback is given between drafts rather than only after the final draft is submitted (Raimes, 1991).

Indirect-coded correction for form-based feedback: A correction method where the teacher notes the location and/or type of error in student writing and thereby ask students to correct errors themselves.

Teacher commentary for content-based feedback: A type of feedback where the teacher responds to students' ideas and organization in their writing. Teacher commentary can take several forms as suggested by Ferris, Pezone, Tade, and Tinti (1997):

- asking for further information;
- giving directions, suggestions, or requests for revision
- giving the student new information that will help him/her to revise
- giving positive feedback about what the student has done well.

One-to-one writing conference: It is a face-to-face conference with only one or a small group of students where the teacher gives oral feedback by interacting, negotiating with the student(s).



Students' reflections about teacher feedback: Thoughts formed in students' mind about the teacher feedback they have received as a result of thinking carefully about the effects of it on their writing ability.

Students' opinions about writing: Students' basic beliefs and ideas about the writing skill.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Any pedagogical process or procedure should have a theoretical foundation so that the teacher involved can make informed educational decisions about his/her teaching situation and the situation is not any different for a foreign language teacher. In the same way, a language teacher focusing on teaching skills has to be informed about the corpus of second language (L2) research and theory to approach his/her instruction from an informed standpoint. In the case of L2 writing instruction, the task of the L2 writing teacher is rather difficult as Silva (1993) explains the reason, “ There exists, at present, no coherent, comprehensive theory of L2 writing” (p.668). What follows is a brief historical account of how (English as a Second Language (ESL) writing theory and practice have evolved.

#### An overview of approaches to the teaching of writing

Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) cites Raimes’ (1991) overview of ESL writing theories which have developed since the 1960s. According to Raimes, approaches to ESL composition can be classified according to four foci:

1. Focus on form and “current-traditional rhetoric,” 1966-
2. Focus on the writer: expressionism and cognitivism, 1976-
3. Focus on content and the disciplines, 1986-
4. Focus on the reader: social constructionism, 1986-

#### Focus on form and “current-traditional rhetoric,” 1966 -

Form-focused approach to L2 writing emphasized the production of well-formed sentences as a way to practise what has been learnt orally and test whether learners can correctly apply grammar rules of the language being learnt (Rivers, 1968). Examples of writing tasks in this approach called “current-traditional

paradigm” are controlled composition or a focused paragraph or an essay prepared to reinforce students’ practice with particular grammar structures and /or particular vocabulary items (Kroll, 1990).

An extended model of form-focused orientation to L2 writing is “current-traditional rhetoric” which aims to teach learners to write paragraphs by arranging sentences according to prescribed formulae (Silva, 1990). The four major rhetorical patterns that students learnt were description, narration, exposition, and argumentation. Students also learnt to make outlines and write in a three-or-five paragraph format (Applebee, 1981). The patterns of organization that students learnt included definition, classification, comparison and contrast so on and so forth. While writing, students got ideas from literary sources and readers which they could analyse and imitate and from the writing teacher’s lectures.

#### Focus on the writer: expressionism and cognitivism, 1976 -

The writer as the “creator” of the written discourse and his/her procedures for producing and revising written texts have been the focus of the “process approach.”

Proponents of the writer-oriented approach can be categorized into two as the “cognitivists” and the “expressivists”.

a) The cognitive view of the writing process is inspired by the scholars Flower and Hayes. Flower and Hayes’ model of writing (1981a) viewed writing as a cognitive problem-solving process. Thus, in research, it was necessary to get into the heads of experienced and inexperienced writers while composing in order to understand the decisions that they make as they write a piece of writing. Process pedagogies aim to help inexperienced writers understand the roles of invention, planning, discovery, revising, inevitable place of errors and imperfections of

language and thinking during the process of writing (Raimes, 1985, 1991; Spack, 1984; Zamel, 1982, 1987).

The major technique was “think-aloud composing” where writers, after having been trained were taped, as they wrote by talking about their problems, decisions, and strategic choices (Casanave, 2004). In Flower and Hayes’s model of writing (1981a), the composing processes are divided into three: the composing processor, the task environment, and the writer’s long-term memory. The writer generates the text within the composing processing which has three operational processes: planning, translating, and reviewing. A monitor as an executive control manages the three processes. In the planning process, there are three components: generating ideas, organizing information, and setting goals. In generating a text, ideas that are planned are translated into language, which is then revised (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). However, the model has been criticized from various perspectives. First, the model does not take into account the individual variations among writers in their processing strategies and cognitive abilities. Second, there is no elaboration on how the text is constructed and what linguistic constraints are involved (North, 1987).

In the following years, Flower and Hayes have revised their model by extending the definitions of its subcomponents. For instance, the subcomponent of reviewing is presented in Hayes, Flower, Schriever, Stratman, and Carey’s (1987) model where “task definition, evaluation, strategy selection, and modification of the text” are four basic processes of reviewing. The model attempts to explain the revision process, the difficulty of revising globally (changing the organization and restructuring information), and the difference between novice and skilled writers in their revision processes (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

Flower, Stein, Ackermen, Kantz, McCormick and Peck (1990) in their series of studies examined the relationship between the component of “task environment” and writing processes. These studies investigated the process of reading to write. Particularly, how students read to produce a written text, how they represent the writing task, how task representation and reading affect the writing process, and how students view the context of the writing task are examined. The relationship between context and cognition in performing a writing task is established (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

Flower's (1994) socio-cognitive theory of writing holds the view that writing is a socially-situated, communicative act. In the social cognitive curriculum students are taught as apprentices who negotiate in an academic community, and in the process they develop strategic knowledge. Writing skills are acquired and practised with real audiences such as in peer response groups through negotiation (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

Another earlier model of process writing is provided by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987). In this model, writers make a transfer from a “knowledge-telling model” to a “knowledge-transforming model”. The former is concerned with the difficulties of unskilled writers and the latter is concerned with those of the skilled writer (Hyland, 2002). In the knowledge-telling model, information is generated from the writing assignment or topic. Idea identifiers are called for and memory is searched for related information. If the retrieved information seems suitable to the writing assignment or topic, the information should be written down and used to search the memory further. The processing demands are retrieval and evaluation demands (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). This model works for simple and manageable composing processes, but not complex ones such as academic writing. Knowledge-

transforming model attempts to address more demanding writing processes. In this model, the writing tasks first lead to problem analysis and goal setting. The set goals and anticipated problems then lead to plans for problem resolution. Problems can be related to content, audience, genre, linguistics and organization. The resolution of one problem brings about another problem. For instance, solving a content problem may create a language problem. As problems are resolved, they feed into the knowledge-telling component which produces writing (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

In the same way, Grabe and Kaplan's (1996) model accounts for contextual factors but with greater focus on linguistic knowledge base and communicative competence (Grabe, 2001). The limitation, however, is that there is no explanation as to how reading will be incorporated in the writing process.

b) Expressivists view writing as a creative act and the discovery of the true self is as important as the product. Student writers are liberated from the constraints of rule-based academic writing and this view helps them to become interested readers of their own writing and like it (Elbow, 1993). In this view, writing is learnt, not taught and since it is a developmental process, teachers are discouraged from giving models, suggesting responses to topics, imposing their views (Hyland, 2002). For instance, journal writing and personal essays are writing tasks which learners can write freely. In these tasks, fluency and voice are fostered. Writing topics are based on students' own lives and topics of general interest rather than topics from academic fields. It is assumed that self-exploration that takes place in expressivist writing through narration and reflection helps not only self-knowledge but also in-depth thinking, the qualities that students need to have for formal academic writing (Silva, 1993).

### Focus on content and the disciplines, 1986 –

It has been argued that approaches focusing on the writer were overwhelmed with how writers build personal meaning (Horowitz, 1986c), but L2 writers have to write texts for academic readers from various fields of study (Horowitz, 1986a). Thus, instructional approaches have been directed to the knowledge and written genres which characterize L2 writers' particular academic disciplines; i.e., specific topics that L2 writers must learn in their major (Horowitz, 1990). Instead of taking language, culture, and literature of an English class as the subject matter of writing processes, content proponents claim that L2 writing courses should characterize the subject matter that learners have to major in (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Horowitz, 1990; Shih, 1986).

Academic content is determined by the instructor who designs reading and writing activities around the content (Raines, 1991). The writing course focuses on skills integration and English for academic purposes. However, this focus on content does not exclude writer-based process approaches.

### Focus on the reader: social constructionism, 1986 -

Reader-focused L2 writing instructional approaches have been employed as a reaction to the writer-centered approach. A reader-centered writing pedagogy is based on the view that a writer has to select words to interact with an academic discourse community so that the readers of that discourse community can be influenced and persuaded by the written text (Hyland, 2002). That is, writing is not only a cognitive but also an interactive process. Swales (1990) define discourse communities as "sociorhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals. One of the characteristics that established members of these discourse communities possess is familiarity with the particular genres that are used

in the communicative furtherance of those sets of goals” (p.9). Martin (1985) describes genres as the way things are done when language is used to actualise them. They range from poems, narratives, expositions, lectures, seminars, recipes, manuals, appointment making, service encounters, news broadcasts and so on. The genre-based approach stresses the social view of language learning and the mediating role that language plays in purposeful communication (Halliday, 1993b). Essentially, in this approach language form plays a role in language learning and combines with notions of writing process, integration of language skills, meaningful communication, peer collaboration, and content-based instruction (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

The social view of writing draws on several disciplines that can be grouped under three headings: writing as social interaction, writing as social construction, and writing as power and ideology (Hyland, 2002).

The social interactive model of writing has been developed by Martin Nystrand (1989). In this model, meaning is created through “a unique configuration and interaction of what both reader and writer bring to the text.” In other words, expectations of readers shape the written text.

In writing as social construction model, the writer is neither a creator as he/she was viewed in the writer-centered approach nor an interactant who assumes the readers’ expectations, but he/she is a member of a community.

The focus of the view of writing as power and ideology is on the social, cultural, and institutional climate, but it stresses the relations of power in a social context and the ideologies that keep these relations. A writer reflects the interests, values, and power relations of any institutional and social context (Hyland, 2002).



Raimes (1991) concludes that all this empirical research and methodological practices neither mark historical periods nor propose theoretical paradigms. Each focus has its own instructional purpose and area of interest, but there is certainly an overlap among them in concept and practice. ESL teachers can be perplexed by the differences and the compatibilities that each of these approaches hold as they look for answers to their pedagogical decisions. Silva (1990) points out that this “merry-go-round of approaches...generates more heat than light and does not encourage consensus on important issues, preservation of legitimate insights, synthesis of a body of knowledge, or principled evaluation of approaches” (p.18). What Silva suggests is to approach L2 writing as “purposeful and contextualized communicative interaction, which involves both the construction and transmission of knowledge” (p.18). He suggests taking the ESL writer, the native English speaker reader as the ESL writer’s primary audience, the writer’s text, the contexts for writing, and the interaction of all of these components in authentic educational contexts as the criteria while evaluating research and theory to make decisions about teaching practices (Silva, 1990).

Apart from familiarity with approaches to ESL writing, an L2 writing teacher has to be informed about the teaching practices in the field, one of which is concerned with providing students with feedback on their writing.

### The relationship between written teacher feedback and student revision

The relationship between written teacher feedback and student revision in ESL writing has been largely unexamined. All in all, studies done on response to L2 (second language) student writing can be divided into four groups:

- studies on what teacher feedback addresses;
- studies on the form and nature of teacher feedback;
- studies on teachers' responding practices and the effects of teacher response on subsequent student writing;
- surveys of student reactions to teacher feedback (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998).

### What teacher feedback covers

In the mid 1980s, L2 writing teachers were more concerned with language errors their students made in their writing. Truscott (1996) defines the response practice of L2 teachers then as "correction of grammatical errors for the purpose of improving a student's ability to write accurately" (p.329). Several researchers have tried to describe the focus of teacher feedback on student writing. Vivian Zamel was one of the pioneering researchers probing into the writing practices of L2 writing teachers. Zamel (1987) concluded from her findings that L2 writing teachers viewed student texts as a "series of separate pieces at the sentence level" rather than "a whole unit of discourse".

One of the earliest studies on teacher feedback was done by Zamel again. Zamel (1985) studied how ESL teachers gave their ESL students feedback on content. She found that ESL teachers and L1 teachers were similar in that their comments on content were both vague and contradictory. She also found that the students tended to respond to comments on form and did not focus on those on content.

Zamel's portrayal of L2 teachers' approach to feedback on student writing in her 1985 study was characteristic of some teaching contexts of the time. However, it was criticized by Silva (1988) for its methodological design since it was based on generalizations and examples.

As stated above, the earliest form of teacher feedback to student writing in L2 dealt with language mistakes. According to Ferris (2003), error feedback given to L2 student writing can be characterized as follows:

- a) In literature, errors have been divided into two: "global" and "local" errors. Global errors are those errors which interfere with meaning and local errors are those that do not distort comprehensibility of the text (Bates, Lane, & Lange, 1993).
- b) Ferris (1997) made a distinction between "treatable" errors and "untreatable errors". Treatable errors are based on grammatical rules, whereas untreatable errors are about idiomatic or idiosyncratic structures such as prepositions, collocations, and lexical items.

Apart from the grammatical structures which teacher feedback addresses, strategies used by L2 teachers are of greatest concern in the examination of error feedback. First, a distinction has been made between selective and comprehensive correction. L2 teachers adhering to the selective correction do not mark all types of student errors but only the major ones. This strategy does not overburden the teacher or the student. Also, the student can stay focused on his/her major errors (Hendrickson, 1980). L2 teachers following the comprehensive correction give detailed feedback to student writing. It is believed that the teacher has to mark all errors in order not to give a wrong message to the student about his /her accuracy in

writing (Lalande, 1982). Secondly, another differentiation has been made between direct and indirect feedback. In direct feedback, the teacher supplies the correct form himself/herself by writing on the student's paper. In indirect feedback, however, the teacher points out the error in various ways such as by highlighting it, underlining it, or circling it. The teacher can prefer to use error codes to help the student understand the type of mistake or the teacher can have the student self-correct on the basis of the teacher's indication of errors.

