College of Social Sciences and International Studies

Graduate School of Education

Peer Review, Collaborative Revision, and Genre in L2 Writing

Submitted by

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to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

In March 2013

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ABSTRACT

During the last few decades peer collaboration has been commonly practised in Second Language (L2) writing classrooms. Despite the conceptual shift towards process, student-centred orientation to writing pedagogy, there are still many L2 composition courses around the world which consider writing as a finished product and assign a central role to writing instructors. This qualitative case study research is one of the first attempts which have been set out to probe the interactional dynamics, revision behaviours, writing performance, and perceptions of Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students engaged in peer review and collaborative revision activities in two genres, process and argumentation, in light of sociocultural perspective of learning. The participants were 5 lower intermediate to intermediate English translation student dyads enrolled in a semester long essay writing course. Drawing on the data collected from audio-recordings, observations, written texts, and interviews, the study investigated how this group of L2 learners approached these two distinct tasks, how they reacted to the feedback they received either from their partners or teacher, how they used the comments to improve their writing performance, and how they viewed each of the tasks they were involved in. Analysis of audio-recorded data revealed that students stayed on task for most of the allocated time and employed three distinct dyadic negotiations; evaluative, social, and procedural with both partners being capable of pooling ideas and providing each other scaffolded help regardless of their level of L2 writing proficiency. However, the majority of conversations and scaffolding concentrated on surface level features of compositions. Further, examination of written texts produced by students during writing cycles demonstrated that they incorporated higher number of teacher’s comments into their subsequent drafts than their peers’ feedback and collaborative revision contributed to greater degree of improvement in the quality of the essays they developed compared to peer reviewing. Retrospective interviews also indicated that collaborative tasks were generally perceived as useful, yet the participants expressed scepticism about the validity of peer comments and did not feel competent enough to address their partners’ papers. Nevertheless, they showed more favourable reactions towards collaborative revision activity than peer reviewing. The researcher concludes that collaborative revision can be used as an interim activity for the move from the traditional, product-based, teacher fronted L2 writing pedagogy to a more theoretically sound, process-based, student fronted approach to writing instruction in EFL contexts.
This thesis is dedicated to

My late father Ramezan and my beloved mother Fatemeh

For their endless and unconditional love, support, and devotion throughout my life
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As is the case in most human productions, many people have contributed their time, support, and inspiration to the process of completing this thesis. My gratitude to these people is far beyond my ability to express. In particular, I offer my genuine appreciations, respect, and admirations to my supervisors Dr Li Li and Professor Debra Myhill for their insights, guidance, encouragement, and step-by-step scaffolding and support throughout every stage of my PhD. This thesis would have not been possible without their contributions, expertise, and professionalism.

I also express my sincerest form of heartfelt indebtedness and thanks to Professor Donald Bligh and his wonderful wife Barbara Bligh for making my life easier both academically and personally. They gave me courage to withstand times of hardship during my life here in the UK. I will always be grateful to these two angels for their generous spirit, love, support, and encouragement.

Special thanks are due to L2 essay writing students who participated in this study. There would have been no study without them. Indeed, their contribution to this study led to the results that can improve composition pedagogy in L2 writing classrooms.

Professor Herman Bell deserves my deepest gratitude for his exceptional support and encouragement in various ways during the course of my PhD studies. He helped me to pursue a dream I have had from my childhood.

Finally, I am extremely thankful to my friends and fellow students for sharing their ideas and providing emotional supports.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Peer collaboration - collaborative writing, peer review, collaborative revision - during which students work together to develop a piece of paper, evaluate the writing performance of their classmates, or revise their written texts jointly has been widely adopted in first language (L1) and second language (L2) composition classrooms in recent decades (Hyland & Hyland, 2006b) and is grounded in the social constructionist theory of learning and the process-based approach to writing (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hu, 2005; Kamimura, 2006; Min, 2005, 2006; Shehadeh, 2011; Yong, 2010). Sociocultural learning framework holds that writing and learning are social processes (DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hyland, 2003b; Santos, 1992; Yong; 2010) and peers can mutually scaffold each other to improve their writing skills through interaction, negotiation, and collaboration (Anton & DiCamilla, 1998; de Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Ohta, 1995; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2002, 2005; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996; 1998; Yong, 2010). Process composition pedagogy perceives writing as a process and emphasises on meaningful writing for a real purpose and audience, feedback, and revision (Raimes, 1985, 1991; Susser, 1994; Zamel, 1982, 1984, 1987). Hence, it provides an excellent opportunity for performing collaborative tasks in writing courses (Ferris, 2003; Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hu, 2005; Kamimura, 2006; Tsui & Ng, 2000). The aim of this thesis, as will be elaborated below, is to explore the extent to which English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners can support each other to improve their writing performance by engaging in peer review and collaborative revision activities in a process-genre based L2 essay writing course.

In what follows, first I briefly introduce the main trends in L2 writing pedagogy. Then, I highlight the existing problems in Iranian composition classes which prompted the conduct of the current study. Next, I will discuss the rationale for performing the research, identify the gaps in the current literature, and underline the significance of the study. This will be followed by discussing the objectives of the research and statement of the research questions. The chapter will end with an overview of the structure of the research project. It should be noted that as the study is locally bounded its findings
cannot be generalised, but its implications may be of interest to teachers in other EFL writing programmes set up to help students develop writing proficiency.

1.2 Background

Writing - whether as first or foreign language - is a complex and recursive process requiring a variety of micro-skills (Zamel, 1987). Undoubtedly, it is more complicated and challenging to write in a foreign language. As a dynamic task, it requires not only a good command of surface-level features including vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics, but also a proper level of competence in several other higher-level skills such as formulating, planning, and organising ideas, as well as drafting, refining and revising them in a coherent and cohesive manner (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Further, writing is the most important skill in learning English and can greatly influence the academic performance and career development of L2 learners (Fazel & Ahmadi, 2011; Ghoorchaei, et al., 2010).

In the history of language teaching, different approaches to writing instruction have been developed among which the product, the process, and the genre approach are the most prevalent (Badger & White, 2000). The product pedagogy is characterised by single-draft, once-off correction and emphasises on linguistically accurate written products (Zamel, 1982, 1983). This writing model reinforces a narrow and limited perception of writing function (Zamel, 1987) and considers writing as demonstration of linguistic skill rather than an opportunity for the discovery and expression of ideas (Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Susser, 1994). Hence, revising is limited mostly focusing on editing linguistic flaws rather than addressing content problems (Reid, 1984), students are passive mainly involved in controlled and guided writing (Badger & White, 2000), the focus is mainly on text, and issues like reader, purpose, feedback, interaction, and collaboration receive no attention.

