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# **The Effect of Oral and Written Teacher Feedback on Students' Revisions in a Process-Oriented EFL Writing Class**

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The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of oral and written teacher feedback on pre-intermediate student revisions in a process-oriented EFL writing class. Specifically, the teacher-researcher investigated how her oral and written feedback on the language and content would affect the way students rewrote their first draft (D1) on a given writing topic. This study also investigated how teacher feedback in a process-oriented EFL writing class affected students' opinions about writing.

## **Process Approach for Teaching L2 Writing**

In a process-oriented approach for teaching writing, emphasis is placed on writing as a process rather than as a finished final product. Students write multiple drafts and make substantive revisions on the basis of teacher feedback given between drafts rather than only on the final draft (Raimes, 1991). Grabe and Kaplan (1996) acknowledge the benefits of the process approach, and they state that it fosters: (a) self-discovery and the author's voice, (b) the need to approach writing as a goal-oriented and contextualized activity, (c) invention and pre-writing activities and writing multiple-drafts according to feedback between drafts, (d) various sources of feedback (the teacher, peers, and real audiences) and other teacher feedback delivery systems such as conferencing and audio-taped or e-mailed commentary, (e) content and personal expression as more crucial than final product and grammar usage, (f) the idea that writing is a recursive rather than a linear process, and (g) students' awareness of the notions of the writing process such as audience and plans.

Process writing pedagogies emerged as a result of resistance to the traditional product-focused approach which entailed emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). It follows from the recent research done on the multiple-draft, process-oriented writing classes in the last fifteen years that, as Ferris (2003) 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" (p. 28).

Since teacher feedback on 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. 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 the form and/or content of their writing. The results of this study suggested that a majority of the students improved the grammar and content of their revisions, suggesting that rewriting is beneficial. The study also showed that 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. 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.

As for feedback on grammar, a number of suggestions exist in the literature. Teachers can use checklists of grammar and 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). 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. She 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 taxonomy lies the distinction between those changes that affect the meaning of a text (global changes) and those that do not (surface or local changes). The writer makes surface changes to the text by correcting grammatical and lexical errors in order to convey the intended meaning. 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.

Many writing teachers believe that one-on-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, be it content, organization, or errors (Zamel, 1985). The technique is advantageous for a number of reasons. Teachers can save more time and energy than they do when they give written feedback, it has room for interaction and negotiation, and it is an effective means of communicating with students who have an auditory learning style (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998).

The main issues that controlled research on writing conferences have looked at are the evaluation of teachers and students after conferences and the nature of teacher-student

interaction during conferences. From examining 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-on-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).

The effects of one-on-one conferences on student revisions in writing has been examined by Goldstein and Conrad (1990) and Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997). Goldstein and Conrad investigated three ESL student texts, one-on-one conference transcripts, and revisions to probe into each student's participation pattern and the influence of these patterns on their revisions. The qualitative and quantitative differences found among ESL students from various cultural backgrounds revealed themselves in the nature of the conferences and their effects on student revision. Students differed in their 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) 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.

### **Purpose of the Study**

For the present study, the teacher-researcher aimed 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. The teacher-researcher also aimed to investigate the effect of process-based writing instruction on her pre-intermediate level EFL writing class. Also, she had the intention of finding out to what extent written teacher feedback used together with oral teacher feedback would benefit the revision strategies of a pre-intermediate learner of English across drafts.

Specifically, the research questions used for this study were:

- 1) Do 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) What are students' opinions on the type and amount of teacher feedback they received between the first and final drafts?

## Methodology

### Research Context

This study was carried out at an English preparatory program of the School of Foreign Languages at an English-medium state university 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 shown the required proficiency in English in the University's English proficiency test to continue their studies as freshmen.

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.

### Participants

There were originally 20 participants in this study from a beginning-level class of 20 students (9 female and 11 male aged between 18 and 24) within the School of Foreign Languages at the university. Drafts from only 16 students were included in this study due to one student dropping out of school and three students having low grade point averages.