In 1990s, there was a shift from form-focused teacher feedback given to single drafts (i.e., product-oriented feedback) to process-oriented feedback. L2 teachers' feedback started to focus on a range of writing vs language issues. For example, Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) investigated what feedback students thought they received from the teacher, their attitudes and preferences towards this feedback in the EFL context and at university. From the results of the questionnaire, it was concluded that the fit between the teacher's reported feedback and actual feedback varied. This fit was best at the university and weakest in the EFL institute. In the feedback, the teacher dealt with five categories (grammar and mechanics, vocabulary, organization, and content) and her students supported this. In the EFL institute, the fit between the teacher's reported feedback and actual feedback was moderately good. The teacher reported her students utilized feedback on organization, but her students reported some of their teacher's feedback involved organizational issues.

One of the researchers examining the focus of teacher feedback when process approach to writing was adhered to was Dana Ferris. In her study on the influence of teacher commentary on student revisions, Ferris (1997) found that certain types and forms of commentary seemed to be more helpful to students than others. She counted

and examined over 1,600 marginal and end comments of one teacher on 110 papers written by 47 ESL students at a US university. She found that 15% of the teacher's verbal comments focused on grammar and mechanics and 85% of the verbal comments focused on content and organization.

The dilemma facing L2 writing teachers on their feedback to student writing in process-oriented instruction was whether to focus on global errors (issues of content and organization) on the first drafts and leave focusing on local errors (grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors) to final drafts or whether to focus on both types of errors right at the beginning of the drafting process. However, several studies done on various forms of feedback treatments (Fathman & Whalley, 1990, Ferris, 1997, Ashwell, 2000) revealed that students receiving simultaneous feedback on form and content throughout the drafting process succeeded in improving their texts. In fact, Ferris et al. (1997) concluded that "description of teacher response to student writing must go well beyond simple discussions of whether a teacher should respond to 'content' or 'form'" (p. 175) and "the substance and form of teacher commentary can vary significantly depending on the genre of writing being considered, the point in the term at which the feedback is given, and the abilities and the personalities of individual students" (p. 176).

#### Studies on the form and nature of teacher feedback

Apart from what teacher feedback addresses, what form teacher feedback takes is also of crucial importance. That is the substance of feedback. Since teacher feedback to student writing has to cover all aspects of the student text (content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics), it can take two forms: teacher commentary responding to content and organization and teacher feedback responding to grammatical issues.

In their longitudinal study, Ferris et al. (1997) define the various forms written teacher commentary can take:

1. Asking for further information,
2. Giving directions, suggestions, or requests for revision,
3. Giving the student new information that will help him or her revise,
4. Giving positive feedback about what the student has done well.

The reasons why teachers comment are:

- a) to allow student writers know whether their written texts have conveyed the meaning they have intended;
- b) to help students become aware of the questions of their audience so that they can evaluate their writing more effectively;
- c) to give students a reason for revision because with no feedback from other writers, novice writers will revise a little or will not revise at all (Sommers, 1980).

The location of teacher commentary is also important. The comments can be written in the margins or at the end of the student text. To avoid teacher burden if one form of teacher commentary is to be given, a comprehensive endnote can be preferred (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998). However, if there is ample time, marginal and endnotes can be combined. Marginal notes are useful because the teacher can immediately indicate the problem at the exact point in the student text. A teacher giving only end comments is likely to sound too general or give awkward directions about the location of the error in the student text (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998).

In the aforementioned study of Ferris (1997) teacher feedback consisted of commentary on content and endnotes with indirect grammar corrections. No error categories were used. She concluded from the research findings that the ESL students

apparently took the teachers' requests quite seriously and that the revisions made in response to requests formed as questions or statements had mainly positive effects (55–62%), but 8–19% of the changes were judged to have mixed effects, and about 26% of the requests resulted in no change. There were rarely imperatives in teachers' comments, but when there were imperative comments, the students appeared to take them seriously, especially in marginal notes; 72% of the marginal comments in imperative forms seemed to have positive changes (Ferris, 1997).

As for feedback on grammar, a number of suggestions exist in the literature. Teachers can use checklists of grammar/editing, give verbal feedback on the location and type of the error, underline or circle the error or make checkmarks in the margin to show the location of the error, and give feedback in the margins or endnotes about the general pattern of errors (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998).

When it comes to techniques of giving feedback, a variety of techniques are at teachers' disposal. These are audiotaped oral feedback, comments written in the students' computer files (e.g., a floppy disk is exchanged between the teacher and the student), and comments sent by e-mail (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998)

#### Studies of teachers' responding practices and the effects of teacher response on subsequent student writing

It follows from the recent research done on the multiple-draft, process-oriented writing classes in the last fifteen years that, as Ferris (2003, p. 28) concludes, "Teacher feedback can and often does help student writers to improve their writing from one draft to the next and over time. However, evidence on this is unfortunately quite limited, particularly as to longitudinal analyses."

A great deal of research has been done on the effectiveness of teacher response to student writing in L1 as a way of improving students' writing. Accordingly, a

number of scholars have tried to survey this research done on L1 teacher written feedback (Beach, 1979; Knoblauch & Brannon 1981; Hillocks 1982; Sommers 1982; Connors & Lunsford 1993). Ferris and Hedgcock (1998, 124) list some general observations and suggestions from these surveys:

“1. Teacher feedback is often problematic, tending to be overly negative, prescriptive, vague, inconsistent, and confusing; 2. Teacher response to student writing is much more successful when it is provided on preliminary and intermediate, rather than final drafts; and 3. Teacher response may often appropriate (i.e., take over) student texts by being too directive or prescriptive.” Zamel (1985, 86) outlines a similar situation for L2 writing contexts:

“ESL writing teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments, provide vague prescriptions, impose abstract rules and standards, respond to texts as fixed and final products, and rarely make content-specific comments or offer specific strategies for revising the texts...The teachers overwhelmingly view themselves as language teachers rather than writing teachers.”

In spite of these negative conclusions, feedback on early drafts of student writing is likely to lead to improvements in subsequent drafts as indicated by Knoblauch and Brannon (1981). Hyland (1998) stated the same situation seemed to be valid for L2 writing contexts.

One of the first studies done in L2 on the effect of teacher feedback is that of Fathman and Whalley (1990). They analyzed the compositions and rewrites of 72 intermediate ESL college students to find out whether students' revision strategies changed when they focused on form and/or content of their writing. The students were randomly assigned to four groups where each group received a different kind of



teacher feedback on their compositions: Group 1 received no feedback, Group 2 received grammar feedback only, Group 3 received content feedback only, and Group 4 received grammar and content feedback. Grammar feedback included only the location of errors and content feedback included general comments which are not text-specific and offered general suggestions for improvement. It was expected that the foci of each group of students would change according to the type of feedback they received. The results of this study suggested the following:

- a) The teacher's grammar feedback was more influential on correction of grammatical errors than the effect of content feedback on the improvement of content of student revisions.
- b) The groups receiving feedback improved more than the group which did not receive teacher feedback at all. However, despite the lack of teacher intervention, a majority of the students improved the grammar and content of their revisions, suggesting that rewriting is beneficial.
- c) Content feedback improved the content of student revisions more than when content feedback was not provided, suggesting that even general comments about content can be effective on student revisions.
- d) The provision of grammar and content feedback at the same time improved the content of student revisions nearly as much as when only content feedback was given, suggesting that student writing can improve when form and content feedback are given simultaneously.

Following Fathman and Whalley's (1990) study, a number of studies have been conducted where the type of teacher feedback has been manipulated to determine the type(s) which result in the greatest gains in student writing.

One of these studies where various types of teacher feedback were used is Semke's (1984). Semke (1984) gave four different kinds of feedback: comments only, direct corrections only, direct corrections with comments, and indirect coded correction and found the groups did not differ in grammatical accuracy, but the comments group wrote more, significantly progressed in language proficiency, and reacted to the journal writing assignments more positively than the other groups.

Another study where manipulation of teacher feedback was observed is Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986). Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986) investigated the effects of four types of feedback throughout an academic year: direct correction, indirect coded feedback, indirect highlighted feedback without codes, and indirect marginal feedback. They found that direct correction of surface errors was not better than other methods of corrective feedback because differences between the groups in terms of accuracy, fluency, and complexity of structures were negligible.

Kepner (1991) gave error correction/ rule reminder feedback or message-related comments on journal assignment throughout one academic year. She found out that message-related comments were more influential than error correction/ rule reminder feedback in fostering the development of language proficiency in L2 in terms of both ideas and grammatical accuracy of student writing.

Another study replicating Fathman and Whalley (1990)'s study is Russikoff and Kogan (1996) which yielded similar results. There were increases in content scores of treatment groups. All groups improved their content, but the two groups receiving content feedback improved the most. Different from Fathman and Whalley's study, in this study the content-feedback-only treatment group improved their content far more better than did content-plus-grammar-feedback group whose content mean was a bit higher than the no-feedback and grammar-feedback-only groups.

A longitudinal case study assessing the effect of teacher feedback on student revisions is Lam's study (1991). In their various types of writing assignments throughout the writing course, five student subjects were able to revise their content and mechanics on the basis of teacher feedback.

Paulus (1999) investigated the effect of peer and teacher feedback on student revisions and the effect of multi-draft process on the overall improvement of student essays. The researcher analyzed eleven student essays and classified the types and sources of student revisions according to Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy of revisions by evaluating the first and final drafts of the students' essays and recording students' verbal reports during revision. In the core of Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy lies the distinction between those changes that affect the meaning of a text (meaning changes) and those that do not (surface changes). A student writer makes meaning (or global changes) when he/she adds, deletes, or rearranges the ideas in such a way that these changes affect the information present in the text. He/she makes surface or local changes to his/her text if he/she brings new information or deletes old information from the text which result in changes in the surface structure. In the study, the majority of student revisions were found to be surface-level revisions, but the changes made on the basis of peer and teacher feedback were more often meaning-level changes compared to the revisions the students made on their own. Another finding was overall essay improvement as a result of writing multiple drafts.

Ashwell (2000) investigated the effect of various feedback patterns of a process-oriented teacher feedback style on the improvement of subsequent drafts of one composition where improvement was defined as increases in formal accuracy (grammar, lexicon, and mechanics) and increases in content measured by adapted

analytic scales. The fifty Japanese university students who participated in this study were put into four groups: content feedback before form, form feedback before form, simultaneous content and form feedback, and no feedback at all. The results showed that the three groups that received feedback of any kind improved their accuracy and content scores. Nevertheless, the group that received no feedback improved their content scores, but their scores on accuracy decreased.

The focus of the study below is different from the ones above. Sugita (2006) investigated the influence of teachers' comment types on EFL students' revision. Three types of handwritten commentary were used between drafts: statements, imperatives, and questions. The resulting 115 changes from 71 pairs of second and revised drafts of 75 students were analyzed based on the degree to which the students utilized each teacher's commentary in the revision. The results showed that the comments in the imperative form were more influential on revisions than questions or statements and seemed to help students to make substantial, effective revisions. This finding may suggest that teachers should be careful in selecting comment types when writing between-draft comments.

To sum up the research on the influence of combinations of various feedback types on student revision, Ferris (2003, 30) made the following generalizations:

- a) L2 student writers took teacher's feedback into consideration and frequently shaped their texts on the basis of teacher suggestions;
- b) Student revisions varied in the extent whether they were surface-level or meaning-level changes and this was largely due to the profound effect of the type of teacher feedback students have received;
- c) Students who received content-based feedback seemed to improve their content in writing across drafts over time;

- d) Some revisions made in response to teacher feedback were successful, whereas some may in fact distort the overall quality of a student text;
- e) Success of the student writer in making effective changes depended on the type of change that the teacher suggested and the ability of the student writer.

One-to-one teacher student writing conferences is another way of giving feedback and instruction to students about their writing. Many writing teachers believe that one-to-one writing conferences with students are more influential than handwritten comments and corrections no matter what aspect of student writing the teacher and the student discuss about, be it content, organization, or errors (Zamel, 1985).

The popularity of this teaching technique derives from various reasons. One reason is that teachers can save more time and energy than they do when they give written feedback. Another reason is that it has room for interaction and negotiation. Last of all, it is an effective means of communicating with students who have an auditory learning style (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998).

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) describe a typical one-to-one conference as the meeting of a few students with the teacher to discuss students' writing progress being made by the students. The research on the role of conferencing on L2 student texts is not so extensive. Controlled research on writing conferences looks at two issues: the evaluation of teachers and students after conferences and the nature of teacher-student interaction in sets of teacher-student conferences. From the research done by Carnicelli (1980), Sokmen (1988), Zamel (1985), and Zhu (1994) on teacher-evaluations, Grabe and Kaplan (1996) concluded that compared to written feedback, students receive more detailed and comprehensible feedback in one-to-one conferences.

Research done on the nature of teacher-student interaction shows that the degree of usefulness of conferences can change (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Research findings suggest that conferences are effective on student writing when students actively participate and negotiate meaning (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990).

Different aspects of teacher-student writing conferences have been the focus of research. These can be listed as attitudes toward and advantages of teacher-student writing conferences, the discourse of writing conferences, the outcomes of conferences, and the roles and behaviours of teachers and students during the conferences (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998).

The effects of one-to-one conferences on student revisions in writing has been examined by Goldstein and Conrad (1990) and Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997).

In Goldstein and Conrad's (1990) study, three ESL student texts, one-to-one conference transcripts and revisions were investigated to probe into each student's participation pattern and the influence of these patterns on their revisions. They found qualitative and quantitative differences among ESL students from various cultural backgrounds. These differences revealed themselves in the nature of the conferences and their effects on student revision. Specifically, differences were witnessed in the students' ability and desire to nominate topics for discussion and give each other input, to set the agenda, and to negotiate meaning.

Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) looked at the extent to which the discussed items were materialized by the student writer in the subsequent draft and they examined first drafts, conference transcripts, revisions, and first drafts of the next essay assignment of eight students. Four of them were ESL students and the other four were native English speakers. These eight students were also divided into weak and strong writers. The following results were obtained from their study:

- a) The conferences between the teachers and the low achievers were shorter and more teacher-dominated;
- b) There were no measured difference between L1 and L2 writers;
- c) All students revised their texts and this could be traceable to the conference transcripts.

Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) suggest that in the most successful conferences students participate actively, ask questions, clarify meaning and discuss their writing rather than just accepting the teacher's advice. In cases where oral conferences are successful, they not only lead to revisions in the drafting process, but also have subsequent effects on the improvement of the writing ability in later assignments.

However, Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) further indicate,

“What is ostensibly the same treatment (a one-to-one writing conference) is likely to be, nor it should be, be the same at all. Further, the same instructional event does not meet with the same response from all students, and the divergent backgrounds students bring to instructional events have a structuring effect that cannot be dismissed solely as teacher bias or self-fulfilling prophecy” (p. 86).

Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) note the same issue. Despite the benefits of oral feedback on student writing, Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) assume that there may arise some problems regarding comprehension of feedback even though conferencing allows for clarification strategies on the part of the teacher as well as the student. In the same way, Goldstein and Conrad (1990) pointed out the same issue, “ESL writers bring with them diverse cultures and languages... that potentially affect how students conference or how their teachers respond to them” (p.459).

#### L2 students' opinions and preferences for teacher feedback types and reactions to teacher feedback

An area of research on response to student writing has been surveys of student opinions and preferences regarding teacher feedback both in L1 and L2. In

the case of L1, the picture that Leki (1990a) portrays after her review of L1 studies on reactions to teacher feedback is rather gloomy. As a result of surveying 100 ESL students about their teachers' correction practices, Leki (1990a) concludes that students do not take their teachers' feedback into account, have trouble understanding it, and even feel hostile about their teachers' attempts to correct their writing. Early surveys of student opinions and preferences regarding teacher feedback in L2 have come to similar conclusions (Cohen, 1987; Leki, 1991; Radecki & Swales, 1988). For example, Cohen (1987) reached the conclusion that "the activity of teacher feedback...may have a more limited impact on the learners than the teacher would desire" (p.36).

Ferris (2003) lists the research questions that have been raised on student opinions about teacher feedback practices. These are,

"(a) According to students, what type of feedback do teachers give them and what aspects of writing does teacher feedback address? (b) What are student preferences about the types of teacher feedback they would like to receive? (c) What are students' reactions to teacher feedback they have received? (d) What types of problems do students have with teacher feedback? (e) How seriously do students take teacher commentary? (f) What strategies do students use to process and apply teacher feedback, particularly if they have trouble comprehending it? and (g) What do students think is the impact or effect of teacher commentary on their development as writers?" (p, 94).

The earliest study on this research topic was done by Cohen (1987) and it also inspired several researchers. The subjects in this study were 217 college students who were native speakers of English in freshman composition, and ESL writers. They were surveyed about the topics covered by teacher feedback, about strategies they employed to deal with teacher feedback, and about the problems they had understanding teacher feedback. The students stated that their teachers' feedback generally focused on grammar. Although they reported attending to teacher feedback, they did not use various strategies to process teacher feedback. They also



pointed out that they had difficulty understanding their teachers' single words or brief phrases. The study was criticized by Ferris (1999b) and Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1994) on the differing characteristics of the subjects and its single-draft writing context.

Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) replicated Cohen's study with 9 EFL college students. In this study, it was found that the students used a wider range of strategies than the ones in Cohen's (1987) study. The researchers suggested that there should be "a clear agreement between teacher and student as to what will be commented on and how such comments will be categorized" (p.175). This study was criticized by Ferris (2003) in that there was a small number of subjects, they were from different institutions, and they had different teachers.

Ferris (1995b) adapted Cohen's study for multiple-draft settings. 155 ESL writers who participated in this study stated that they reread their papers, attended to teacher feedback, and used a number of coping strategies for problematic teacher feedback. They said that they paid more attention to teacher feedback on first drafts than on final drafts and they thought that feedback was helpful at the end of the end of the drafting process (Ferris, 1995b).

Saito's (1994) study is also comprehensive in that reactions of 39 college students to teacher feedback, their texts, and their teachers' comments and corrections were all examined. The results showed that all the teachers were similar in that they all gave feedback on content and language errors, but their treatment of error and intervention in the composing process were different. Also, students preferred to have indirect error correction to direct correction by the teacher. In varying rates, students stated that they would reread their compositions after getting

feedback, make a note of corrections, and correct errors and rewrite their papers (Saito, 1994).

Brice's (1995) study is different from other studies in that video-taped think-aloud protocols were employed and the students reacted to the teacher's comments on their first and final drafts. Brice (1995) found great differences between the three university ESL writers, but they were all engaged in reading and responding to their teacher's comments. Although the two students were quite good at responding to coded error feedback, they all stated that they disliked the teacher's indirect feedback and they would have wanted clearer "verbal cues".

In her survey of a number of studies on student opinions regarding teacher commentary, Ferris (2003) made the following generalizations:

- a) Students appreciated any form of teacher feedback.
- b) Students preferred to have feedback on their language issues. In no study did any student express that they disliked teacher feedback and found it irrelevant.
- c) In some studies, students appreciated feedback on their ideas and composing strategies.
- d) As far as the types of error feedback are concerned, students preferred indirect error correction to direct error correction. Students thought that they would learn more if they cooperated with the teacher in the revision and correction processes.
- e) As for the strategies of dealing with teacher feedback, they seemed to change according to the nature of the feedback and the teacher's expectations from students after giving feedback. Precisely, if the teacher wanted the students rewrite and revise and held them responsible for making use of teacher

feedback in their revisions, the students would try to employ various strategies to meet the teacher's requirements. However, if the teacher handed in the student texts with comments and grades on them and did not expect students to revise their texts on the basis of his/her comments, the students were not willing to rewrite their texts on their own.

- f) When students were asked about the advantages and disadvantages of written teacher commentary and one-to-one writing conferences, they stated that they preferred both.

Overall, Grabe and Kaplan (1996) acknowledges the benefits of the process approach and they state that it fosters:

- a) self-discovery and the author's voice;
- b) meaningful writing on interesting topics or topics that are of interest to the writer;
- c) the need to approach writing as a goal-oriented and contextualized activity;
- d) invention and pre-writing activities and writing multiple-drafts according to feedback between drafts;
- e) various sources of feedback (the teacher, peers, and real audiences) and other teacher feedback delivery systems (conferencing, audiotaped and e-mailed commentary);
- f) free writing and journal writing as a way of developing written expression;
- g) content and personal expression as more crucial than final product and grammar usage;
- h) the idea that writing is a recursive rather than a linear process;

- i) students' awareness of the notions of the writing process such as audience, plans, so on and so forth (p. 87).

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### Research questions

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of written and oral teacher feedback on pre-intermediate student revisions in a process-oriented EFL writing class. Specifically, the research questions are:

- 1) Does written and oral teacher feedback have an impact on pre-intermediate student revisions in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, to what extent?
- 2) Does writing multiple drafts in a process-oriented writing class have an impact on the overall writing quality? If so, to what extent?
- 3) Does teacher feedback in a process-oriented EFL writing class have an impact on students' opinions about writing? If so, what are students' reflections about the type and amount of teacher feedback they received between first and final drafts? How much attention did they pay to each type of teacher feedback?

#### Research context

##### Boğaziçi University School of Foreign Languages

Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu (YADYOK), where this particular study was carried out, is the School of Foreign Languages of Boğaziçi University, which is an English-medium state university located in İstanbul, Turkey. The school is responsible for giving English classes to all preparatory school students who have been newly accepted to the university after having passed the university entrance exam, but have not showed the required proficiency in English in Boğaziçi University English Proficiency Test (BUEPT) to continue their studies as freshmen.

The school also gives freshmen and sophomores various language classes such as Advanced English, German, French, and Spanish.

There are three levels of English classes for preparatory school students: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. The ultimate aim of the school is to equip these students with such an academic level of English that would help them continue their freshman studies in English. To this end, in an academic year, the teachers teach three different syllabi (beginner, intermediate, and advanced) to their own group of students. The syllabi aim to foster academic reading, listening, and writing skills together with the teaching of grammar.

Students are required to attend 90 % of the classes. Unless a student whose absence limit is over 10 % has an acceptable excuse, he/she cannot attend classes during the term and/or the summer school and cannot take BUEPT administered in January and June.

Every academic semester, BUEPT is administered to YADYOK students who are eligible for the test on the basis of their cumulative grade average of the tests that they take throughout the year. Intermediate and advanced students whose cumulative grade averages are 80 and 60, respectively can sit BUEPT administered in January. Students who have the required cumulative grade average and have not extended their attendance limits can sit BUEPT administered in June.

#### Participants

There are 20 participants in this study, a beginner level class of 20 students (9 female and 11 male aged between 18 and 24) who were enrolled in the School of Foreign Languages of Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, Turkey in the fall semester of 2005-2006 academic year. Of all the students, drafts of 16 students were included in this study since one student dropped out of school because of exceeding the absenteeism

limit and the rest had a low grade point average, which made all of them ineligible to take the June BUEPT. At the start of the study, having completed the fall semester of the academic year, the students were exposed to English for a period of sixteen weeks. They received 30 hours of English instruction per week, 20 of which constitute grammar and 10 reading and listening lessons. In grammar, they covered the present tenses, the future forms, the perfect tenses, the passive voice, type 1 conditional and gerunds and infinitives from “The New Headway Elementary”. They studied basic reading skills from a beginners’ reading textbook called “Themes For Today” and practised detailed reading skills through reading handouts provided by the curriculum committee of the school. They practised listening for specific information i.e., listening for the time, numbers, and years. They learnt and practised conventions of paragraph writing-developing main and supporting ideas, writing topic and concluding sentences, using coordinating conjunctions, some sentence transitions of concession (however, nevertheless) and exemplification (for example, for instance).

#### Teacher-researcher

The teacher-researcher carrying out this particular study has been a teacher of English for twelve years. She has taught in preparatory schools of English language in various universities. She has been teaching English to mainly beginner level students at YADYOK since 1998. She also worked as a member of the Curriculum Committee of YADYOK for two years.

#### Implementation of the process writing approach

The study was carried out for 14 weeks by the researcher who was also the teacher of the class during the spring semester of the 2005-2006 academic year.

The teacher-researcher adopted the process approach to the teaching of writing in her class of 20 pre-intermediate students over twelve weeks of the sixteen-week period. The researcher met her class four days a week and taught them 17 hours, seven of which were scheduled for the writing skill and five of which were scheduled for the teaching of grammar and the listening skill, respectively.

The researcher started off by briefing students about the process approach to writing. Having worked on the organization, structure words, and sample essays of a particular essay type, the teacher-researcher continued to practice the stages of this approach (pre-writing stage, planning stage, and drafting stage in one or two writing assignments of that particular essay type). The class was introduced to the following essay types: comparison and/or contrast, cause and/or effect, and discursive essays where advantages and disadvantages of an issue are discussed.

In the pre-writing stage, the teacher organized activities that helped students explore, come up with and get started with ideas on a given topic by using all language skills. Raimes (1983) suggests some activities for this stage: brainstorming, guided discussion, note-taking from a related reading text or the teacher's lecture on a related topic. While practising this stage of the process writing, the teacher-researcher did group and class brainstorming, guided discussion by teacher-led questions, and had students take notes from the texts they have searched on the Internet. The teacher-researcher also used think-aloud demonstrations to clarify the strategies for brainstorming and invention (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). She did this with the whole class by writing on the board and discussing the choices she made with the class during brainstorming and composing.

Next, the researcher helped the class plan extensively. After having developed enough ideas in the pre-writing stage, the researcher helped students to lay



out a rough outline or plan for this “raw” material. Student writers were shown how to exclude irrelevant ideas, narrow down coherent and related ideas, and organize them in some sort of logic (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998). Suggested activities for outlining are analysis of pieces of writing by professional or textbook writers, reading a passage and completing its outline, and producing an outline of a given or student draft of a paragraph.

To help students with drafting and redrafting their written texts, the teacher-researcher also presented models for various text types as a guide or resource rather than a prescribed form to be followed. These models just set examples of what students could do.

The teacher-researcher helped students go through the multistage drafting where students were expected to incorporate focused teacher feedback in the form of written and oral feedback. She had her class go through the drafting process in seven writing topics which required the rhetorical mode of description, comparison and contrast, and cause and effect through the twelve-week period in the spring term. The students produced two drafts per writing topic (14 drafts in total) and received the teacher-researcher’s written feedback on their first and second drafts. The teacher-researcher was able to give oral feedback in addition to the written feedback on one of the writing topics.

#### Data collection

By week thirteen and fourteen, students who developed an understanding of this approach and practised it for a few times were subject to close examination by the teacher-researcher to collect data especially for this study. In the thirteenth and fourteenth week of the spring term, the writing topic of this present study (advantages and disadvantages of attending a university outside one’s hometown)

was assigned to the students. The writing topic was chosen as a result of class discussion from the four writing topics suggested by the teacher-researcher.

Written feedback on students' D1s involved an error checklist which includes error codes focusing on grammatical accuracy, word choice, mechanics (punctuation and spelling), coherence at sentence level and accuracy of clauses. An adapted version of Lane and Lange's (1993) editing guide was used at this stage (See Appendix A for the error checklist.)

The written feedback also included written teacher commentary in the form of text-specific comments or questions and summary comments on grammar, organization, content and vocabulary of the student essays in endnotes. The teacher commentary was based on the guidelines suggested by Bates, Lane, and Lange (1993). (See Appendix B for the guidelines).