The process approach, on the other hand, focuses on the process of writing which leads the writer to generate ideas and organise them through a non-linear and generative process of planning, drafting, and revising (Raimes, 1990; Seow, 2002; Zamel, 1983). Hence, texts are no longer treated as finished products and learners are encouraged to develop several drafts of their papers. More precisely, this model views revision and feedback as integral components of writing instruction (Zamel, 1982) as they provide the students opportunities to understand their readers’ expectations and allow them to address those expectations in the subsequent revisions of their written works (Reid,

Finally, genre-based pedagogues assert that writing is not an abstract, neutral, value-free activity whose good command is associated with mastery of universal processes (Hyland, 2003b; Raimes, 1991), but “a set of social or cultural practices” and “its participants as a community of practice” (Reder, 1994, cited in Baradaran & Sarfarazi, 2012, p. 28). In other words, writing is a purposeful, socially situated response to particular contexts and communities (Hyland, 2002) and it “varies with the social context in which it is produced” (Badger & White, 2000, p. 155). More precisely, the genre model is supported by sociocultural theory of learning which perceives writing as a social activity through which the writer tries to approximate what is expected by the discourse community (Silva, 1990). Within this contextual framework, the teacher and/or peer reviewer - audience - collaboratively negotiate with the student writer and actively support him/her by providing feedback to construct meaning through multiple drafts (Johns, et al., 2006). Badger and White (2000) call this eclectic method “process genre approach” (p. 157) which considers writing as “a dynamic set of social, linguistic and cognitive processes that are culturally motivated” (Kern, 2000, cited in Baradaran & Sarfarazi, 2012, p. 29) by integrating four elements of form, the writer, content, and the reader (Raimes, 1991). Such an approach recognises L2 students’ need of linguistic knowledge about the texts, admits the importance of the skills involved in writing, and acknowledges that writing is a social practice with special attention being paid to purpose and audience.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

By many accounts, writing is one of the most neglected skills in Iranian schools (Fahim & Pishghadam, 2009; Mahnam & Nejadansari, 2012; Rahimi, 2009). Every year large numbers of adolescents graduate from high school without having adequate command of writing skill and being aware of its importance in their future academic and social life even in Persian as their native language (Ahmadi Darani, 2012; Hosseini, 2007; Maleki & Zangani, 2007). Many of these students enter university to continue their education at tertiary level among whom there are groups of candidates who are admitted by education and language schools as EFL learners. As part of their training, these students
are required to attend some skills development modules including paragraph and essay writing courses. Theoretically, these modules are intended to provide students with essential skills for producing different types of papers through the medium of English. However, due to a number of theoretical as well as practical constraints including the teacher-centred pedagogy (Birjandi & Malmir, 2009; Hosseini, 2007), exam dominant educational system (Dahmardeh, 2009; Fahim & Pishghadam, 2009; Sarani & Lotfi, 2010), product based writing approach (Ghorbani, 2009), inadequate training (Ahmadi Darani, 2012; Vaezi, 2008), and crowded classes (Khojasteh Nam, 2011; Vaezi, 2008), most of these courses fail to achieve the pre-determined goals set for them and students pass them without developing the expected skill (Baroudy, 2008; Birjandi & Malmir, 2009).

Typically, a ninety-minute class session which spans 15 weeks, is mainly dominated by the teacher and consists of whole class instruction with students interacting just with the teacher and not to each other (Hadad Narafshan & Yamini, 2011). Pair and group based activities are rarely implemented and students construct their texts individually in class or at home (Khojasteh Nam, 2011). Indeed, in almost all of the L2 writing classes teachers cover basic composing issues such as traditional essay structure, essay types, and provide some editing tips very briefly (Allami, 2006). Subsequently, students are assigned to compose one-draft papers as their out of class homework which will later receive teachers’ written summative feedback and comments (Ghoorchaei, et al., 2010). As teachers are the only sources of feedback, most of them face workload which negatively affects the quality of their annotations (Khojasteh Nam, 2011). Even worse, many of them lack adequate training and are not familiar with the recent trends in the field (Ibid., p. 242). Hence, the advice they provide is usually general, inconsistent, and incomprehensible to their students failing to improve the quality of their papers. Besides, they are overly concerned with linguistic problems of the texts they review and take a grammar teacher role paying less attention to content and organisation aspects of students’ papers (Allami, 2006; Birjandi & Malmir, 2009) and implicitly stress the priority of accuracy over fluency (Hadad Narafshan & Yamini, 2011). Finally, the summative evaluation approach towards students’ generated drafts which views writing as an end product does not require students to take a further step to revise their drafts and re-submit them. As a result, the teachers have no clear evaluation of the efficiency of their feedback on their students’ writing performance (Ghoorchaei, et al., 2010).
Considering the conceptual shift in the teaching of writing from product, teacher-directed pedagogy to process, student-centred instruction which facilitates peer collaboration, evaluation, feedback, and revision during writing process (Ferris, 2003; Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hu, 2005; Kamimura, 2006; Tsui & Ng, 2000), and bearing in mind that the current traditional L2 composition instruction model fails to yield satisfactory outcomes in Iranian context (Baroudy, 2008; Birjandi & Malmir, 2009), the need for a more appropriate approach seems necessary. Therefore, the present study strives to explore the feasibility of adopting alternative/complementary methods to the existing L2 writing pedagogy in L2 composition classes in Iran; that is, incorporation of peer evaluation and collaborative revision techniques into EFL essay writing courses drawing on sociocultural perspective to second language learning and one of its key principles; scaffolding, as well as multiple-draft, process-oriented approach to writing.

1.4 Rationale for Study

As is evident from the above, incorporation of alternative writing pedagogies/techniques such as process writing and collaborative tasks namely peer review and collaborative revision deserves special attention in Iranian EFL writing composition courses and can be a persuasive research agenda. Peer review, which occurs between at least two peers (Kollar & Fischer, 2010), is an activity used exclusively by student pairs as they exchange, review, and evaluate each other’s essays and provide their partners with written and oral feedback. The beneficial effects of using peer feedback have been widely discussed in L2 writing literature. More precisely, several L2 composition researchers have maintained that if it is used correctly, peer review has the potential to be a powerful learning tool for a variety of reasons. Overall, it is suggested that peer evaluation provides students with a real audience for their writing (Caulk, 1994; Hyland & Hyland, 2006), and enhances their sense of audience and makes them aware of their readers’ expectations (Jacobs et al., 1998; Keh, 1990; Liu & Sadler, 2003; Paulus, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000). Besides, it generates more positive attitudes towards writing (Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Min, 2005), reduces learners’ writing anxiety and increases their confidence (Lockhart & Ng, 1995), and contributes to their autonomy (Mendonca & Johnson 1994; Tsui & Ng, 2000). Further, reviewing peers’ texts fosters students’ critical and analytical awareness (Leki, 1990; Storch, 2005; Zhang, 1995), and facilitates their evaluative skills (Berg, 1999). Students are also exposed to alternative ideas and writing styles and learn how to work collaboratively with their peers.
Teachers also benefit from incorporating this technique into their composition classes as it reduces their workload saving them time to focus on other helpful tasks (Gielen et al., 2010; Keh, 1990). Finally, peer review activity provides opportunities for negotiation of meaning, collaborative learning, and co-construction of knowledge (Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996; Yong, 2010). More precisely, peer review helps students learn from each other by means of receiving and giving feedback (van Gennip et al., 2010) and improve their writing competence via mutual scaffolding (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Zhu, 2001). Therefore, it can be inferred that incorporation of this technique into Iranian EFL writing courses can have several theoretical and practical advantages. First, it helps Iranian learners not only to focus on text and form, but also pay special attention to the content of their papers they produce and understand whether they have been able to express their meaning properly. Besides, as they notice errors in their classmates’ papers, they realise that mistakes and errors are indispensable part of learning process and their self-confidence is enhanced. It also facilitates independent learning which is very valuable specially in Iranian setting which is characterised by crowded classes and busy teachers. Further, they practice being critical thinkers, readers, and evaluators since they do not feel they have to incorporate their teachers’ comments unreflectively and passively but they need to actively participate in the task not only by critically reviewing the texts they read, but also by challenging the feedback they receive from their partners. The activity also encourages more participatory forms of learning, makes Iranian learners familiar with peer collaboration mechanisms, and provides them with an opportunity to share ideas and knowledge, as well as to support each other in a stress free atmosphere without the fear of being assessed by the teachers as the only sources of knowledge.