### Implementation of the Process Writing Approach

The study was carried out during the last two weeks of a 14-week spring semester. The researcher, who was also the teacher of the class, adopted the process approach to the teaching of writing in her class of 20 pre-intermediate students. The teacher-researcher met her class four days a week and taught them for a total of 17 hours per week. Seven class hours per week were scheduled for the writing skill. During the first 12 weeks of the spring semester, the students produced seven essays. For each essay, students wrote two intermediate drafts and a final draft, and they received written feedback on both intermediate drafts of each essay. Oral feedback was given on only one essay draft during this time.

The last two weeks of the semester constituted the data collection period for this study. During these two weeks, the students were assigned a writing topic and they produced two intermediate drafts and a final draft, following the same process previously established in the semester. All students received both written feedback on the first and second drafts and oral feedback on the second draft before completing the final draft of this essay. The intermediate and final drafts of this essay constituted the data used for this study. The reason for using the essays from the last two weeks of the semester was to give the students more time and practice with the process-based writing approach.

### Data

The data for this study came from student drafts, teacher-student conferences, and a questionnaire.

*Student Drafts*

The feedback written on students' drafts during the last two weeks of the semester constituted the written feedback data for this study. Written feedback on students' first drafts (D1s) involved both grammar and content feedback. For providing grammar feedback, the teacher-researcher used an error checklist which included error codes focusing on grammatical accuracy, word choice, mechanics (punctuation and spelling), sentence level coherence, 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). In the D1s, the teacher-researcher identified the location of the error by underlining the error and writing the particular symbol for the error. In the second drafts (D2s), she made checkmarks for the errors that had been corrected accurately and underlined those that had been revised inaccurately by the student. The teacher-researcher blended content and grammar feedback in all drafts.

At the end of students' D1s and D2s, the teacher-researcher gave written commentary in the form of text-specific comments or questions and summary comments on grammar, organization, content, and vocabulary. The teacher commentary was based on the guidelines suggested by Bates, Lane, and Lange (1993).

*Teacher-Student Conferences*

After students used the written feedback on the D1 to write a D2, the teacher-researcher gave oral feedback to each student through one-on-one conferences. Each conference was approximately 15 minutes long and was held at appointed times outside class hours. The conference was tape recorded by the teacher-researcher and transcribed. Then the transcriptions were analyzed and were used to check the revisions that were made between the D2s and final drafts and based on oral teacher feedback.

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 the one-on-one conference, each student had to fill in a "Revision Planning Conference Sheet" taken from Reid. During the one-on-one conferences, each student started off by commenting on what they thought the best and the weakest parts of their essay were and then went on to ask the teacher-researcher questions about her feedback on the D2. After the student-initiated comments, the teacher-researcher focused on points she felt still needed attention. These points were either form-based mistakes that still existed in the D2 or content-related comments that required further revision by the student. The teacher-researcher did not write any notes on the students' D2s during the conferences, but the students were allowed to take notes as they wished during the teacher's oral feedback.

Thus, the feedback procedures on students' drafts can be summed up in the following way:

- (a) First Draft – The writing topic was set as take-home assignment. After students produced a D1, the teacher provided written feedback on it.
- (b) Second Draft – In order to produce the D2, students made revisions outside class based on written teacher feedback given to the D1. The teacher then provided written feedback on the D2 and oral feedback during one-on-one writing conferences.
- (c) Final draft – Students used the oral and written feedback from the D2 to produce a final draft of the essay.

### *Questionnaire*

To examine students' views on teacher feedback, the students were given a questionnaire (see Appendix B). The open-ended questions in the questionnaire aimed to find the students' views on the usefulness of teacher feedback on their writing performance and their views on the advantages and disadvantages of process approach to the teaching of writing.

## **Data Analysis**

The first research question asked whether written and oral teacher feedback have an impact on student revisions.

### **Written Feedback**

To determine the effects of written teacher feedback on student writing, D1s and D2s 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. In this study, the teacher-researcher counted clause-level and word-level errors. Not only incorrect words or clauses were counted, but also missing words were indicated in the drafts.

To confirm the teacher-researcher's error coding, two colleagues reviewed the marked errors in both drafts. The first interrater agreed with the teacher-researcher across 96% of the codes in the D1s and 100 % of the codes in the D2s. The second interrater agreed with the teacher-researcher 95% and 96% respectively.