Studies of Lalande (1982) and Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986) indicate that the teacher's location of grammar errors increases accuracy of writing. Accordingly, in D1s in this present study, based on the error checklist symbols, the teacher-researcher identified the location of the error by underlining the error and writing the particular symbol for the error and in D2s she made checkmarks for the errors that have been corrected accurately and just underlined those that have been revised inaccurately by the student.

Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) state, "Teacher response to student writing needs to cover all facets of students' texts, including issues of content, organization, style, grammar, and mechanics." Also, one major conclusion of Fathman and Whalley's (1990) study was that students' writing improves when the teacher provides form and content feedback simultaneously in a draft rather than assigning them multiple drafts that separate grammar and content feedback. Ferris (1997), who examined the

influence of teacher marginal and end comments written on 110 D1s by 47 advanced ESL university students, seemed to provide further support for the major finding of Fathman and Whalley, too. In her study, one of the most successful kind of teacher commentary resulting in substantive and effective student revisions was the commentary where the teacher indicated the student's major error pattern in end notes together with underlining of sample errors in the text. Ferris (1997) came to the conclusion that "simultaneous attention to content and form does not short-circuit students' ability to revise their ideas, but may in fact improve their end products because they receive more accuracy-oriented feedback throughout the writing process" (p. 332). In this present study, the researcher's way of responding to student drafts included blending content and grammar feedback in all drafts.

The teacher's oral feedback was given on students' D2s which they rewrote as a result of written feedback. The teacher-researcher was able to give oral feedback on one particular writing assignment to individual students in one-to-one conferences throughout the term. Students were able to practise mostly proofreading and editing.

One of the methods of giving feedback on student writing is one-to-one conferences away from the class (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In this study, the teacher-researcher held approximately fifteen-minute-long one-to-one conferences with individual students at appointed times outside class hours to give oral feedback on D2s.

In conducting teacher-student conferences, the stages suggested by Reid (1993) were followed: openings, student-initiated comments, teacher-initiated comments, reading of the paper, and closings. Before one-to-one conferences took place, the students had to fill in "Revision Planning Conference Sheet" taken from Reid (1993). (See Appendix C for the "Revision Planning Conference Sheet"). In the

one-to-one conference, the individual student started off by commenting on what he/she thought the best and the weakest part(s) of his/her essay was and then went on to ask the teacher-researcher questions about her feedback on D2. After the student-initiated comments, the teacher-researcher continued the conference by drawing the student's attention to the points that she herself found it necessary to focus on the student's D2. These points were either form-based mistakes that still existed in D2 or content-related comments that required further revision by the student writer. The teacher-researcher did not write any notes on the student's second draft during the conference, but the student was allowed to take notes as he/she wished during the teacher's oral feedback. The conference was tape recorded by the teacher-researcher as well.

The feedback procedures can be summed up in the following way:

D1 (The writing topic was set as take-home assignment)

D2 (The first revision was based on written teacher feedback given to D1 and it was done outside class during the weekend to produce the D2.)

Final draft (The second revision was based on oral teacher feedback given to D2 during one-to-one writing conference with the teacher and the final draft was produced outside the class as homework.)

To examine students' views on teacher feedback, the students were surveyed in the spring semester of the 2006 academic year. A slightly adapted version of Ferris's (1995b) "Student Survey on Teacher Feedback" was used. (See Appendix D for the survey). The questionnaires were administered in class in the fourteenth week of the semester. In general, the survey included questions about what students have thought the teacher feedback was concerned with. Specifically, the questions of the questionnaire addressed the students' reflections about the frequency of the feedback

on content, organization, grammar and mechanics (spelling and punctuation) respectively, how far they thought they utilized the teacher feedback in their revisions between drafts, and their views on the usefulness of teacher feedback on their writing performance.

#### Data analysis

Data analysis of student revisions between drafts was done in two strands: the data analysis of student revisions between D1 and D2 based on the teacher's written feedback, which consisted of feedback on form through indirect-coded feedback and feedback on content in the form of teacher commentary. Data analysis of student revisions between D2 and draft three which is the final copy based on the teacher-researcher's oral feedback. While delivering her oral feedback about D2s, the teacher-researcher was comprehensive in that she skipped focusing on very few grammatical mistakes and dwelt on those content-related comments the student ignored or those content-related revisions which she thought did not improve the content of D2s very much, i.e., revisions which had a negative or negligible effect on the content of D2s.

#### Data analysis of the teacher's written feedback

To determine the effects of written teacher feedback on student writing, the drafts of the students (drafts 1 and drafts 2) written on the topic of "advantages and disadvantages of attending a university outside one's home town" were first assessed for grammatical accuracy and then for content quality. To assess D1s and D2s for grammatical accuracy, all the grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors of all D1s and D2s were counted and assigned a rating for grammatical accuracy. The rating was based on the total number of errors divided by the total number of words in a draft. The rating showed measured grammatical accuracy according to the amount

that was written. The higher the rating was, the more errors per the number of words were found in a given student text. The changes in mean accuracy ratings would suggest possible effects of the teacher's written feedback on the grammar, lexis, syntax and mechanics of student revisions between D1s and D2s. Statistical analyses were done by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

To determine if all sixteen students made any improvement in terms of grammar, lexis, and mechanics from D1 to D2 of their essays, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was performed on their ratings for grammatical accuracy.

To determine the effect of the teacher's written comments on student revisions between D1 and D2, the analysis of the total number of student revisions was based on an adapted version of Ferris' (1997) "Rating Scale for Revisions" where the revisions are basically categorized as no change, minimal change with positive/negative effects, substantive change with positive/negative effects. (See Appendix E for the "Rating Scale for Revisions").

The scale shows the degree to which a student addresses each teacher comment in his/her revision by making no attempt, a minimal attempt, or a substantive attempt and the scale shows whether the student's change(s) improved his/her draft or had a negligible or negative effect on the revision.

To assess the content revisions students made in their D2s according to the teacher-researcher's written feedback, the revision a student made in response to each written comment was given a rating scale ranging from 0 to 5. To determine the impact of the teacher's written comments on content, the number of revisions receiving ratings 0,1,2,3,4, and 5 in all D2s were summed respectively.

To determine the kind of revisions students made between D1s and D2s on the basis of the teacher's written feedback, a slightly adapted version of Yagelgsky's

(1995) coding scheme, which was adapted from Faigley & Witte (1981), was used. (See Appendix F for the coding scheme).

D2s were analysed to find whether the changes were surface changes (grammar and mechanics), stylistic changes (lexical or phrasing), organizational changes (organization or paragraphing) or content changes. This means a categorization of the revisions was made. The number of change(s) for each category every student has made between his/her D1 and D2 was determined by counting the revisions and at the same time categorizing them.

#### Data analysis of teacher's oral feedback

The teacher-researcher has analysed the revisions between D2s and final copies by identifying how far the student revised his/her final copy on the basis of the feedback he/she received during one-to-one conference. Specifically, the teacher-researcher tracked whether in his/her final draft the student has materialized every piece of feedback, which he/she has received during his/her one-to-one conference with the teacher by comparing the student's transcript with his/her D3.

To assess the effect of oral teacher feedback on grammatical accuracy across D2 and final draft, as has been done above, all the grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors of all final drafts were counted and assigned a rating for grammatical accuracy. The rating which measured grammatical accuracy according to the written amount was based on the total number of errors divided by the total number of words in a draft.

To find out if all sixteen students made any improvement in terms of grammar, lexis, and mechanics from D2 to the final drafts of their essays, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was performed on their D2 and final draft ratings for grammatical accuracy.

To assess the effect of oral teacher feedback on student revisions between D2 and final draft, Ferris's (1997) "Rating Scale for Revisions" was again used to analyse the total number of student revisions. The teacher-researcher compared the students' final copies with their transcripts and judged the effect of the revisions as having no change, minimal change with positive/negative effects, and substantive change with positive/negative effects.

To assess the content revisions students made in their final drafts according to the teacher-researcher's oral feedback, the revision a student made in response to each oral comment was given a rating. The rating scale ranged from 0 to 5. To determine the effect of the teacher's oral comments on content, the number of revisions receiving ratings 0,1,2,3,4, and 5 in all final drafts were summed respectively.

To determine the kind of revisions students made between D2s and final drafts on the basis of the teacher's oral feedback, Yagelgsky's (1995) coding scheme was again used. Final drafts were analysed to determine whether the changes made were surface changes (grammar and mechanics), stylistic changes (lexical or phrasing), organizational changes (organization or paragraphing) or content changes. In particular, while the revisions were being categorized, the number of change(s) for each category every student has made between his /her D2 and final draft was counted.

#### Data analysis of overall essay quality

To determine whether the overall quality of the drafts improved as a result of the feedback and the revision process, D1s and final drafts of ten participants were scored by two interraters (native speakers of English teachers). The D1s and final drafts of the rest of the class were scored by the teacher researcher herself.



The scores given by the interraters were averaged to calculate the overall scores of D1s and final drafts respectively. The amount of improvement made on the essay was determined by the difference between the scores given to D1 and final draft of a student's essay by the interraters. The teacher-researcher assigned a score herself if there occurred a discrepancy between the first two interraters (a variation of more than 3 points). The third score has been averaged with the closest score given previously by one of the two interraters.

In the scoring procedure, a slightly adapted version of Kobayashi and Rinnert's (1992) "Criteria for Evaluating 11 Components of Writing" was used. (See Appendix G for the criteria). The criteria involved three categories: content, organization, and style. The categories involved subcategories, each of which weighed ten points summing up to a hundred in total.

To assess the overall quality of student writing from D1 to final draft, Npar test and Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test were run on the means of D1s and final drafts.

#### Data analysis of student questionnaires on teacher feedback

The quantitative items of the student questionnaires on teacher feedback (1-4) were collated and the percentages were calculated. For the open-ended items (5-12), the responses were summed and grouped to determine the various trends in the responses.

#### Interrater reliability

As for the interrater reliability of the two interraters who participated in this study, how far the two interraters agreed with the teacher-researcher in the feedback procedure of the ten participants' rewrites across D1, D2, and final draft and in the

essay scoring procedure of D1s and final drafts have been calculated. This means that the interraters worked on 63% of the drafts.

The first interrater agreed with the teacher-researcher 96%, 100%, and 87% in the written and oral feedback procedures of D1s, D2s, and final drafts of the ten participants, respectively. In total, the reliability of the first interrater was 97%. (See Appendix I, J, K in the Appendices.)

The second interrater agreed with the teacher-researcher 95%, 96%, and 65% in the feedback procedures of D1s, D2s, and final drafts of the ten participants, respectively. In total, the reliability of the second interrater was 94%. (See Appendix L, M, N in the Appendices.)

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### The effect of written teacher feedback

In this present study, in her written feedback across students' D1s and D2s, the teacher-researcher simultaneously focused on form (i.e., grammatical accuracy of student writing) and content and organization and used indirect coded feedback and teacher commentary, respectively.

Written feedback on form was assessed at a rating based on the total number of errors divided by the total number of words in a draft. The smaller the rating was, the fewer errors per the number of words were found in a given student text. The mean for 16 students in D1 is ,0923 and the mean for them in D2 is ,0193. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test run on D1 ratings and D2 ratings showed that students improved their grammatical accuracy across their D1s and D2s ( $p < 0.05$ ). The subtraction of mean grammatical accuracy ratings of D2s from D1s produced positive results in each and every student ( $p < 0.05$ ) showing a statistically significant difference between the mean of grammatical ratings of D1s and D2s (See Table 1). This suggests all students improved their grammatical accuracy significantly across their D2 rewrites. This means that the students made a significantly fewer number of grammatical, lexical, and mechanical mistakes in their D2s than they did in their D1s as they revised their texts on the basis of the error codes the teacher used to indicate their grammar-related errors.

TABLE 1 Test statistics of written form-focused teacher feedback

Test Statistics <sup>b</sup>	
	grammatical accuracy in draft2 - grammatical accuracy in draft1
Z	-3,516 <sup>a</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000

a. Based on positive ranks.

b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

Some examples of how students revised their grammar across their D1s and D2s are as follows:

Example 1:

WC

A word choice error in D1: "Next, if they win a university which is outside their hometown, will they attend this university or not?"

Revised version in D2: "Next, if they enter a university which is outside their hometown, will they attend this university or not?"

Example 2:

A preposition, punctuation, pronoun reference, and verb tense error in D1: "On the other

PREP PUNC PRO REF VT  
hand, beside these advantages\_of course\_ they experienced some unpleasant situations and feelings."

Revised version in D2: "On the other hand, besides these advantages, of course, students attending a university outside their hometowns experience some unpleasant situations and feelings."

Example 3:

CONN PUNC

A connector, punctuation and nonidiom error in D1: "And also if you have siblings, you can

NONIDIOM

feel their nonexistence when you want to talk to someone and share your problems."

Revised version in D2: "Also, if you have siblings, you can feel their absence when you want to talk to someone and share your problems."

As for the teacher commentary on content and organization, in total, the teacher-researcher noted down sixty-two comments which asked for explanation, description or addition on the part of the students so that they could improve their content in their D2s. Of the sum of all ratings given by the teacher-researcher to the revisions, the highest sum was 19, receiving rating 4. This meant that students who revised the content of their D2s in 30.6% of the cases made minimal attempt to address the teacher's comment but its effect was positive. Of all the sum of all ratings, the lowest sum was 3, receiving rating 5. This meant that those who revised the content of their D2s in 4.8% of the cases made substantive changes in response to the teacher-researcher's comments with generally positive effect. In 14.5% of the cases, students made no changes in their texts. In 9.6% of the cases, students deleted the text in their D2s. Last, in 24.1% of the cases, students changed the text in their D2s substantively, but the effect was negative or negligible (See Table 2).