On the other hand, despite the large number of studies focusing on peer response in English as a Second language (ESL) context (de Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Lundstorm & Baker, 2009; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Nelson & Murphy, 1992, 1993; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996, 1998; Zhu, 2001), only few parallel research has been conducted in EFL settings (Min, 2005, 2006; Kamimura, 2006; Saito & Fujita, 2004; Suzuki, 2008; Yang, et al., 2006). Due to the social, cultural, educational, and individual differences between L1, ESL, and EFL learners (Nelson & Murphy, 1992; Carson & Nelson, 1994, 1996; Zhang, 1995; Nelson & Carson, 1998) it is difficult to directly apply some of the results obtained in other settings to EFL contexts. More precisely, despite the persuasive
arguments mentioned above in favour of peer feedback incorporation in English composition classrooms, some studies carried out with ESL and EFL students have reported a number of problems associated with the use of peer review which have turned it into a counterproductive activity. It has been acknowledged that peer respondents tend to focus more on micro-structure problems than content and organisation (Leki, 1990; Liu & Sadler, 2003; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Nelson & Carson, 1998; Nelson & Murphy, 1992, 1993; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1998). Their lack of knowledge of the target language may limit their ability to detect errors and provide concrete and useful feedback. Hence, their comments may be vague, misleading, and invalid (Leki, 1990; Mendonca & Johnson 1994; Nelson & Murphy 1992, 1993; Tsui & Ng, 2000). L2 students’ cultural norms, their roles and expectations concerning peer review dynamics (Allaei & Connor, 1990; Carson & Nelson 1994, 1996; Nelson & Murphy, 1992, 1993) and their beliefs and feedback preferences (Hyde, 1993; Morra & Romano, 2008; Nelson & Carson, 1998; Roskams, 1999; Zhang, 1995) also reveal other sources of concerns regarding the helpfulness of peer evaluation in L2 composition classrooms. Finally, it is said that students doubt their classmates’ writing/evaluative skills and are reluctant to accept their advice (Paulus, 1999; Rollinson, 2005; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Yang et al, 2006) and ultimately ignore the comments when revising. Hence, it can be argued that the value and efficiency of peer evaluation in L2 writing is not established yet and further investigations are required to address these controversies especially in EFL contexts like Iran.

Further, L2 literature sheds little light on collaborative revision mechanisms. Thus far, joint revision activity during which students work together to revise their compositions using the responses and comments provided by their instructor has rarely been investigated empirically whether in ESL or EFL settings and this area has been left unattended. In other words, as can be seen from the relevant literature reviewed later, most existing research on alternative/complementary feedback forms in L2 writing to date has focused on peer evaluation rather than collaborative revision tasks (de Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Kamimura, 2006; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Lundstorm & Baker, 2009; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Min, 2005, 2006; Nelson & Murphy, 1992, 1993; Saito & Fujita, 2004; Suzuki, 2008; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996, 1998; Yang, et al., 2006; Zhu, 2001). There is also no research comparing peer review and collaborative revision activities features in an L2 writing context.
Besides, with only a few exceptions (McGroarty & Zhu, 1997, Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996, 1998) there have rarely been any comprehensive attempts (1) to explore L2 students’ negotiation dynamics across two distinct genres and activities (process vs. argumentation and peer review vs. collaborative revision), (2) to examine the revision focus of the participants, (3) to determine the extent of feedback incorporation in the subsequent drafts, (4) to elicit student reflections and attitudes about the activities they performed, and (5) to compare the efficiency of peer evaluation and collaborative revision activities in terms of the participants’ level of engagement in the tasks, their revision behaviours, and their writing performance in one single research. All of the above mentioned gaps in the existing research justifies implementation of a comprehensive study which aims to investigate in more detail EFL learners’ (a) behaviours during peer review and collaborative revision activities, (b) reactions to their peers’instructor’s comments as two different sources of feedback, (c) writing performance after being engaged in these activities, and (d) reflections on the experience of executing these two distinctive joint tasks in a process-based approach to writing.

The findings of such research can be illuminating in terms of both theoretical and pedagogical considerations. From a theoretical perspective, it can demonstrate whether peer review and collaborative revision activities can provide opportunities for meaningful communication and mutual scaffolding that contributes to creation of better quality written texts in L2 writing courses. From a pedagogical perspective, the findings of the research might provide empirical-based evidence on the effectiveness of peer review and collaborative revision tasks in FL contexts. In other words, such a study can have a number of potential significances. It is presumed that by incorporation of more student-centred pedagogy into L2 writing modules, the courses would be more productive. In this sense, class sessions consist of whole class, individual, pair and group based activities in which students interact with not only the teacher but also each other. Much of the work is based on discussion and exploration and students will be required to participate cooperatively in class activities which include reviewing and evaluating each other’s papers and giving feedback to each other as well as jointly revising their texts using their instructor’s comments. Besides, writing is treated as a recursive process and students are reminded that composing is not just drafting but covers some other essential stages such as generating ideas, planning and organisation, drafting, revising, and editing. Similarly, equal emphasis is placed on both local and
global aspects of writing. That is, not only surface level issues such as language and mechanics, but also content and organisation of the texts receive special attention.

Being mindful about advantages of adopting such an appealing method in L2 writing courses, this study can add another dimension to the literature by understanding factors and experiences that may be different to other contexts. In short, the findings of this project can be used to shed light into the effectiveness of incorporating collaborative activities in Iranian context and help identify the pitfalls that the programme may encounter during its implementation. Put differently, the ultimate aim of the current research is to extend research from SL to FL contexts on the one hand, and to investigate the relative merits of peer review and collaborative revision activities in an EFL context on the other.

1.5 Research Objectives

In Iran, the issues of collaborative learning and process-based instruction to L2 writing are relatively unexplored areas. So far, very few studies have investigated the nature of peer response and collaborative revision, their efficiency, and the learners’ views concerning their usefulness in that special EFL context. Despite the increasing emphasis on incorporation of alternative methods in L2 writing classes, teachers still continue practicing their traditional one-draft, one-reader, product-oriented approach to writing (Ghorbani, 2009). Indeed, they are either not familiar with recent developments in L2 writing pedagogy or are less than convinced about the usefulness of implementation of student-dependent activities like peer reviewing and collaborative revision in their particular context and claim such activities are impractical. In other words, the current popularity of collaborative activities in L2 writing contexts and its absence in Iranian EFL writing curriculum are the primary motives of undertaking this class-based project. Hence, the present study is one of the first attempts to probe the nature and effectiveness of collaborative learning in Iranian EFL writing classrooms. Indeed the focus of the current study is:

- To understand EFL students’ interactional dynamics during peer review and collaborative revision activities in general and to deepen knowledge of scaffolding strategies they adopt as they cooperate together in particular
- To identify the extent of peer/teacher suggestions incorporation into students’ revised drafts
• To examine the relative impact of peer/teacher feedback on participants’ writing quality outcomes

• To describe students’ accounts of their experience of involving in peer evaluation and collaborative revision activities in a multiple-draft composing approach.