To determine the types of revisions students made on the basis of the teacher's written feedback between D1s and D2s, a slightly adapted version of Yagelgsky's (1995) coding scheme, which was adapted from Faigley & Witte (1981), was used (see Appendix C for the coding scheme). Changes in the D2s were given a code from one of five categories: surface changes (grammar and mechanics), stylistic changes (lexical or phrasing),

organizational changes (organization or paragraphing) and content changes. The codes were then tabulated to determine for each D2 the number of changes within each category.

In order to determine how much the students reacted to the teacher commentary on content and organization, the teacher-researcher used an adapted version of Ferris' (1997) "Rating Scale for Revisions," which categorizes the revisions as no change, minimal change with positive/negative effects, or substantive change with positive/negative effects. The scale shows the degree to which a student addresses each teacher comment in the revision by making no attempt, a minimal attempt, or a substantive attempt.

### *Oral Feedback*

In order to analyze the teacher's oral feedback in response to the oral feedback part of the first research question, the teacher-researcher analysed the revisions between the D2s and final copies by identifying to what extent the revisions in the final draft were based on the feedback received during the one-on-one conference. Specifically, the teacher-researcher examined whether the student was able to make satisfactory changes in the final draft by going through the conference transcript in detail, noting where the student was helped to notice incorrect revisions based on the teacher's written feedback, and checking for corresponding revisions in the final draft.

Just as a rating was assigned for grammatical accuracy across D1s and D2s, so was it assigned for grammatical accuracy of the final drafts. 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 determine the kind of revisions students made between the 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. Within each category, the number of changes every student made between the D2 and final draft was counted.

To assess the effect of oral teacher feedback on the extent of student revisions on content between D2 and final draft, Ferris's (1997) "Rating Scale for Revisions" was again used to analyse the degree to which a student addressed each teacher comment in the revision. 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.

The interraters were informed about how to follow the same systematic process during the evaluation of student rewrites as the teacher-researcher did herself. They also used the same error checklist and guidelines for each draft. The interraters reviewed the teacher-researcher's revision codes, and when there was disagreement, they put crosses for each error or comment. In the oral feedback procedures of the final drafts, the first interrater and the second interrater agreed with the teacher-researcher 87% and 65 % respectively.

## Results and Discussion

### Effect of Written Teacher Feedback

In her written feedback across students' D1s and final essays, the teacher-researcher simultaneously focused on form (i.e., grammatical accuracy of student writing), content, and organization. The mean score of the grammatical accuracy for all students in D1 was .0923 and the mean for the final essay was .0193. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test run on D1 ratings and final draft ratings showed that students significantly improved their grammatical accuracy across their D1s and final essays ( $p < 0.05$ ) confirming the first research question which investigates the impact of oral and written teacher feedback on student revisions. The subtraction of mean of grammatical accuracy ratings of D1s from final essays 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 final essays. This suggests all students improved their grammatical accuracy significantly across their rewrites. The students made a significantly fewer number of grammatical, lexical, and mechanical mistakes in their final essays than they did in their D1s as they revised their texts on the basis of the grammar error codes.

Some examples of how students revised their grammar across their rewrites are as follows:

Example 1:

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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: "*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*

PREP

PUNC

PRO REF

VT

*other hand, beside these advantages of course they experienced some unpleasant situations and feelings."*

Revised version: "*On the other hand, besides these advantages, of course, students*



*attending a university outside their hometowns experience some unpleasant situations and feelings.”*

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 final essays. Thirty percent of these comments requested only minimal content revisions, and students were generally successful in making these changes. The teacher found these revisions sufficient in terms of expansion of the topic. In contrast, 24.1% of the comments required the students to produce substantial content revisions. However, the students were less successful in revising content which required major revisions, and the teacher found these revisions generally insufficient.

The following are some examples of student revisions made based on teacher comments that requested only minimal content revisions:

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: The infinitive of purpose does not fit in the main clause in terms of meaning. Please check the thesis statement again.

Revised version: “Students who attend a university outside their hometowns have some advantages and disadvantages.”

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: ...to study where?

Revised version: “To sum up, going to other towns to study university or high school has both advantages and disadvantages.”