TABLE 2 Revision ratings resulting from written teacher feedback on content

Total number of the ratings	N	sum
Rating 0	16	9
Rating 1	16	6
Rating 2	16	10
Rating 3	16	15
Rating 4	16	19
Rating 5	16	3

When the percentages of ratings four and five which stand for minimal or substantive changes made by students with positive effects on their texts are added, the sum is 35.4%. This means that in their first revision made on the basis of written teacher commentary, the students made small or substantive changes in 35% of the cases, which the teacher then found them to have positively affected their D2s.

Some examples of student revisions made on the basis of teacher commentary and the ratings they received are as follows.

Example 1: (A thesis statement)

*"Students who attend a university outside their hometowns have some advantages and disadvantages to overcome some difficulties because of being far away from their families."*

Teacher comment at this point: The infinitive of purpose does not fit in the main clause in terms of meaning. Please check the thesis statement again.)

Revised version in D2: *"Students who attend a university outside their hometowns have some advantages and disadvantages."*

(The rating that this revision received was 1. Rating 1 included deletions from the student text.)

Example 2: (A concluding sentence from the conclusion paragraph)

*"To sum up, going other towns to study has not only advantages but also disadvantages."*

Teacher comment at this point: ...to study where?

Revised version in D2: *"To sum up, going to other towns to study university or high school has both advantages and disadvantages."*

(The rating that this revision received was 2. Rating 2 included revisions where minimal attempt was made by the student to address a comment with generally a negative or negligible effect.)

Example 3: (An excerpt from the second body paragraph)

*"Especially, first times when they went to universities they feel themselves alone because they do not know anybody and they have some drawbacks like other students."*

(Teacher comment at this point: What are some of these drawbacks? Please specify them.)

Revised version in D2: *"For instance, most of them miss their mothers' cooks and generally almost all of them enforce to spend money economically."*

(The rating that this revision received was 3. Rating 3 included substantive changes made by student in response to a comment with generally a negative or negligible effect.)

Example 4: (A thesis statement)

*"However it has some disadvantages such as feeling homesick and financial problems."*

Teacher comment at this point: You need parallel structures after “such as”. What do you do with financial problems?

*Revised version in D2: “However it has some disadvantages such as feeling homesick and having financial problems.”*

*(The rating that this revision received was 4. Rating 4 included revisions where minimal attempt was made by the student to address a comment with generally a positive effect.)*

Example 5: (A supporting point from a body paragraph)

*“The second one is learning to be provident and patient especially when a decision is taken. This decision should be taken carefully because there is nobody to support it.”*

(Teacher comment at this point: What kinds of decision does one learn to make while studying far from his/her hometown? Can you specify this point?)

*Revised version in D2: “For example, as you meet new friends, you must be choisy and shouldn’t trust everyone with first view. In addition, you have difficulty in getting accustomed to new environment and may be you want to return your hometown but if you are patient, you can easily overcome these orientation problems.”*

(The rating that this revision received was 5. Rating 5 included substantive changes made by the student in response to a comment with generally a positive effect.)

As a result of the teacher’s written feedback, the sum of all sorts of revision (surface, stylistic, organizational, and content changes) was 179. Of all these changes, surface changes accounted for the highest - at 41.8%. Surface changes included errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, nouns, verbs, and reference words. Next came content changes at 28.4%. These included addition of new subject matter or ideas and deleting subject matter or ideas. Of all changes, stylistic changes



made up 26.2%. These included errors in word choice and word formation, nonidiomatic expressions, run-on sentences, comma splices, fragments, sentence structure errors, and word order errors. The fewest number of revisions were made in the category of organizational changes - 3.3%. These revisions included errors in cohesion, connectors and paragraphing (See Table 3).

TABLE 3 Type of revisions resulting from written teacher feedback

Type of revisions	N	Sum & percentage	
Surface changes	16	75	41,8%
Stylistic changes	16	47	26,2%
Organizational changes	16	6	3,3%
Content changes	16	51	28,4%

#### The effect of oral teacher feedback

All students in the present study produced their finals drafts after having received oral feedback in one-to-one writing conferences they held with their teacher. This means, the revisions of D2s were based on oral teacher feedback.

The calculations which were done to assess the effect of written teacher feedback were done at this stage to assess the effect of teacher oral feedback. Oral feedback on form was assessed at a rating based on the total number of errors divided by the total number of words in a draft. The smaller the rating was, the fewer errors per the number of words were found in a given student text. As it was stated previously, the mean for 16 students in D2 is ,0193 and the mean for them in D3 is ,0037. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test run on D2 ratings and final draft ratings showed that students improved their grammatical accuracy across their D2s and final drafts

( $p < 0,05$ ). The subtraction of mean grammatical accuracy ratings of final drafts from those of D2s produced positive results in each and every student ( $p < 0,05$ ), showing a significant difference between the mean of grammatical ratings of final drafts and D2s. This shows significant improvement in all students' grammatical accuracy across their second revision. All students took the teacher's oral feedback on the grammatical aspect of their D2s seriously and made the necessary corrections resulting in a fewer number of grammar, lexical, and mechanical errors in their final drafts (See Table 4).

TABLE 4 Test statistics of oral form-focused teacher feedback

Test Statistics <sup>b</sup>	
	grammatical accuracy in draft3 - grammatical accuracy in draft2
Z	-3,516 <sup>a</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000

a. Based on positive ranks.

b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

In total, during the one-to-one conferences with her students, the teacher-researcher orally made twenty-one comments which asked for explanation, description or addition on the part of the students so that they could improve their content in their final drafts.

Of the total number of all ratings, the highest total belonged to rating 2 and rating 4, respectively at 33.3%. This meant that in 33.3% of the cases in final drafts, students mostly made minimal attempt to address the teacher's comment, but its effect was both positive and negative in general. Next came rating 3 at 14.2%. This meant that in 14.2% of the cases, in final drafts substantive changes were made by the students, but their effect was negative or negligible. Of the sum of all ratings, the

lowest sum belonged to ratings 0 and 5, respectively at 9.5%. This meant that in 9.5% of the cases D2s were not revised at all in response to the teacher's oral comments and still in another 9.5% of the cases in final drafts, substantive positive changes were made by the students in response to the teacher's oral comments (See Table 5).

TABLE 5 Revision ratings resulting from oral teacher feedback on content

Total number of ratings	N	sum
Rating 0	16	2
Rating 1	16	0
Rating 2	16	7
Rating 3	16	3
Rating 4	16	7
Rating 5	16	2

When the minimal and substantive changes making only positive effects to student texts were added up, the resulting percentage was 42.8%. In other words, in 42.8% of the cases, the students acted on the conference discourse by making either small or major changes which were thought to have positive effects on the writing.

As a result of the effect of the writing conference, the students made a total of 45 revisions. Of all these changes, content changes accounted for the highest at 37.7%. Next came stylistic changes at 31.1%. The percentage of surface changes was 24.4%. The fewest number of revisions were made in the category of organizational changes at 6.6%

(See Table 6) (See Appendix H for case summaries of written and oral feedback across all students).

TABLE 6 Types of revisions resulting from oral teacher feedback

Type of revisions	N	Sum & percentage	
Surface changes	16	11	24,4%
Stylistic changes	16	14	31,1%
Organizational changes	16	3	6,6%
Content changes	16	17	37,7%

As a result, one-to-one writing conference held right after the writing-up of D2 seemed to be more effective on student writers' content and lexical revisions than it did on their grammar and organizational revisions.

#### The effect of multiple drafting on the overall writing quality

To find out whether there was any improvement in the quality of the student text from D1 to final drafts, Npar tests and Wilcoxon Signed Rank test were run on the mean scores of D1 and final drafts. The mean for 16 students in D1 is 68,31 and the mean for them in final drafts is 77,25. The difference between the mean scores of final drafts and those of D1 was high for each and every participant ( $p < 0,05$ ), showing a significant difference between the scores of D1s and final drafts. This shows significant improvement in all students' essays from their D1s to final drafts when content, organization, and style were concerned (See Table 7).

TABLE 7 Test statistics of overall writing quality

Test Statistics <sup>b</sup>	
	D3 score - D1 score
Z	-3,529 <sup>a</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000

a. Based on negative ranks.

b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

#### Student opinions about process-oriented approach to the teaching of L2 writing

When the answers given to questions 1 to 4 were collated, the following results were found out.

The 1<sup>st</sup> question of the questionnaire asked the students how much of each comment they read over again in the first and final drafts when the teacher returns it. Out of sixteen students, 56% of them read all of their first and second drafts when the teacher returned the drafts to them. 25% of them reported they read most of their first and second drafts and 19% of them read some of them. 50% of the students indicated they read all of their final drafts and 31% read some of them.

As a result, the high percentage of students opting for the “all” and “most” categories in both the first and the final drafts show that the students took the responsibility of their own work\_ rereading the drafts themselves. When the “all” and “most” categories are added up in both drafts, in the first drafts the students rereading all and most of their first drafts add up to 81%, and those rereading their final drafts make up nearly 69%. This means that the students were more likely to take reading over their first drafts more seriously than they did their final drafts.

As for the 2<sup>nd</sup> question, around 44% to 37,5% of the students said that they thought carefully about all of their teacher’s comments in both the first and final drafts and in the same way those paying attention to most of the teacher’s comments in both drafts constituted 50%. In total, those opting for the “all” and “most” in the

first drafts add up to nearly 94%, whereas in the final drafts those opting for both categories add up to 88%. It can be concluded that the students were tremendously interested in learning about their teacher's feedback on their writing and that they deeply thought about it.

When looked at the overall percentages for the first two questions, it can be observed that the students were a bit more keen on rereading their first drafts and paying full attention to the teacher's comments than they were on their final drafts since they were required to revise according to these comments. It can be also concluded that the students' tremendous interest in rereading their drafts and attending to the teacher's feedback is still sustained until the final drafts although they were not required to do any work on the final versions of their writing after the teacher returned them.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> question was concerned with how much of the comments and corrections the students thought involved organization, content/ideas, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics in the first and final drafts. It assessed the students' reflections about the nature and amount of their teacher's feedback.

Both in their first and final drafts, 62,5% of the students thought that a few of the comments involved organization. In their first drafts, 31% thought some of them were about organization.

In their first drafts, 56% of the students indicated that a lot of the comments were about their content/ideas and 44% thought some of them were content related whereas in their finals drafts 56% thought some of the teacher's comments were about the content of their essays, but 25% thought a few of them were related to content.

In their first drafts, 50% of the students thought some of the comments were about the grammar of their essays and 31% thought a few were grammatical comments. In their final drafts, however, 62,5% of the students found a few of the teacher's comments to be about grammar.

As for the teacher's feedback on vocabulary in the first drafts, 50% of the students thought some of it were lexical whereas 38% thought a lot of it was lexical. However, in the final drafts, 56% found it to be a little lexical, and 18,7% thought a lot of the teacher's comments to be lexical in the final drafts.

Last of all, in their first drafts, 43,7% of the students found some of the teacher's feedback to focus on mechanics (punctuation, spelling). 37,5% thought a little of the feedback was concerned with mechanics, but in the final drafts 50% thought the same way. Those thinking that some of the comments were about mechanics were 31%.

The overall sum of the responses to the "a lot of" and "some" categories in question 3 indicate that the students thought that they received comments of content the most (100%) followed by vocabulary (88%), grammar (69%), mechanics (62%) and organization (37%) in their first drafts. Specifically, the students thought they received comments of content the most (75%), followed by mechanics (50%), vocabulary (32%), grammar (25%) in their final drafts. This meant that the students perceived that the teacher was more concerned with content and vocabulary in the first drafts and her feedback was more focused on content and mechanics in the final drafts.

The 4<sup>th</sup> question of the questionnaire inquired how much attention the students paid to specific kinds of feedback. In their first drafts, 75% of the students

stated that they paid some of their attention to organizational comments and in their final drafts this attention decreased to 68,7%.

As for the attention paid to the feedback on content in the first drafts, 50% stated that they paid a lot and 43,7% stated that they paid some attention to content feedback. In the final drafts, those paying some attention made up 56,2% and those paying a lot of attention constituted 31,2%.

Both in the first and final drafts, around 50 to 56% of the students stated that they attended a lot to feedback on vocabulary. In the first drafts, 31% indicated that they paid some attention to it, and in the final drafts 25% stated that they paid a little. In the final drafts, grammar received a lot of attention from 50% of the students, whereas it received some attention of 25% of the students.

As for the amount of attention paid to feedback on mechanics in the first drafts, 31,2% of the students attended a lot to this kind of feedback whereas another 31,2% indicated that they paid a little attention to it. In the final drafts, 37,5% attended a little to mechanics, but 25% attended a lot. Another 25% stated they paid some attention to feedback about mechanics.

In general, the sum of the percentages of the categories “a lot” and “some” in all types of feedback in response to question 4 above reveal that 94% of the students paid their utmost attention to content or ideas in their first drafts, whereas in their final drafts this percentage added up to 87%. Next came attention paid to organization of the first drafts by 88% of the students and the organization of the final drafts received the attention of 81% of the students. In the third place came the attention paid to vocabulary feedback of the first drafts by 81% of the students, and in the final drafts feedback on vocabulary received 75% of the students’ attention. Finally came the attention paid to the feedback on mechanics of the first drafts by



56% of the students and in the final drafts the percentage of students paying attention to feedback on mechanics decreased to 50%. The results suggest that at least 75% of the students seemed to attend to the feedback on organization, content, grammar and vocabulary of both their first and final drafts. In other words, attention devoted to these types of feedback on the first drafts was quite similar to the attention devoted to them on the final drafts.

The 5<sup>th</sup> question in the questionnaire was an open-ended one asking students what they did in their first and final drafts after reading the teacher's comments and corrections. In their first drafts, 81% of the students indicated that they looked up words in a dictionary for the corrections. 44% stated they asked for help from their classmates or friends. 25% of the students pointed out that they referred to the Internet, and 13% to a grammar book to find a way to correct their mistakes. Another 13% asked their teacher for help.