1.6 Research Questions
Motivated by the scant research performed in the areas of oral peer feedback and collaborative revision activities in Iran, the personal experiences gained in the EFL writing classrooms, and inspired by sociocultural theory of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and process oriented approach to L2 writing, this study is designed to address the following four research questions:

RQ1. What is the nature of EFL learners’ interactions during peer review activity?

RQ2. What is the nature of EFL learners’ interactions during collaborative revision activity?

RQ3. To what extent does each of these two distinct tasks facilitate mutual scaffolding between EFL students?

RQ4. To what extent do EFL students incorporate their peers’/ tutor’s feedback into their revisions in a multiple-draft, process approach to L2 writing?

RQ5. To what extent do peer review and collaborative revision activities improve the writing quality of EFL students?

RQ6. What are EFL students’ perceptions of performing peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple-drafting activities?

1.7 Overview of the Thesis
To answer the questions posed above and meet the objectives of this research I present this thesis in ten chapters including the introduction. In the following chapter, I will provide thorough background information about the context of the study including some facts and statistics about the country in which the investigation was performed, its educational system, the status of EFL and L2 writing instruction, and characteristics of the research site. In chapter 3, I provide a review of the literature that is relevant to the
present study and introduce the conceptual framework that guided the research process. This is followed by chapter 4 in which I outline the philosophical and methodological issues that have influenced the research approach adopted to meet the objectives of this study. This chapter also provides a description of the research project design, an explanation of data collection and analysis procedures, and a reflection on the ethical considerations of the study. Following on from this, in chapters 5 to 8, I report the results of interaction, written text, and interview data analyses that I undertook to address the research questions. This is followed by chapter 9 where I discuss the findings and my interpretations of the data and present my theoretical and methodological contributions to the research. It also explains the areas where the findings corroborate/contradict the existing literature. Finally, in chapter 10 I conclude the thesis by discussing the implications of the study both in terms of policy and practice, explaining the limitations of the study, proposing a number of recommendations for further research, and highlighting my PhD learning journey.
CHAPTER 2
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

Known as Persia until 1935, Iran is located in the Middle East. The 18th largest country in the world in terms of area, it occupies 1,648,195 square kilometres (636,372 square miles). Iran is bordered by Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan on the north, by Afghanistan and Pakistan on the east, by Iraq on the west, by Turkey on the northwest, and by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman on the south. Tehran is the capital, the country's largest city and the political, cultural, commercial and industrial centre of the nation.

Iran’s population is over 74 million. Of the population, 50.50% are male and 49.50% female. Currently, it is estimated that more than two-third of the population is under the age of 30, and the literacy rate is 83%. The majority of the population speaks Persian language and its dialects, which is also the official language of the country. Other
Iranian languages and dialects include Azeri, Gilaki and Mazandarani, Kurdish, Arabic, Luri, Baluchi, Turkmen, etc.

Iran is a diverse country consisting of people of several ethnic backgrounds and religions joined by the Persian culture. The exact ethnic breakdown of Iran is unknown as there are no official numbers; however, the ethnicity of nation falls under the following categories: Persian, Azerbaijani, Kurd, Lur, Arab, Baluch, Turkmen, Turkic tribal groups such as the Qashqai, and non-Iranian, non-Turkic groups such as Armenians, Assyrians, and Georgians. Religion in Iran is dominated by the Twelve Shi’a branch of Islam, which is the official state religion and to which about 89% of Iranians belong. About 9% of Iranians follow the Sunni branch of Islam, mainly Kurds and Iran’s Baluchi Sunni. The remaining are non-Muslim religious minorities including Zoroastrians, Jews, and Christians (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran).

The culture of Iran is a combination of ancient pre-Islamic traditions and Islamic customs. Iranian culture has long been a dominant culture of the region, with Persian being regarded as the language of scholars during much of the 2nd millennium. Both national heritage and religious trainings place particular emphasis on education for both males and females.

### 2.2 Education System in Iran

Education in Iran is strongly centralised and all education policies are subject to government control. Generally, education is free, although private schools and universities are authorized by law to run and charge tuition fees. The Iranian education system comprises of three main cycles namely primary, secondary, and higher education. Under the Iranian constitution, primary education is mandatory and according to government figures over 95% of Iranian children receive primary and secondary education in segregated schools. Due to the huge demand of the applicants, post-secondary education in Iran is very competitive and admission to both state and private universities requires success in the National Entrance Exam known as Konkur. Currently, well over two million students are pursuing their studies at tertiary level (http://www.britishcouncil.org/iran-discover-iran-education-in-iran-education-system).
2.3 Primary Education

Ministry of Education and Training directs all aspects of both the primary and the secondary education including equipping schools, providing materials, developing unified curricula, and supplying students with textbooks. Primary education is divided into three stages: pre-school, primary school, and middle (orientation) school.

2.3.1 Pre-school

This one-year programme is a non-compulsory stage designed for children aged five. There is no exam at the end of this stage and children proceed automatically to primary education at the age of six.

2.3.2 Primary school

Children go to primary school at the age of six and the cycle spans for five years during which students are given a broad range of general education. At the end of the cycle, students have to pass a national exam in order to proceed to the next cycle.

2.3.3 Middle (Orientation) school

This cycle lasts for three years and students are exposed to some general education as well as being oriented for the secondary education. Indeed, this cycle is designed to explore students’ talents and to help them decide to follow their education whether in theoretical or vocational branch. At the end of this cycle, students take a regional examination to be qualified to enter into secondary education level.

2.4 Secondary Education (high school)

This three-year programme is divided into two main streams: theoretical and technical & vocational with their own specialities and the students are free to choose either. The theoretical branch comprises four subject areas: literature and culture, socio-economic, math and physics, and experimental sciences. The other route is vocational in structure and is designed to train students for business and labour market. It is divided into three sectors: technical, business and vocational, and agriculture. Each year the students have to complete a number of units and at the end of the third year national exams are conducted and the students who pass them are awarded the High School diploma.
2.5 Pre-university

Taking the one-year pre-university programme is the prerequisite of entering Higher Education in Iran. Only after successful completion of this course and obtaining the “Pre-university Certificate”, students are eligible to sit for the highly competitive National University Entrance Exam – Konkur.

2.6 Higher Education

The Ministry of Science, Research & Technology, and the Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education supervise most tertiary programmes. Together, the two organisations are in charge of educational planning, administration, curriculum and textbook development. At present, more than 100 state universities and institutes of Higher education in addition to several private universities actively offer post-secondary education to applicants in five major fields of study namely medicine, engineering, humanities, pure sciences, and art. The male/female ratio is relatively balanced. Indeed, women make up about 50 per cent of Iranian university students although in some fields their proportion actually outweighs men.