The teacher-researcher found these revisions positive and gave a rating of 4 which meant “minimal attempt has been made by student to address the comment, effect generally positive”.

The data showed that students made a total of 179 revisions (surface, stylistic, organizational, and content) as a result of the teacher’s written feedback. Table 1 shows the type of revisions made on the basis of written teacher feedback. Surface changes accounted for 41.8% of the total and included errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, nouns, verbs, and reference words. This indicated that the students were more likely to attend to correcting the grammar mistakes and vocabulary. However, the vocabulary revisions made by the students required further work on the side of the teacher

Table 1

*Type of Revisions Resulting from Written Teacher Feedback*

Type of revisions	Frequency	Percentages
Surface changes	75	41.8%
Stylistic changes	47	26.2%
Organizational changes	06	03.3%
Content changes	51	28.4%

since the students could not make the appropriate word choice required by the context. They could easily handle grammatical revisions due to the formal instruction offered in the class.

**The Effect of Oral Teacher Feedback**

All students in the present study produced the final draft of a paper after having received oral feedback in one-on-one writing conferences they held with their teacher. This means, the revisions of D2s were based on oral teacher feedback. The same calculations which were done to assess the effect of written teacher feedback were also used to assess the effect of oral teacher 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.

The mean for the 16 students in D2 was .0193 and the mean for them in D3 was .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 ( $p < .05$ ). The subtraction of mean grammatical accuracy ratings of final drafts from those of D2s produced positive results in each and every student ( $p < .05$ ), 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 aspects of their D2s seriously and made the necessary corrections resulting in a fewer number of grammar, lexical, and mechanical errors in their final drafts.

In total, during the one-on-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.

As a result of the writing conference, the students made a total of 45 revisions. Table 2 shows the types of revisions made by the students as a result of oral teacher feedback. Of all these changes, content changes accounted for the highest at 37.7%. The one-on-one writing conferences held right after the writing-up of the D2 seemed to be more effective on students' content and lexical revisions than it did on their grammar and organizational revisions.

### Students' Opinions on the Writing Process Approach

The first two questions in the questionnaire asked whether the students felt that their teacher's comments and corrections help them to improve their composition skills and asked them to write the reasons. The students felt that their teacher's feedback helped them improve their composition skills, and the majority stated that they noticed their mistakes, corrected them, and learnt not to repeat them. The comments also helped them to understand the use of new words and collocations.

The third question in the questionnaire asked the students' opinions about the effects of the process approach on their writing skills. Forty percent 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. Twenty percent indicated that the approach affected their writing skill in a positive way. Therefore, the students gained insight into the writing process approach which in turn resulted in the students' becoming aware of their weaknesses and strengths as pre-intermediate student writers. For the majority of the students, the process approach was effective for improving their writing ability although they found the drafting process to be time-consuming.

Table 2

### *Type of Revisions Resulting from Oral Teacher Feedback*

Type of revisions	Frequency	Percentages
Surface changes	11	24.4%
Stylistic changes	14	31.1%
Organizational changes	03	06.6%
Content changes	17	37.7%

## Conclusion

The results of this study suggest that written teacher feedback positively affects students' grammatical revisions but has a limited effect on content revisions. In terms of grammatical accuracy, all students succeeded in acting on teacher error feedback and thereby accurately revising the grammar of their first drafts to a great extent. Specifically, they were able to interpret the teacher's error codes correctly and make the required grammar, lexical, and mechanical revisions between their drafts. In contrast, the students did not perform in revising their ideas and organization as well as they did in revising their language. The teacher's written feedback on language errors had a 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. Only 35% of the teacher's comments were judged as having a positive effect on the content of the D2s.

These two results confirmed Silva's (1993) observation that learners' revisions are often superficial. Learners 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. Furthermore, these results parallel Fathman and Whalley's (1990) study in which 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 improved their grammatical accuracy in their D2s but showed less dramatic improvement with their content.

Ferris (1997) states that "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 (only 4.8% of the cases). One possible reason for not being able to make major positive changes in content could have been students' lack of practice in making content revisions as well as limited knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and content, which can inhibit students' writing performance.