As for their references in their final drafts, 25% stated that they read the drafts, tried to understand the teacher's corrections, and kept the mistakes in mind. Another 25% said they used the dictionary to understand the teacher's corrections in the final drafts. Together with the small percentages, the results suggest that the students were able to use a variety of resources to learn correct English and revise their drafts accordingly.

The 6<sup>th</sup> question in the questionnaire asked whether there were ever any comments and corrections that the students did not understand and whether they could give any examples. 75% of the students stated that there were no comments and corrections that they did not understand, but only 25% indicated that there were comments that they did not understand. Comments about collocations were given as an example teacher comment creating difficulty and this made up 6%. Another 6%

gave no examples for problematic teacher comments although they indicated that they did not understand the teacher's comments.

As a follow-up to the 6<sup>th</sup> question, the 7<sup>th</sup> question asked what the students did about the comments that they did not understand. Since 75 % stated they were able to understand the teacher's comments as an answer to the previous question, 25% indicated that they asked their instructor for help. It can be concluded from the responses given to questions 6 and 7 that a majority of the students were able to make sense of their teacher's feedback and knew the kind of revision they were asked to make in their writing. The feedback was not understandable to a minority of the students. However, considering that the question asked if the students ever had difficulty understanding their teacher's feedback, those who had just once had a problem with the feedback were counted together with those who had problems with the feedback all the time. In cases when students did not make sense of the teacher's feedback, they asked for oral feedback from her. After the clarification of the problematic teacher feedback to the minority through oral feedback, it can be said that nearly all students were able to understand the teacher's feedback on their writing.

The 8<sup>th</sup> question in the questionnaire asked whether any of the teacher's comments were positive and whether they could give an example. 94% of the answers was affirmative and the following were given as examples for positive comments: 44% indicated "Well-written essay or well-organized essay" as a positive comment. 38% reported "Good supporting points or content" as such. 31% said that the teacher found their grammar good. 19% stated that their vocabulary was deemed to be good. The results suggest that the teacher applied the guidelines of Bates et al.

(1993) on teacher commentary in her feedback to writing in that she was able to balance her negative and positive feedback.

The 9<sup>th</sup> question asked whether the students felt that their teacher's comments and corrections helped them to improve their composition skills and asked them to write their reasons. 100% of the students' answer to this question was affirmative. 70% of the students stated that they saw and understood their mistakes, corrected them and learnt not to repeat them. 50% said that they understood the use of new words and collocations. Another 50% indicated that these comments and corrections helped them to improve their writing skills. 20% stated that they learnt different use of grammar. Thus, it can be concluded that the students perceived the teacher's feedback to be of use to the various skills of their writing ability.

The 10<sup>th</sup> question in the questionnaire asked the students whether they would prefer to learn writing through the process approach in their future writing classes and asked them to write their reasons depending on their answer to the question. 100% of the students' answer to this question was affirmative. As for the reasons, 50% of the students said that they clearly saw their mistakes, searched to find correct English, and learn how to correct them. 30% indicated that while rereading and rewriting, the correct revisions stuck in their mind better. 30% stated that the approach helped them to improve their composition skills.

The 11<sup>th</sup> question in the questionnaire asked the students' opinions about the effects of the "process approach to writing" on their composition writing skills. The following conclusions can be reached from the comments of the students in response to this question. 40% of the students said that they learnt to write more coherent essays with fewer mistakes. Another 40% stated that they learnt how to introduce and develop an essay and write in an organized and planned way. 20% indicated that

the approach affected their writing skill in a positive way. Another 20% said that their writing improved gradually. Therefore, from the responses given to the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> questions it can be said that the students gained an insight into the process approach to writing which in turn resulted in the students' becoming aware of their weaknesses and strengths as pre-intermediate student writers.

The 12th question in the questionnaire asked the students what they thought the advantages and the disadvantages of the "process approach to the teaching of writing" were. From the responses, these common advantages could be drawn: 50% of the students said that the method led them to search and correct their errors. In this way, they did not forget quickly what they learnt. Also, they added that they did not repeat the mistakes and learnt better this way. 40% stated that the method helped them learn how to introduce, develop, and conclude an essay in a short time and easily. 20% said that while revising, they paid attention to their supporting points and grammar. As for the disadvantages, for 50% of the students the greatest disadvantage was that the drafting process could take a long time and writing two or three drafts could be boring. 20% indicated that while drafting, they ended up using the same structures and this resulted in the same writing style. On the whole, for the majority of the students, the process approach to writing was effective on the improvement of their writing ability although they found the drafting process to be time consuming (See Appendix O in the Appendices for the results of the responses to questionnaires).

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggest that written teacher feedback which involves using “indirect coded correction” to indicate students’ language errors and “teacher commentary” to comment on students’ ideas and organization positively affect students’ between draft changes. In terms of grammatical accuracy, all students succeeded in acting on teacher error feedback and thereby revising the grammar of their first drafts accurately to a great extent. Specifically, they were able to interpret the teacher’s error codes correctly and make the required grammar, lexical, mechanical revisions between their drafts.

The students did not perform in revising their ideas and organization as well as they did in revising their language. Around 35% of the teacher’s comments were judged as having positive effects on the content of D2s where both small and substantive changes were made by the students. The teacher’s written feedback on language errors had more positive effect on the correction of grammatical errors than her written comments about ideas and organization did on the improvement of the content of the rewrites.

The results of the present study concerning the effects of both written teacher feedback on form and content seem to be consistent with some studies done on written teacher feedback on L2 student writing. The present study somewhat correlates with the findings of Ashwell (2000), Ferris, Chaney, Komura, Roberts, and McKee (2000), Ferris (1997) and Fathman and Whalley (1990) studies. In particular, the experimental studies (Ashwell, 2000; Ferris, 1997; Fathman & Whalley, 1990) have indicated that correcting errors for every student and every composition resulted

in the improvement of the quality of the text, and at the same time leading to a 44% improvement of content (Hinkel, 2004).

In Ashwell's (2000) study where improvement was defined as increases in formal accuracy and increases in content measured by analytic scales, the "simultaneous content and form feedback group" improved their accuracy and content just like the "content feedback before form" group and "form feedback before form" group did. Similarly, in this study, the teacher-researcher focused on both form and content at the same time in her written feedback and the results suggested gains in grammatical accuracy in all student texts and positive minimal and substantive changes in content in 35% of the cases.

The present study yields similar accuracy ratings with those of Ferris et al. (2000). Specifically, in Ferris et al.'s (2000) study, students could edit 80% of the errors marked by their teachers. In total, the teachers marked 5,707 errors. In the present study, the teacher-researcher marked 555 errors in 16 students' first drafts and the students were able to revise 77.7% of their grammatical errors correctly in their D2s.

In Ferris (1997), only teacher commentary was used to give feedback of any kind. Of 1467 comments on 110 pairs of first drafts and revisions written by 47 ESL students, 109 were about grammatical issues of student texts and in response to these grammar-related comments, students addressed 86% of them and 73% of them were edited correctly. The present study differs from Ferris (1997) in that teacher commentary was used to address content and organization but not grammar, lexicon, and mechanics. Instead, an indirect coded error feedback was used. Thus, a comparison between the two studies regarding the effect of teacher feedback on form would seem inappropriate. Ferris (1997) concluded, "Marginal requests for

information, requests (regardless of syntactic form) and summary comments on grammar appeared to lead to the most substantive revisions" (p.330). Conversely, in the present study, student revisions of content that were categorized as substantive and effective by the teacher-researcher were in the minority (in 4.8% of the cases). The main reasons for not being able to make major positive changes in content can be lack of enough practice in making content revisions as well as lack of knowledge about the components of writing. In the case of native speakers, "Writing ability is more closely linked to fluency in and familiarity with the conventions of expository discourse" (Kogen 1986, p. 25). L2 writers, however, are in the process of acquiring these conventions and so they often need more instruction about the language itself. Limited knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and content can inhibit their writing performance. Silva (1993) observes that learners' revisions are often superficial. They read over their revisions less, reflect less on them, and revise less. When they revise their texts, the revision is mainly focused on grammatical correction. Another factor that can account for students' ineffective content revisions is the transfer of L1 writing ability to L2. A skilled writer in L1 is likely to transfer these skills to L2 if he/she has reached a certain level of L2 proficiency. Accordingly, those who find it difficult to write in their L1 may not have the skills to help them in their L2 writing development.

In Fathman and Whalley's (1990) study, of the 72 intermediate ESL students, all students in the group receiving simultaneous content and form feedback improved their grammatical accuracy and 77% improved their content. In the same way, all students, in the present study, receiving the same kind of feedback improved their grammatical accuracy in their D2s. From another perspective, when the students' attempt to address teacher commentary in their revisions were computed

(i.e., if the sum of the revisions that were rated 0 and 1 -those that were not addressed by the students and those that were deleted, respectively- are subtracted from 100%), the result equalled 75.9%. Thus, students attempted to revise their content in 75.9% of the cases in the present study irrespective of the effect of the revisions on their texts as judged by the teacher-researcher.

In fact, the conclusions that follow from the findings above are validated by the results that the categorization of the error types yielded. The sum of surface and stylistic revisions which stood for grammatical and lexical corrections, respectively made up 68%. However, the total of content and organizational revisions was 31.7%.

As for the effect of the one-to-one writing conferences held following the D2 rewrites, all students' texts showed gains in accuracy, but language revisions constituted 55.5% of all sorts of revisions made. Significant effect of the conferences can be observed on the improvement of the students' texts grammatically, but the degree of influence subsides when it comes to content-related revisions. It can be said that conferences did not result in successful student revisions on content in this study.

The fact that the students were moderately successful in revising their content across drafts can be attributed to their inadequate composition writing ability in their L1. Their inadequate L1 experience in composing in Turkish Language classes at high school might have brought about weak revision skills in L2 writing skill. Specifically, the students have difficulty elaborating points in a body paragraph and relating them to the flow of ideas in an essay. Another reason might be their limited range of vocabulary in L2. Even if they know how to expand a point, their inability in choosing the right word according to context and usage is a hindrance to



successful revisions. In short, it is possible that limited knowledge of content and vocabulary constrain students' L2 writing ability.

Some parallelism in research design can be established between Patthey-Chavez and Ferris' (1997) study and the present study but not exactly in terms of the findings. Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) examined the effect of oral feedback on the subsequent drafts of an essay written by eight students, four of whom were ESL writers and four of whom were native English speakers. In addition, the students were divided into two as strong writers and weak writers. Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) conclude that "Although there were quantitative and qualitative differences in the conferences of stronger and weaker students, all 8 students did indeed revise their papers in ways that a) made them more acceptable academic discourse and b) reflected, to varying degrees and with differing levels of sophistication, the suggestions and directives of their teachers during the conferences" (p. 83).

In the present study, almost all of the students improved their grammatical accuracy on the basis of the writing conference, but this constitutes 55.5% of all the revisions as the results of the categorization of revision types show. Although content revisions rated as the highest in this categorization (37.7%), of all the content-related discourse held between the teacher and the students, 42.8% of this input resulted in positive revisions in student texts. Thus, not all negotiations or discussions held improved the student texts.

As for the effect of writing multiple drafts on the overall quality of the students' texts, according to analytical assessment, the drafting process made it possible for all students to improve their writing performance across their D1s to final drafts. (The mean scores of D1s is 68,31 and those of final drafts is 77,25.)

The findings of the present study about the improvement in the overall quality of student text confirm the findings of the study of Ferris (1997). In Ferris' (1997) study, where no specific definition of error was provided and no control group was included, one of the major findings was that "When changes (whether minimal or substantial) were made, they overwhelmingly tended to improve the students' papers" (p. 330).

As far as the 3<sup>rd</sup> research question is concerned, this study yielded the following final results:

1. Teacher feedback in a process-oriented pre-intermediate EFL writing class had a profound impact on students' opinions about writing. The teacher's comments and corrections on content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics between drafts of a writing topic benefited students' composition writing skills. Particularly, according to students' opinions about the teacher's feedback on their writing, it helped the students to become more aware of their mistakes, explore ways to correct them on their own at first and call for the teacher's help at last, and minimise the possibility of repeating the mistakes. Also, the students reported that their understanding of new words and collocations in context and different use of grammatical structures were enhanced.
2. The students thought that the teacher's comments and corrections focused more on content and vocabulary in the first drafts and her feedback focused more on content and mechanics in the final drafts.

The students were somewhat concerned about attending to their first drafts rather than their final drafts. Comments about content and organization ranked higher in the students' reflections of the type and amount of teacher

feedback they received in both the first and final drafts. Obviously, the students noted that they paid their utmost, but nearly an equal amount of attention to feedback on content and organization both in the first and final drafts.

3. A majority of students stated that they found the teacher's feedback comprehensible and the following were explored as ways of revising their writing: looking up in a dictionary, asking friends for help, using the Internet, asking the teacher, and checking a grammar book. Ferris (1995b) also cites "asking the teacher" as one kind of strategy for solving problems in understanding teacher comments along with others such as asking a tutor or peers for help, consulting a grammar book or dictionary.
4. An overwhelming majority of students stated that they received positive comments from the teacher about their writing by citing examples of encouraging and positive remarks.
5. Learning essay writing by means of process approach to writing was very welcome in the whole class and benefits of the approach certainly outweighed its disadvantages in this study. Particularly, the approach benefited the students in error recognition and correction, retrieval of new information by means of revision strategies, and improvement of composition writing skills.

Overall, the results suggest that the students are highly dependent on the teacher's feedback in L2 writing development. They do not question the feedback at all or enter into heated discussions with the teacher about the specifics of the feedback but just ask for further clarification about the unclear points of the feedback. There can be more teacher involvement and guidance at lower levels since students are not yet proficient enough in L2 and have basic composition skills.

The results of this present study seems to bear some resemblance to Ferris' (1995b) study where students reported that content and organization were of great importance to their instructors. In Ferris' study (1995b), the students stated that they received more and attended the most to feedback on grammar than any other sorts of feedback. In the present study, although the students perceived that they received more feedback on content and vocabulary in the first drafts and they thought they received more feedback on content and mechanics in the final drafts. They attended the most to feedback on content and organization in both drafts.