Each academic year includes two semesters and each semester comprises 17 weeks including the end of the term examinations. The Iranian universities operate based on a credit system, and upon successful completion of their programmes within the designated time limit, students are awarded relevant degrees. Table 2.1 depicts the programme degrees, their completion requirements, the minimum overall score needed to be eligible as graduate, as well as the period of each programme in detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Completion Requirements</th>
<th>Minimum Overall Score</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Diploma</td>
<td>72-78 units</td>
<td>12 out of 20</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>153 units</td>
<td>12 out of 20</td>
<td>4-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>28 units + thesis</td>
<td>14 out of 20</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td>28 units + dissertation</td>
<td>14 out of 20</td>
<td>3-6 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1. Overview of programme degrees in Iranian tertiary education

As noted earlier, admission to tertiary education is highly competitive and very difficult in Iran. To alleviate this problem, the parliament passed a law in early 1980s and paved the ground for private universities to establish. These universities must conform to the rules and regulations of both aforementioned ministries, though they do not rely on government funding and are financed primarily through tuition fees received from the students. The most prevalent private university whose activities rapidly spread
throughout the country is Azad University. Established in 1982 and with more than 350 campuses across the country and other countries such as UK, UAE, and Lebanon, Azad University is currently the biggest university in Iran offering degree programmes to 1.5 million students.

2.7 English Language Teaching (ELT) in Iran

In Iran, English is taught as a Foreign Language (Ghorbani, 2009) and Iranian students are formally exposed to English language instruction from the first year of the middle school at the age of eleven (Dahmardeh, 2009). As a regular subject, English is taught three to four hours a week from that level until the end of the secondary school over a period of seven years (Talebizadeh & Aliakbari, 2002). However, due to growing interest among both the students and their parents on one hand, and the dissatisfactory quality of instruction in public schools on the other, numerous private schools across the country run extra-curricular English language courses for their students even from pre-school level (Talebinezhad & Sadeghi Beniss, 2005). Such schools adopt their own curricula, textbooks, and English Learning Packages available in the market in addition to those prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Training (Ghahramani-Ghajar & Mirhosseini, 2005).

English instruction also continues at university level. The medium of instruction in all Iranian universities is Persian (Hosseini, 2007). Yet, students of all disciplines except those whose main field of study is English, namely; English Translation, English Literature, and Teaching English as a Foreign Language, receive English language instruction at two levels: (a) English for General Purposes which is mainly a review of the basic and general issues the students have already learnt during their middle and secondary school; (b) English for Specific Purposes which is tailored based on the needs of the students of each discipline and mostly focuses on familiarising the students with the terminology of their fields of study through reading and analysing relevant texts (Talebinezhad & Sadeghi Beniss, 2005; Vaezi, 2008).

In spite of the fact that English is a mandatory subject both at Iranian schools and universities, most of the students have very limited command of English after graduation (Ahmadi Darani, 2012; Hosseini, 2007; Maleki & Zangani, 2007). Therefore, an increasing number of them seek other alternatives such as English language institutes or private tutorials to meet their needs (Talebinezhad & Sadeghi Beniss, 2005; Vaezi, 2008). According to Talebinezhad and Sadeghi Beniss (2005), currently well over two
thousand English language institutes are licensed to run throughout the country and are actively offering a wide range of courses for their diverse candidates.

The inefficiency of English language courses in Iranian schools and universities may be attributed to several factors largely educational, socio-political, and cultural issues (Dahmardeh, 2009; Rahimi, 2009). First, limited hours of instruction –two or three hours a week- does not equip students with the skills they need to be able to use English competently (Vaezi, 2008). In addition to time shortage, the large number of students does not let the instructors cover all aspects of English sufficiently (Khojasteh Nam, 2011). Indeed, having thirty students in an English language course is quite common. This situation, therefore, makes it impossible for the teachers to communicate with every one of the students effectively. Moreover, Iranian educational system including ELT is heavily teacher dominated with the teacher organising all class activities, and the students merely listening, taking notes, and doing the assignments individually (Hosseini, 2007).

English textbooks are the second source of problem. In contrast to Iran’s “Textbook and Curriculum Development Centre” claim which stresses the incorporation of the most recent achievements in the field namely Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in developing English textbooks, the dominant trend is generally towards out of date approaches of English language teaching such as Grammar Translation and Audio Lingual methods (Dahmardeh, 2009; Ghorbani, 2009). The analytical evaluation of high school ELT textbooks from 1970 to the present conducted by Azizifar et al. (2010) is very informative. In their report, they indicate that English textbook series developed nationally “have overemphasized the practice of the linguistic forms, and not many of their language learning activities actually include activities which stimulate or lead to authentic communication and language use” (p. 140). They conclude that “these textbooks cannot meet the learners’ and the teachers’ needs within the Iranian educational system and it is a bit strange that they still emphasize structural methods and ignore the communicative role of the language” (Ibid., p. 140). The situation gets worse when one notices that these books do not mirror either the source or the target language culture properly and are culturally neutral (Hosseini, 2007; Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007). This point is highlighted in Aliakbari’s (2004) study as he asserts students’ induction to cultural aspect of the language they are learning is extremely “shallow and superficial” and the locally produced ELT textbooks fail to broaden “students’ world view and cultural understanding” as is normally expected (p. 13).
Earlier, Yarmohammadi (2002) came with a similar conclusion evaluating the pre-university textbooks. He argued that these textbooks “suffer from a lot of shortcomings: (1) they are not authentic; (2) English and Persian names are used interchangeably; and (3) oral skills are ignored” (cited in Azizifar, et al., 2010, p. 133).

The next key factor, which contributes to the inefficiency of English language teaching in Iran, is the testing scheme. Considering the fact that achievement tests in Iran like National University Entrance Exam - Konkur - and end of the term/year final exams fail to assess students’ communicative competence as well as their writing skill, these exams are domineered to evaluate merely the reading, vocabulary and grammatical proficiency of the students (Fahim & Pishghadam, 2009; Jahangard, 2007, cited in Ghorbani, 2009, p. 132). Consequently, the focus of teachers is shifted towards teaching a very narrow version of English which solely covers reading, grammar, and vocabulary (Sarani & Lotfi, 2010) and ignores aural and oral skills namely pronunciation, listening and speaking abilities (Rahimi, 2009). In addition, writing activities are limited to some fill in the blanks and controlled de-contextualised writing exercises whose primary purposes are again developing students’ abilities in English language structure and mechanics rather than authentic writing practices (Ghorbani, 2009). Indeed, external pressures such as nation-wide exams, students’ parents, as well as school head teachers set students’ success to pass national exams as ELT ultimate goal and thus force teachers to prepare students to perform well in their course exams (Dahmardeh, 2009).

A good proportion of students, on the other hand, consider English as a subject which requires a passing mark like others. They are not motivated enough to go beyond the structures the exams prescribe and just seek for mastering some survival skills which help them get an acceptable mark. As Freire (1970) describes it:

Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and parrot back. This is the “banking” concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filling, and storing the deposits. They do, it is true, have the opportunity to become collectors or cataloguers of the things they store (cited in Hosseini, 2007, p. 7).
In such an atmosphere, teaching is subordinated to testing and this wash back effect, in turn, leaves destructive impacts on learning process and hence students’ capabilities in language use (Hossein, 2007).