Another factor that could account for students' ineffective content revisions is the transfer of L1 writing ability to the L2. A skilled L1 writer is likely to transfer these skills to L2 writing if the writer 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. The fact that the students were fairly unsuccessful in revising their content across drafts could be attributed to their inadequate composition writing ability in their L1. Inadequate experience with composing in Turkish (L1) language classes at high school might have brought about weak revision skills in their L2 writing. In general, students have difficulty elaborating points in a body paragraph and relating them to the flow of ideas in an essay.

A third reason for students' ineffective content revisions might be their limited range of L2 vocabulary. Even if they know how to expand a point, their inability to choose 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 constrained the students' L2 writing.

As for the effect of the one-on-one writing conferences held following the D2 rewrites, all students' texts showed gains in accuracy with language revisions constituting 55.5% of all revisions made. The conferences had a significant effect on the grammatical improvement of the students' texts but only a marginal effect on content-related revisions. It can be said that the conferences in this study did not result in successful student revisions on content.

### **Implications for Language Teachers**

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 were used: teacher commentary for content-based feedback and form-based feedback. The two types seem to be complementary. At points where error codes are not informative enough, these can be addressed through a comment. Teachers could do this by numbering the parts that need revision and writing down the corresponding comment at the end of blank space in the student's paper.

As for form-based feedback, error codes are effective in stimulating student response (e.g., Ferris, 1997) and in developing self-editing strategies (Hyland, 2003). The checklist for error codes could reflect what has been covered in grammar in the program. 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 development (Ellis, 1998).

As for the teacher's oral feedback, the pedagogical generalization that emerged from this study regarding one-on-one teacher-student conferences is that both the student and the teacher should come to the conference well-prepared. Before the conference, the student should read the draft carefully on which the teacher has given feedback and identify the sections about which the student would like to ask questions to the teacher, number them, and write a relevant question or comment on a separate piece of paper. The teacher should note down the points that the teacher wants to discuss or clarify in advance. At lower proficiency levels, the teacher could hold the conference in the L1, as was 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 the 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, and 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.

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## Appendix A

### Error Checklist

	<b>Error code</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Example</b>
1.	vt	incorrect verb tense	In the last weeks, you <u>did not have</u> much fun.
2.	vt	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 see <u>yet</u> London.
7.	conn	incorrect or missing connector	I did not listen to my <u>doctor</u> . I 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.



	Error code	Explanation	Example
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 area 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> , they 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.	pr agree/ pro ref	pronoun agreement or reference unclear or incorrect	An increase in global temperature would melt the polar ice caps. Thus, it 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>pronunciation</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

### Questionnaire on Teacher Feedback

1. Do you feel that your teacher's comments and corrections help you to improve your composition skills? Why or why not?
2. 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.)
3. How do you think learning writing through the "process approach to writing" had affected your composition writing skills?
4. 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 C

### Coding Scheme for Revisions

1. 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)
2. Stylistic changes
  - a. Lexical changes (wc)
  - b. Phrasing
    - i. Syntactic (meaning-preserving rewordings; including adding or deleting words: e.g. to avoid an awkward construction) (wf, nonidiom)
    - ii. Structural (meaning- preserving sentence restructuring) (ro, cs, frag, ss, wo)
3. Organizational changes
  - a. Organization (within paragraphs; within essay) (coh, conn)
4. 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).



## Call for Tips

Have you or your colleagues found  
creative ways to . . .

Cope with large multi-level classes

Adapt high tech ideas for your low tech classroom

Use prescribed teaching materials

Scaffold for success when materials are difficult  
and expectations are high

Minimize the negative backwash of high stakes testing

Bridge the divide between home and school

Achieve big results with small changes

Or

Do you have an activity that works every time?

If you can answer ‘yes’ to any of the above, please consider sharing your experience, or offer to collaborate with your colleague to share his or her experience as a ‘Tip for Teachers’ in the next issue of the *TESL Reporter*.

For details about how and where to submit your ‘Teaching Tip’, please see ‘Notes to Contributors’ inside the back cover of this volume of the *TESL Reporter*. Note that any submissions that cannot be accommodated in April 2010 will be considered for future issues.