Particular findings of this study differ from those of Ferris' (1995b). Different from the finding of Ferris (1995b) where she reported students paying more attention to earlier drafts than final drafts, in the present study students (around 80% in the first drafts and 70% in the final drafts) seemed to pay nearly the same amount of attention to both first and final drafts by rereading them.

In certain aspects, between the present study and Ferris' (1995b) study some similarities are observed. Just like the students in Ferris' (1995b) study, the students in the present study stated they referred to various outside resources during the drafting process. In here, a lot more students (75%) reported understanding the teacher's feedback clearly compared to those (59%) in Ferris' (1995b) study. Also, many of the students in Ferris's (1995b) and a substantial majority of students in the present study said to have received positive comments from their teachers. Last of all, all the students (100%) in the present study and a sweeping majority of the students (93.5%) in Ferris' (1995b) study hold the opinion that the teacher's feedback is helpful in improving their composition writing skills.

## IMPLICATIONS

Considering that the improvement of student writing between drafts in the present study is due to the nature of teacher feedback, it may be appropriate to propose this kind of teacher feedback to be used to respond to pre-intermediate student writing in a process-oriented writing class. In the present study, two forms of teacher written feedback have been used: teacher commentary for content-based feedback and indirect-coded correction for form-based feedback. The two types seem to be complementary in that in cases when it is not possible to categorize the error by a certain type of correction code, this can be addressed through a comment. The teacher could number the parts on which he/she asks for revision and write down the corresponding comment at the end of blank space in the student's paper. Also, a comprehensive endnote can be written to summarize the general outlook of student writing. As for form-based feedback, error codes are effective in stimulating student response (e.g., Bates et al., 1993; Ferris, 1997) and in developing self-editing strategies (Hyland, 2003). The content of the checklist for error codes could reflect what has been covered in grammar in the program and the checklist can be extended in line with what would be covered or students' needs. It has been suggested by some researchers that focused grammar instruction on problematic writing errors should accompany writing feedback so that learners can accelerate their developmental stage (Ellis, 1998), however, formal instruction may work out if learners have reached a stage in their development to internalise the target structure. That is, there are psychological constraints governing whether teaching of specific grammar rules result in explicit knowledge (Pienemann, 1984). Specifically, one of the predictions of Pienemann's Teachability Hypothesis is that stages of developmental sequence cannot be skipped through formal instruction and instruction will benefit learners if it

is targeted on structures from the next stage of the learner's developmental sequence (Pienemann, 1998). Rod Ellis is one of the researchers providing support for this hypothesis with empirical studies. Ellis (1990) suggests that explicit knowledge contributes to L2 acquisition in two ways. First, knowledge about a grammatical structure makes the learner notice it in the input, and therefore acquire it as implicit knowledge. However, attaining implicit knowledge depends on whether the learner is ready to integrate the L2 feature into his/her interlanguage system. Second, explicit knowledge can be used to form utterances which will constitute the input for the language learning mechanisms. In this sense, explicit knowledge indirectly contributes to implicit knowledge of certain linguistic structures and act as a 'monitor' in communicative tasks, thereby accelerating the process of implicit knowledge (Ellis, 1999).

Ellis' model above has implications in the language classroom. First, formal instruction should be targeted at explicit knowledge rather than implicit knowledge. Second, formal instruction should ensure that learners know about a grammatical rule and use it to monitor their inaccurate output with it. In teaching, this requires the use of consciousness-raising tasks rather than practice. Instead of exposing learners to controlled production exercise followed by free practice, the teacher should expose them to problem-solving tasks where they analyze input to come up with explicit representations of the specific target structure (Ellis, 1999).

Another crucial decision that a writing teacher has to make is whether to employ selective or comprehensive error correction. Ferris (2002) suggests focusing on patterns of error i.e., selective correction especially in two-to-three page paper (under 800 words) because attempting to mark all the errors has the risk of tiring teachers and overwhelming students (p. 50). However, in a 250-word essay written at

the pre-intermediate level, the teacher would rather employ comprehensive error feedback since this would give the student the opportunity to practise the learnt grammar items in meaningful context.

Since the view of feedback on writing which does not differentiate between focus on form and focus on content on the same draft of a student writing seemed to produce positive effects (68% constituting revisions on form and 31.7% constituting revisions on content) in the present study, it may be possible to propose that teachers had better employ a feedback procedure where they give simultaneous feedback on form and content to a student draft. Hyland (2003) emphasizes the same point when he states, "Teachers may feel that they can only help learners to engage in the writing process by responding to their ideas, but, in fact, the separation of form and content is largely an artificial one, of dubious theoretical value and impossible to maintain in practice. We only successfully articulate our feelings through the selection of appropriate forms. Language is a resource for making meanings, not something we turn to when we have worked out what we are going to say, and the two cannot be realistically separated when responding to writing" (p.185).

As for the teacher's oral feedback, the pedagogical generalization that emerged from this study regarding one-to-one teacher-student conferences is that both the student and the teacher should come to the conference well-prepared. On the part of the student, he/she should read the draft carefully on which the teacher has given feedback before and identify the sections about which he/she would like to ask questions to the teacher, number them, and write his/her relevant question or comment on a separate piece of paper. On the part of the teacher, he/she should note down the points that he/she wants to discuss or clarify in advance. Prior to the conference, the teacher also has to prepare a timetable for the students where a

certain amount of time is allocated to each student at a specified hour. The teacher could hold the conference in L1 at lower levels, as has been the case in this study, to ensure better teacher-student negotiation and student self-expression.

Regarding the responsibility of the syllabus designers in this network, Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) assert that the stages that a writer goes through starting with pre-writing and ending with publishing of his/her written text are recursive and overlapping and this process should be used broadly to outline the sequence of any classroom activity. After syllabus designers work out the goals, materials, and writing tasks accordingly, academic calendars showing deadlines for drafts and assignments, peer feedback sessions, teacher-student conferences should be scheduled so that students can keep track of their progress themselves.

Finally, further investigation on teacher feedback between drafts has to be made to draw a more accurate and comprehensive picture of the effect of teacher response to student writing and the research questions of this study can be posed for student writings of other levels for this aim.

#### LIMITATIONS

This study was carried out on the three drafts of the same essay topic. Thus, it seems that the effects of the teacher's written response and one-to-one conference persisted during the drafting process which can be defined as a "period of short term". It cannot be argued whether there is evidence and room for long-term improvement. However, as Ferris (2002) points out there are some studies which show that error correction help students improve in the short run and she stresses that "long-term development is unlikely without observable short-term improvement" (p.8).



Assessing the effects of written feedback across D1s and D2s and oral feedback across D2s and final drafts of the same essay topic can be a limitation of this study in that the order effect of the two procedures have not been taken into consideration statistically. However, there is a rationale behind this practice: the class being a pre-intermediate one itself. Take for example a student from the group who made around forty grammar mistakes in his/her D1. He/she made accurate corrections of more than two thirds of them in his/her D2. At this stage of the writing process, further written teacher feedback (either in the form of indirect coded errors or direct feedback) would be of little use to this student. He/she needs, as Grabe & Kaplan (1996) well put it, "a more informal atmosphere in which to ask questions without embarrassment and is able to receive more immediate and more elaborate feedback than they would through exclusively written comments" (p. 391). With the private attention that the student gets in the one-to-one writing conference feedback, he/she would be more informed about the corrections to be done and feel more motivated to rewrite his /her final draft.

Finally, the fact that only one teacher who is the researcher herself carried out the feedback procedures of this study across three drafts of one writing topic can be a limitation of this study. Also, students' knowing that a study was being carried out on them can be an additional limitation. Both the teacher and the students might have performed better than normally they would do under normal circumstances. These limitations could be eliminated by further analyses of various instructors on the drafts of more than one writing topic would be more beneficial. Also, the limitation regarding the order of the effects of the two feedback types (written and oral) could be eliminated in a research design where a teacher would have two groups of students, the first of whom would produce drafts on the basis of one-to-one writing

conferences with the teacher and the second group would produce drafts on the basis of written teacher feedback throughout the drafting process of the same writing topic. Then, the effect of each feedback type can be assessed more accurately independent of the effect of any one type on the other.

Despite these limitations, the study contributes to the research on response to student writing in L2 since there are very few studies carried out on pre-intermediate EFL students. The subjects of the studies in the literature on this research topic are by and large ESL or EFL students at college level.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### ERROR CHECKLIST

<i>Error code</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Example</i>
1. vt	incorrect verb tense	In the last weeks, you <u>did not have</u> much fun.
2. vf	verb incorrectly formed	I am not <u>go</u> on a holiday this summer.
3. modal	incorrect use or formation of a modal	I <u>can</u> exercise three times a week when I was younger.
4. cond	incorrect use or formation of a conditional sentence	If she <u>married</u> that rich man, she would not be living in a pigsty now.
5. ss	incorrect sentence structure	<u>We want that you come.</u>
6. wo	incorrect or awkward word order	I have not seen <u>yet</u> London.
7. conn	incorrect or missing connector	I did not listen to my <u>doctor</u> . <u>I</u> got worse.
8. pass	incorrect formation or use of passive voice	The Internet <u>use</u> worldwide.
9. sv	incorrect subject-verb agreement	She <u>like</u> jogging every Sunday morning.
10. art	incorrect or missing article	<u>A</u> honest individual is someone you can rely on.
11. sing/pl	problem with the singular or plural of a noun	A garden usually has <u>flower</u> in it.
12. wc	wrong word choice	I do not like to <u>borrow</u> my stuff to people.
13. wf	wrong word form	He was accused of <u>thief</u> .
14. nonidiom	nonidiomatic (not expressed this way in English)	<u>I feel myself relaxed</u> when I sunbath.
15. cap	capitalization _capital letter needed	In the past, <u>french</u> was the lingua franca.

16. coh	one idea does not lead to the next	The mining industry are able to bring two things to the country. First a large amount of revenue to the country and also jeopardy to the natural environment. Other mines all over the world are a good example of <u>this</u> . <u>Therefore</u> , we must have only local companies to mine.
17. cs	comma splice_ 2 independent clauses joined by a comma	The media has a major influence our <u>society</u> , <u>they</u> provide a model for how people should live.
18. frag	fragment_ incomplete sentence	Scientists believe that global warming could produce side effects. <u>For example, the changing of the earth's wind patterns.</u>
19. lc	lower case_ word(s) incorrectly capitalized	I like <u>Spring</u> the most.
20. punc	punctuation incorrect or missing	We also need <u>flour eggs and milk</u> for the cake.
21. pro agree/ pro ref	pronoun agreement or reference unclear or incorrect	An increase in global temperature would melt the polar ice caps. Thus, <u>it</u> would empty more water into the oceans. <u>They</u> also predict that this ocean rise could flood port cities and coastal land.
22. ro	run-on (two independent clauses joined with no punctuation)	<u>He has four children two of them go to high school.</u>
23. sp	spelling	I find the <u>pronounciation</u> of English difficult.
24. prep	incorrect or missing preposition	He leaves <u>from</u> his office early.
25. ^	something is missing	a verb, a preposition, a subject...

APPENDIX B

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER COMMENTARY ON CONTENT AND  
ORGANIZATION

1. Write personalized comments.

Respond to points in the student essay personally. (e.g., “I like your example.”, “Your argument is very confusing here”.)

2. Provide guidance or direction.

Give clear and direct feedback and instructions about the content and organization of the student essay by asking questions in the margins or end notes.

3. Make text-specific comments.

Give helpful feedback that is directly related to the student text at hand rather than generic comments that could be made for any student essay.

4. Make more general summary comments in the written commentary that will carry across principles throughout drafts. It could be in the form of an end note that provides a balance of text-specific and summary comment.

5. Balance positive and negative comments.

Write praises for students’ efforts together with constructive criticism.

## APPENDIX C

### REVISION PLANNING CONFERENCE WORKSHEET

Name of the student:

Date of the conference:

1. I thought the best part of my essay was...

2. I thought the weakest part of my essay was...

3. According to the teacher's comments, the strengths and problems in my second draft are:

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Problems: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Some questions I want to ask the teacher about my second draft are:  
(Write down which particular error codes or teacher comments in the second draft you have had problems with.)

5. Based on the conference, here is my plan for revising the essay.

(List specific steps you intend to take and specific paragraphs you intend to revise.)

## APPENDIX D

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEACHER FEEDBACK

1. How much of each comment do you read over again when your teacher returns it to you?

1<sup>st</sup> drafts

All of it \_\_\_\_\_ Most of it \_\_\_\_\_ Some of it \_\_\_\_\_ None of it \_\_\_\_\_

Final drafts

All of it \_\_\_\_\_ Most of it \_\_\_\_\_ Some of it \_\_\_\_\_ None of it \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many of the teacher's comments and corrections do you think about carefully?

1<sup>st</sup> draft

All of them \_\_\_\_\_ Most of them \_\_\_\_\_ Some of them \_\_\_\_\_ None of them \_\_\_\_\_

Final draft

All of them \_\_\_\_\_ Most of them \_\_\_\_\_ Some of them \_\_\_\_\_ None of them \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many of the comments and corrections involve:

1 <sup>st</sup> drafts	A lot	Some	A little	None
------------------------	-------	------	----------	------

Organization

\_\_\_\_\_

Content

\_\_\_\_\_

Grammar

\_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary

\_\_\_\_\_

Mechanics

\_\_\_\_\_

(e.g., punctuation, spelling)

\_\_\_\_\_

Final drafts

A lot	Some	A little	None
-------	------	----------	------

Organization

\_\_\_\_\_

Content

\_\_\_\_\_

Grammar

\_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary

\_\_\_\_\_

Mechanics

\_\_\_\_\_

(e.g., punctuation, spelling)

\_\_\_\_\_



4. If you pay attention to what your teacher wrote, how much attention do you pay to the comments and corrections involving:

1 <sup>st</sup> drafts	A lot	Some	A little	None	Not applicable
Organization	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Content	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Grammar	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vocabulary	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Final drafts	A lot	Some	A little	None	Not applicable
--------------	-------	------	----------	------	----------------

Organization	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Content	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Grammar	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vocabulary	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Describe what you do after you read your teacher's comments and corrections. (e.g., Do you look up the corrections in a grammar book? See a tutor? Rewrite your paper?)