Finally, socio-political and cultural elements are so crucial in ELT that no researcher can easily ignore them (Dahmardeh, 2009). Iran’s relations with the world outside have gone through some difficulties during the last three decades. Before the 1979 revolution, the country had a warm relation with the West in general and the US in particular and it hosted thousands of advisors, experts, technicians, lecturers and teachers who were working in almost all areas including oil and natural gas industry, armed forces, universities, construction projects, companies, and factories. Moreover, each year the government sent hundreds of students to developed countries to continue their studies at graduate and postgraduate levels. As a result, the social and cultural exchange between the country and other nations significantly increased, and individual contact with expatriates escalated rapidly. Learning other languages especially English, therefore, appeared as an urgent need. To fulfil this need, several language institutes some of which affiliated by foreign bodies like British Council were established and by recruiting native English teachers and the latest methodologies and resources of that time these institutes ran high quality English language courses in nearly all Iranian major cities. In general, learning other languages was highly regarded by both the government and the citizens (Aliakbari, 2004).

After the revolution, however, the situation turned significantly particularly in the early years. Although learning English was apparently encouraged by the politicians, the unfriendly relations between the country and the West, mainly the US, marginalised ELT within the educational system of the country (Aliakbari, 2004). Moreover, the radical stances of Iranian political leaders towards global issues on one hand, and the unrealistic picture of Iran and its citizens depicted in the Western mass media on the other, isolated Iran from the international community. Consequently, a country with an ancient history and kind-hearted and friendly people, which could potentially be one of the five main tourist destinations in the world, was and is still being neglected by tourist companies despite its numerous historical, cultural, and natural attractions (Dahmardeh, 2009; Vaezi, 2008). In addition, Iranian people find it very difficult visiting Western countries and unlike before the revolution, just a limited number of students are awarded scholarship to study abroad merely at postgraduate level and in restricted disciplines. Due to the above reasons and considering the fact that access to the satellite
is banned and the use of the internet is narrowed to elite group of the society, such as university lecturers, scholars, students, and the like, it is quite natural to conclude that Iranian people have very little contact, if any, with the native speakers of English (Rahimi, 2009; Rashtchi & Mirshahidi, 2011). Thus, its use is mainly restricted to English language courses and business and industrial companies. In fact, communication with EFL teachers, reading story and textbooks, watching state-run English programmes, and the films made by Hollywood are the most common channels of exposure to English language for Iranian EFL students.

However, in recent years the situation is gradually improving (Vaezi, 2008). As Talebinezhad and Aliakbari (2002) argue “English seems to have smoothly found its way right to the heart of the Iranian society, approving itself as an undeniable necessity, rather than a mere school subject” (p. 21). However, it seems a bit early to claim whether the shift and the new look towards ELT can yield positive results in the area in the near future. It needs time and requires extensive research to document the success of the new trend in the society and its impact on English proficiency of Iranian students.

2.7.1 L2 writing in Iran

In general, there is imbalance between teaching of English language skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) in Iranian EFL context (Askarzadeh Torghabahe & Yazdanmehr, 2011; Gorbani, 2009; Hashemi, et al., 2009; Mahnam & Nejadansari, 2012). Despite the current claims that equal emphasis is given to the teaching of all skills, receptive skills particularly reading, and sub-skills such as vocabulary, and grammar receive the maximum attention (Hosseini, 2007). For example, pre-university text books mainly focus on learning new vocabularies and comprehending reading passages. Even though they contain other sections like writing exercises, these controlled exercises are designed to help students internalise new vocabularies and information (Aliakbari, 2004) as well as grammatical structures. Indeed, writing activities aimed to improve L2 learners’ writing performance is missing (Ghorbani, 2009). English writing pedagogy is also inefficient at higher education level (Hosseini, 2007). English major students (English Language and Literature, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and English Translation) have to attend English paragraph and essay writing modules during the first two years of general English instruction. Nevertheless, these courses fail to educate this group of students to write proper English and L2 learners still have many problems in their written works (Birjandi & Malmir, 2009). More precisely, L2 writing instructors’ adherence to traditional, product-oriented, form-
focused models of writing and feedback delivery despite the well-established pedagogical shift to more process, student-based approaches to L2 composition has not been that much successful (Baroudy, 2008; Birjandi & Malmir, 2009).

2.8 Eslamshahr University

Eslamshahr University was the immediate context of the study where in the researcher has been working as an academic member since 2000. Located in the South West suburb of Tehran, the capital, the University’s origin dates back to 1997. In fact, Eslamshahr University is one of the campuses of the parent university “Azad” whose well over 350 campuses have spread throughout the country. The university has a population of more than 15,000 students studying in undergraduate level, with a total number of fifty degree programmes, and 263 full time academic staff.

Eslamshahr University comprises of five faculties: engineering, social sciences, pure sciences, sport sciences, and arts. The English department is part of the faculty of social sciences, which recruits around a hundred English translation candidates every year. The students are admitted through National University Entrance Exam. All entrants have studied English for a minimum of seven years within the school system. On entry to the programme, most students have only very basic English skills, yet they are taught all their subjects through the English medium except for translation courses. All the academic members of the department including the researcher are non-native speakers of English with MA or PhD degree in ELT or English literature. The syllabus mainly focuses on improving the four major skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the first two years of the programme. The remaining two years concentrate on more specific subjects such as linguistics, interpretation and translation, ELT, testing, etc. Throughout each semester there are assessments and students need to pass all subjects to progress to the next semester. After completion of the four-year programme, students are awarded BA degree in English translation.
CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction
This chapter endeavours to investigate and connect a number of complex and interconnected issues relevant to feedback and peer collaboration, and revision in writing composition classroom. As was explained in Chapter 1, peer collaboration including peer review and collaborative revision activities derive from the social constructionist theory of learning (SCT) (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hu, 2005; Kamimura, 2006; Min, 2005, 2006; Shehadeh, 2011; Yong, 2010). Hence, in an effort to demonstrate the relevance of Vygotsky’s sociocultural model to L2 writing and peer collaboration, the opening section begins with an overview of sociocultural theory of development, its two fundamental concepts; ‘scaffolding’ and ‘Zone of Proximal Development’, and their implications for Second Language (L2) learning and writing. Further, as recent approaches to writing pedagogy namely process and genre-based frameworks justify incorporation of peer collaboration activities in composition classes (Ferris, 2003; Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hu, 2005; Kamimura, 2006; Tsui & Ng, 2000), attention is then turned to a brief discussion of three dominant approaches to second language writing instruction; that is, product, process, and genre-based teaching of composition as well as demonstrating the characteristics of each of them, their advantages and disadvantages, and their stance towards SCT and peer collaboration in L2 writing classrooms. The chapter then presents the concept of feedback. As it will be explained later, as an integrated part of writing process and composition course, feedback has been the source of hot debate in L2 writing research community (Hyland & Hyland, 2006b). Having said that, following providing some general comments on the notion of feedback and discussing its relevance to SCT in section 3.4, different feedback strategies such as direct and indirect, local and global, as well as selective and comprehensive will be reviewed and justifications for choosing each particular method in this research with reference to the underpinning learning theory, research questions, and the design of the study will be presented. Following on from this, feedback types including teacher written feedback, teacher-student conferencing, computer mediated feedback and peer feedback will be described. It should be noted that as in this study the participants received feedback from two different sources (teacher and peer) and in two different forms (written and oral), it seemed necessary to include some background
information about teacher-written feedback, teacher-student conferencing, and computer mediated feedback, consider the advantages and disadvantage of each of them succinctly and prepare the readers for the main part of this chapter which reviews various issues associated with peer evaluation, revision, and writing performance.