1<sup>st</sup> drafts  
Final drafts

6. Are there ever any comments or corrections that you do not understand? If so, can you give any examples?

7. What do you do about those comments or corrections that you do not understand?

8. Are any of your teacher's comments positive? If so, can you give an example?

9. Do you feel that your teacher's comments and corrections help you to improve your composition skills? Why or why not?

10. Would you prefer to learn writing through the process approach in your future writing classes? If you prefer to do so, why? If you do not, why not? Can you write your reasons? (Note: The writing pedagogies of the process approach include pre-writing activities, planning and drafting, rewriting and revising, feedback and revision, editing.)

11. How do you think learning writing through the “process approach to writing” has affected your composition writing skills?

12. What do you think are the advantages and the disadvantages of the “process approach to the teaching of writing”? Please write your comments briefly.

## APPENDIX E

### RATING SCALE FOR REVISIONS

0 No change made by student in response to this comment

1 Deletion

2 Minimal attempt by student to address the comment, effect generally negative or negligible

3 Substantive change(s) made by student in response to comment, effect generally negative or negligible

4 Minimal attempt by student to address the comment, effect generally positive

5 Substantive change(s) made by student in response to comment, effect generally positive

## APPENDIX F

### CODING SCHEME FOR REVISIONS

- I. Surface changes (Mechanics) (i.e., corrections of errors)
  - A. Punctuation (*punc*)
  - B. Spelling (*sp*)
  - C. Capitalization (*cap, lc*)
  - D. Nouns (*sing/ plu, art, prep*)
  - E. Verb form corrections other than nouns (*sv, vf, vt, modal, pass, cond*)
  - F. Substitutions (*pro ref, pro agree*)
- II. Stylistic changes
  - A. Lexical changes (*wc*)
  - B. Phrasing
    - 1. Syntactic (meaning-preserving rewordings; including adding or deleting words: e.g. to avoid an awkward construction) (*wf, nonidiom*)
    - 2. Structural (meaning- preserving sentence restructuring) (*ro, cs, frag, ss, wo*)
- III. Organizational changes
  - A. Organization (within paragraphs; within essay) (*coh, conn*)
  - B. Paragraphing (moving whole paragraphs; creating new paragraphs from existing ones)
- IV. Content changes
  - A. Addition of new material (new subject matter or ideas\_ as distinct from simply adding new words to tighten a phrase or sentence, as in IIB) to develop subject or clarify points
  - B. Deleting material (deleting subject matter or ideas\_ as distinct from deleting words to make a sentence or phrase tighter)

## APPENDIX G

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING 11 COMPONENTS OF WRITING

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
<i>Content (40 points in total)</i>	
1. Specifics (10 points)	Vivid example, supporting details
2. Developed ideas (10 points)	Explanation or elaboration of the main idea; ideas relevant to the given topic
3. Overall clarity (10 points)	Presentation of ideas easy to understand, not confusing
4. Interest (10 points)	Writing capturing reader's attention with imaginative, insightful, unusual perspective
<i>Organization (40 points)</i>	
6. Introduction (10 points)	Opening focusing to what the writer will talk about, appealing to reader, preparing for what is coming
7. Thesis (10 points)	Main idea/point of view of writer clear, reasonable and representing the text (may be explicit or implicit thesis)
7. Unity and logical sequence (10 points)	Ideas throughout paper relating to main point Ideas following logically within paragraphs
8. Conclusion (10 points)	Synthesis of entire writing through summary, suggestions or predictions based on what has been said, strong finished preferred
<i>Style (20 points)</i>	
10. Vocabulary (10 points)	Sophisticated range, variety, appropriate register
11. Variety of form (10 points)	Variety of sentence beginnings, participle phrases, subordinate/dependent clauses and discourse markers

## APPENDIX H

### CASE SUMMARIES OF WRITTEN AND ORAL FEEDBACK ACROSS ALL STUDENTS

Case Summaries												
	surface changes in draft1	stylistic changes in draft1	organizational changes in draft1	content changes in draft1	surface changes in draft2	stylistic changes in draft2	organizational changes in draft2	content changes in draft2	surface changes in draft3	stylistic changes in draft3	organizational changes in draft3	content changes in draft3
1	21,00	15,00	4,00	7,00	9,00	8,00	1,00	6,00	6,00	3,00	,00	4,00
2	33,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	4,00	5,00	,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	,00	2,00
3	45,00	10,00	4,00	6,00	8,00	1,00	,00	4,00	1,00	,00	,00	,00
4	18,00	6,00	,00	1,00	7,00	,00	,00	1,00	,00	,00	,00	,00
5	22,00	9,00	1,00	8,00	6,00	1,00	1,00	8,00	,00	,00	1,00	1,00
6	35,00	10,00	3,00	6,00	3,00	5,00	,00	6,00	,00	2,00	,00	4,00
7	10,00	7,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	,00	,00	1,00	,00	,00	,00	,00
8	26,00	6,00	,00	,00	3,00	1,00	,00	,00	,00	,00	,00	,00
9	33,00	4,00	1,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	,00	1,00	,00	1,00
10	27,00	5,00	2,00	3,00	4,00	2,00	,00	2,00	1,00	,00	,00	,00
11	19,00	13,00	1,00	,00	2,00	4,00	,00	,00	,00	1,00	,00	,00
12	21,00	15,00	3,00	5,00	7,00	5,00	,00	5,00	1,00	3,00	,00	1,00
13	10,00	,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	,00	3,00	,00	2,00	,00	,00
14	14,00	8,00	,00	8,00	7,00	2,00	2,00	5,00	1,00	,00	2,00	1,00
15	31,00	8,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	,00	1,00	,00	3,00
16	31,00	12,00	,00	1,00	2,00	3,00	,00	1,00	,00	,00	,00	,00
Total N	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16

## APPENDIX I

r1: interrater 1

interrater reliability of r1 in d1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	,83	1	6,3	10,0	10,0
	,94	1	6,3	10,0	20,0
	,97	1	6,3	10,0	30,0
	,97	1	6,3	10,0	40,0
	,98	1	6,3	10,0	50,0
	,98	1	6,3	10,0	60,0
	1,00	4	25,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	10	62,5	100,0	
Missing	System	6	37,5		
Total		16	100,0		

## APPENDIX J

interrater reliability of r1 in d2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1,00	10	62,5	100,0	100,0
Missing	System	6	37,5		
Total		16	100,0		

## APPENDIX K

interrater reliability of r1 in d3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	,50	1	6,3	16,7	16,7
	,75	1	6,3	16,7	33,3
	1,00	4	25,0	66,7	100,0
	Total	6	37,5	100,0	
Missing	System	10	62,5		
Total		16	100,0		

## APPENDIX L

r2: interrater 2

interrater reliability of r2 in d1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	,83	1	6,3	10,0	10,0
	,88	1	6,3	10,0	20,0
	,88	1	6,3	10,0	30,0
	,97	1	6,3	10,0	40,0
	,98	1	6,3	10,0	50,0
	1,00	5	31,3	50,0	100,0
	Total	10	62,5	100,0	
Missing	System	6	37,5		
Total		16	100,0		

## APPENDIX M

interrater reliability of r2 in d2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	,83	2	12,5	20,0	20,0
	1,00	8	50,0	80,0	100,0
	Total	10	62,5	100,0	
Missing	System	6	37,5		
Total		16	100,0		

## APPENDIX N

interrater reliability of r2 in d3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	,00	1	6,3	14,3	14,3
	,33	1	6,3	14,3	28,6
	,50	1	6,3	14,3	42,9
	,75	1	6,3	14,3	57,1
	1,00	3	18,8	42,9	100,0
	Total	7	43,8	100,0	
Missing	System	9	56,3		
Total		16	100,0		



## APPENDIX O

### RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEACHER FEEDBACK

1. How much of each comment do you read over again when your teacher returns it to you?

1<sup>st</sup> drafts

All of it (56%)	Most of it (25%)	Some of it (19%)	None of it
-----------------	------------------	------------------	------------

Final drafts

All of it (50%)	Most of it (19%)	Some of it (31%)	None of it
-----------------	------------------	------------------	------------

2. How many of the teacher's comments and corrections do you think about carefully?

1<sup>st</sup> draft

All of them (44%)	Most of them (50%)	Some of them (6%)	None of them
-------------------	--------------------	-------------------	--------------

Final draft

All of them (37.5)	Most of them (50%)	Some of them (12.5%)	None of them
--------------------	--------------------	----------------------	--------------

3. How many of the comments and corrections involve:

1<sup>st</sup> drafts

	A lot	Some	A little	None
Organization	6%	31%	63%	0
Content	56%	44%	0	0
Grammar	18,7%	50%	31%	0
Vocabulary	37,5%	50%	12,5%	0
Mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling)	18,7%	43,7%	37,5%	0

Final drafts

	A lot	Some	A little	None
Organization	0	18,7%	62,5%	18,7%
Content	18,7%	56%	25%	0
Grammar	12,5%	12,5%	62,5%	12,5%
Vocabulary	18,7%	12,5%	56%	12,5%
Mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling)	18,7%	31%	50%	0

4. If you pay attention to what your teacher wrote, how much attention do you pay to the comments and corrections involving:

1<sup>st</sup> drafts

	A lot	Some	A little	None	Not applicable
Organization	12,5%	75%	12,5%	0	0
Content	50%	43,7%	6,2%	0	0
Vocabulary	50%	31%	19%	0	0
Mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling)	31,2%	25%	31,2%	12,5%	0

Final drafts	A lot	Some	A little	None	Not applicable
Organization	12,5%	68,7%	12,5%	6,25%	0
Content	31,2%	56,2%	12,5%	0	0
Grammar	50%	25%	18,7%	6,25%	0
Vocabulary	56%	19%	25%	0	0
Mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling)	25%	25%	37,5%	12,5%	

Number of responses and percentages to open-ended questions (5-12)

5. Describe what you do after you read your instructor's comments.

a. First drafts

- \_ Use a dictionary (13) (81%)
- \_ Use a grammar book (2) (13%)
- \_ Search the Internet (4) (25%)
- \_ Get help from friends (7) (44%)
- \_ Correct the mistakes myself while reading the draft (1) (6%)
- \_ Ask my teachers or some other teacher about the corrections (2) (13%)

b. Final drafts

- \_ Read the drafts, try to understand the teacher's corrections, and keep the mistakes in my mind (4) (25%)
- \_ Refer to a dictionary (4) (25%)
- \_ Get help from the teacher (1) (6%)
- \_ Get help from friends (1) (6%)
- \_ Refer to a grammar book (1) (6%)
- \_ Use the Internet (1) (6%)

6. Are there ever any comments or corrections that you do not understand? If so, can you give any examples?

- \_ No (12) (75%)
- \_ Yes (4) (25%)
- \_ Sometimes I have difficulty in collocations. (1) (6%)
- \_ Yes (I do not have any examples) (1) (6%)

7. What do you do about those comments or corrections that you do not understand?

- \_ Students leaving this question blank (12) (75%)
- \_ Ask my teacher (4) (25%)

8. Are any of your teacher's comments positive? If so, can you give an example?

Yes (15) (94%)

No (1) (6%)

- \_ Well-developed and organized essay (7) (44%)
- \_ Good supporting points or content (6) (38%)
- \_ Good grammar (5) (31%)
- \_ Good vocabulary (3) (19%)
- \_ Good conclusion (1) (6%)
- \_ Good introduction (1) (6%)

9. Do you feel that your teacher's comments and corrections help you to improve your composition skills? Why or why not?

- \_ Yes (16) (100%)
- \_ See and understand our mistakes, correct them and learn not to repeat them. (7) (70%)
- \_ Understand the use of new words and collocations. (5) (50%)
- \_ These comments and corrections help me to improve my writing skill. (5) (50%)
- \_ Learn different use of grammar (2) (20%)

10. Would you prefer to learn writing through the process approach in your future writing classes? If you prefer to do so, why? If you do not, why not? Can you write your reasons?

- \_ Yes (10) (100%)
- \_ Clearly see my mistakes, research to find correct English, and learn how to correct them. (5) (50%)
- \_ While rereading and rewriting, the correct revisions stick to my mind better. (3) (30%)
- \_ Helps me to improve my composition skills. (3) (30%)

11. How do you think learning through the "process approach writing" has affected your composition writing skills?

- \_ Learnt to write more coherent essays with fewer mistakes. (4) (40%)
- \_ Learnt how to introduce and develop an essay and write in an organized and planned way. (4) (40%)
- \_ Has affected in a positive way. (2) (20%)
- \_ My writing has improved gradually. (2) (20%)
- \_ Thought I would never write well. I gained self-confidence in writing through this method. (1) (10%)

12. What do you think are the advantages and the disadvantages of the "process approach to the teaching of writing"? Please write your comments briefly.

- \_ The method leads me to research and correct my errors. In this way, I do not forget what I learn. I do not repeat the mistakes. I learn better this way. (5) (50%)
- \_ The method has helped me to learn to introduce, develop, and conclude an essay in a short time and easily. (4) (40%)
- \_ While revising, I pay attention to my supporting points and grammar. (2) (20%)
- \_ The greatest disadvantage is that the drafting process can take a long time and writing two or three drafts can be boring. (5) (50%)
- \_ While drafting, I end up using the same structures and this results in the same writing style. (2) (20%)

Note: As an answer to some questions, some participants wrote more than one comment whereas some wrote no comments. This means that the number of responses in some questions did not add up to 16. Similarly, the percentages do not add up to 100%.

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