Obviously, as the current research strives to investigate the nature of EFL students’ interactions during peer review and collaborative revision tasks, their reactions to their peers’/instructor’s comments, their writing performance after being engaged in these activities, and their reflections on the experience of involving in peer evaluation and collaborative revision activities, the main section of the chapter focuses on reviewing a number of studies which have been undertaken into peer evaluation. To that end, I first introduce some peer feedback procedure models in writing classrooms. Then, drawing on literature, I provide an outline of the investigations which have examined the nature of peer interaction. Next, I move on to discuss the feedback incorporation behaviours of L2 learners, their attitudes towards different feedback sources as well as efficiency of each type of feedback in terms of students’ writing performance. These are followed by acknowledging the significance of training in improving the quality of peer evaluation technique in L2 writing as stressed by several researchers. I end the chapter by concentrating on revision. Indeed, feedback, revision, and writing performance are not only intertwined concepts, but also key elements of this study. Hence, I believe the issue of revision requires a brief discussion. However, as I have already discussed in section 1.4, research on collaborative revision tasks both in ESL and EFL contexts is scarce and in this chapter I reiterate the need for performing such research. I also consider different methods of evaluating/assessing writing performance of students and discuss the rationale for selecting Multiple-trait scoring rubric to assess the papers written by the participants of the present study.

3.2 Sociocultural Theory of Development (SCT)

Over the last few decades theorists and researchers have increasingly acknowledged the social aspects of human learning and development. Sociocultural perspective of development rejects the view that cognitive growth exists or is developed inside individual people’s brains independent of context and intention and as a consequence of individual processing of information (Alfred, 2002; Palincsar, 1998). According to this paradigm, learning is a much more complex activity than the individual engagement. In other words, cognition and knowledge are inherently social and are dialogically
constructed and shared within a social world (Alfred, 2002; Lantolf, 2000, 2006; Swain, et al., 2002). In fact, the basic assumption of sociocultural theory of mind and learning, originally associated with the work of Vygotsky, is that human learning is intertwined with the context within which it occurs, and knowledge is constructed through a process of interaction, collaboration, and communication among members of the society (Nassaji & Swain, 2000). Hence, this theory assigns a central role to social context and the daily social and cultural practices in which an individual participates (Barnard & Campbell, 2005; Gebhard, 1999). Specifically, from Vygotsky’s perspective, learning precedes and forms development, and does so through the mechanism of dialogic interaction (Dipardo & Freedman, 1988, p. 134).

Within this theory, higher forms of human mental abilities and complex skills are learnt in specific cultural, historical, and institutional context through the medium of language and other semiotic tools (Frawley & Lantolf, 1985). In this vein, a child’s (novice) cognitive development is shaped by interacting with more able members of the community including parents, caregivers, teachers, siblings, and older peers (McCafferty, 1994). Indeed, to Vygotsky, any kind of higher mental ability is initially social and collaborative, emerging first between individuals as intermental activities and subsequently become intramental activities for the individual (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995). The transition from inter- to intramental functioning is a dynamic developmental process in which the novice and the expert work together in order to create a mutual activity frame (Aljaafreh & Lantolf 1994).

This activity frame known as Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is where learning and development come together. The actual and potential developmental level of each individual is also distinct within this space (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998; Lantolf, 2000). The actual developmental level refers to those mental functions that the novice can demonstrate alone or perform them independently (Palincsar, 1998). The potential level of development, on the other hand, is a stage during which mental functions are in the process of formation and the novice can accomplish them only with the support and assistance of a more competent peer. Indeed, the potential level of development varies independently from actual developmental level and is more dynamic and indicator of mental growth than actual development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Therefore, ZPD is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky,
According to Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) ZPD is “the framework, par excellence, which brings all of the pieces of the learning setting together - the teacher, the learner, their social and cultural history, their goals and motives, as well as the resources available to them, including those that are dialogically constructed together” (p. 468). In short, as Nassaji and Swain (2000) assert, learning takes place within the learners’ ZPD.

However, for that interaction to be effective, the assistance provided by the more knowledgeable member (expert) needs to be adjusted to the less knowledgeable partner’s ZPD (Van Der Stuyf, 2002). In the literature, this graduated and temporary assistance provided by the expert to a novice has been metaphorically referred to as “scaffolding” (Weissberg, 2006). In other words, scaffolding or “assisted performance” refers to a “situation where a knowledgeable participant can create supportive conditions in which the novice can participate, and extend his or her current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence” (Donato, 1994, cited in Nassaji & Swain, 2000, p. 36). More specifically, scaffolding “consists essentially of the adult ‘controlling’ those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner’s capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence” (Wood, et al., 1976, cited in Weissberg, 2006, p. 247).

Hence, the ultimate aim of scaffolding is facilitating the novice member’s development and supporting him/her to become independent and assume responsibility to perform the tasks which are beyond the level of what he/she can do alone (Van Der Stuyf, 2002).

On the other hand, Weissberg (2006) believes that scaffolding and collaborative learning are two distinct notions which should not be confused. Indeed, according to Wells (1999), scaffolding is misused unless (1) it refers to a conversation involving one participant who is more competent than the others; (2) it is applied to situations where the main purpose is to instruct someone something; and (3) it is performed with the expert member’s intention of making the novice member autonomous in accomplishing the present task. Wood et al. (1976, cited in Ko, et al., 2003, p. 304) categorised six types of scaffolding functions which they believed a more competent other uses in order to support a learner. These include: “recruiting the learner’s interest, simplifying the task, highlighting its relevant features, maintaining motivation, controlling the learner’s frustration, and modelling”.

Originally, Vygotsky’s framework focused on child psychological development, expert/novice interactions, and co-construction of knowledge. However, in recent
decades it has been argued that the idea and its two key constructs - ZPD and scaffolding - can also be extended to educational settings and to both asymmetrical (expert-novice) and symmetrical (equal ability) situations (Storch, 2002). One of its implications, for example, is for second language learning scenarios in which L2 learners need to be scaffolded and supported in their ZPD in order to develop second language competence (Lantolf, 2000, 2006). Ohta (1995) adapted the concept of the ZPD to L2 as “the difference between the L2 learner’s developmental level as determined by independent language use, and the higher level of potential development as determined by how language is used in collaboration with a more capable interlocutor” (p. 96). Accordingly, scaffolding in the L2 refers to those supportive behaviours employed by the more advanced partner in collaboration with the less competent learner that aims to foster L2 learner’s progress to a higher level of language proficiency. However, a number of researchers (Storch, 2002, 2005; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996; 1998; Yong, 2010) have stressed that scaffolding is not just a unidirectional support from an expert to novice, but can occur between novices with both learners acting as expert and supporting each other mutually and concurrently through dialogic interaction.

Further, sociocultural theory, which maintains that learners develop knowledge through social interaction with others around them in the community, offers an ideal framework for the study of peer review. In other words, it stresses that peer interaction integrates the cognitive and social aspects of language by allowing peers to construct meaning within the context of dialogic interaction (Zhang, 1995). Indeed, by rejecting the traditional view that assumes writing as an individual attempt through which the author tries to express his/her message to the intended audience, this theoretical perspective considers writing as a deeply rooted social act (Santos, 1992, p. 3). Hence, it has prompted composition theorists and researchers to begin to explore empirically how engaging students in collaborative tasks in the classroom can contribute to the development of writing abilities. As DiPardo and Freedman (1988) put it, sociocultural theory provides “a close relationship between talk and writing and the importance of a research framework that leads to understanding how social interactions, in this case in the form of peer talk, can contribute to writing development” (p. 122). It is also documented that scaffolding can occur in an L2 composition context among peers when working in pairs and groups (Storch, 2002, 2005; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996, 1998; Yong, 2010). In sum, perceiving writing as a social act not only inspires and justifies the empirical studies which focus on the dynamics of peer response in writing.
classrooms, but also helps composition practitioners and instructors understand the potential role of peer interactions and evaluations in improving the writing ability of students.

3.3 Approaches to Second Language Writing

Grabe & Kaplan (1996) define composing as “the combining of structural sentence units into a more-or-less unique, cohesive and coherent larger structure (as opposed to lists, forms, etc.)” (p. 4). In-depth case studies, and ethnographic research collecting data from observations, interviews, surveys, and protocol analyses, have all provided insights into the complex, recursive, and nonlinear nature of composing and have inspired changes in second language writing pedagogy over the past approximately fifty years. These changes have influenced such areas as whether the focus of writing should be on the product (text), the process (writer), or the genre (audience and context). While product and process approaches have dominated much of writing instructions in L2 context, genre approaches have also gained adherents over the last twenty years (Badger & White, 2000). In what follows these competing approaches to L2 writing instruction that have been very influential in L2 writing pedagogy sometimes creating hot debates will be outlined briefly and their strengths and weaknesses will be highlighted. Finally, in section 3.3.4 the stances of each of these pedagogies in relation to SCT and collaborative activities will be discussed and the most suitable approach which is believed to match with this learning theory will be introduced.

3.3.1 Writing as a product

Product approach to writing also referred to form-dominated approach has been one of the dominant modes of instruction in L2 writing since 1960s (Raimes, 1991). This view that writing primarily means “linguistic knowledge” (Pincas, 1982a, cited in Badger & White, 2000, p. 153) and form precedes meaning reinforces a narrow and limited perception of writing function (Zamel, 1987) which considers writing “as grammar instruction, with the emphasis on controlled composition, correction of the product, and correct form over expression of ideas” (Susser, 1994, p. 36). In fact, writing courses inspired by this approach are preoccupied with constant concern about usage, structure, or accurate form (Zamel, 1982, 1983) and pay particular attention to appropriate use of grammatical rules, vocabulary, and mechanics which are believed would improve writing. So, Curricula are developed based upon a mechanistic philosophy of teaching and learning (Zamel, 1987) and follow a traditional model involving “familiarization;
controlled writing; guided writing; and free writing” (Badger & White, 2000, p. 153). The Familiarization phase which aims to make learners aware of accurate application of grammatical rules, consists of sentence exercises and drills. During controlled and guided composition tasks, students are prepared for free writing by being widely provided with the texts and asked to manipulate linguistic forms within those texts. Free writing which occurs at the end of the process commonly aims to improve students’ understanding of the earlier assigned tasks and is performed based on the restricted notion of writing that requires grammatical proficiency and the accuracy of surface-level features of writing (Zamel, 1976, 1982, 1987).

In product dominant classrooms, teachers largely play the role of language teachers and examiners rather than composition instructors perceiving the texts as demonstrations of linguistic skill rather than opportunities for the discovery and expression of ideas (Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992). Hence, they are overly concerned with their students’ written products and try to identify and address their mechanical errors while show less interest in dealing with other aspects of their papers such as content and meaning. In other words, they emphasize accuracy at the expense of fluency (Raimes, 1985, 1991; Susser, 1994; Zamel, 1985). As Zamel (1987) puts it:

ESL writing teachers view themselves primarily as language teachers, that they attend to surface-level features of writing, and that they seem to read and react to a text as a series of separate pieces at the sentence level or even clause level, rather than as a whole unit of discourse. In fact they are so distracted by language-related problems that they often correct these without realizing that there is a much larger, meaning-related problem that they have failed to address (p. 700).

Indeed, writing assignments are treated as testing the application and mastery of specific grammatical rules and prescribed forms. Therefore, revising is limited and mostly focuses on editing linguistic flaws rather than addressing content problems (Reid, 1984) and the main purpose of writing assessment is to make evaluative decisions for summative purposes and justifying grades as teachers approach students’ single draft texts as final products (Ferris, 2003).

3.3.2 Writing as a process

Process approach to writing instruction also known as writer-dominant approach was formed in the late 1970s as a reaction against the product oriented approach to
composition writing (Raimes, 1991). This shift in composition theory challenges “the traditional practice of teaching writing according to reductionist and mechanistic models” (Lockhart & Ng, 1995, p. 606) and seeks to construct cognitive models of what writers actually do as they write (Hyland, 2003b). In fact, at the heart of this model is the view that writing is a “non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning” (Zamel, 1983, p. 165). Hence, new concerns replace the old. Issues such as “accuracy”, “usage”, “form”, “imitation”, and “product” are replaced by “fluency”, “meaning making”, “invention”, “creation”, and “process” (Raimes, 1991, p. 410).

“Awareness and intervention” are two principal features of process writing pedagogies (Susser, 1994, p. 34). A process oriented instruction helps make students aware that writing by its nature is a complex and recursive process through which meaning is created and not merely transcribed as pre-formulated ideas. This suggests composition instruction that recognizes the importance of generating, formulating, and refining one’s ideas through cyclical and interdependent pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing procedures which encompass organizing ideas, determining purpose, considering audience, selecting vocabulary, and judging format (Zamel, 1982). Further, as students’ texts are no longer treated as finished products, teachers also involve during the composing process at several points in a variety of ways by assuming a less controlling role and establishing a non-directive and facilitating stance encouraging writers to come up with ideas, explore ways of expressing them, and examine and refine their writing in a supportive and co-operative environment (Caulk, 1994; Hyland, 2003b; Reid, 1994; Zamel, 1983, 1987). In other words, as Zamel (1983) points out, “intervening throughout the process sets up a dynamic relationship which gives writers the opportunity to tell their readers what they mean to say before these writers are told what they ought to have done” (p. 182).

In practice, this means writing classrooms which highlight the critical nature of writing meaningfully for a real purpose and audience and cover a wide range of tasks during which students are introduced to invention techniques such as brainstorming, free writing, and journal writing and are engaged in small-group activities, teacher/student conferences, peer collaboration, and revision. This shift in composition pedagogy is also characterized by developing several drafts and receiving extensive feedback on content and organisation at earlier stages while delaying focus on form until the final draft (Raimes, 1985, 1991; Susser, 1994; Zamel, 1982, 1984, 1987).
The advocates of this approach stress that producing multiple drafts of a composition and receiving response at intermediate stages of writing whether by the teacher or the peer is very helpful since it makes students aware of how well their texts meet their audience’s needs and allows them to utilize the feedback in subsequent revisions of their pieces rather than at the end after the final drafts are submitted (Reid, 1994; Susser, 1994). It also implies that revision should become an integral component of writing instruction, that content and organisation are of primary importance, and that editing and proofreading should be delayed until the last stage of composing (Zamel, 1982, p. 205). This emphasis on audience, feedback, and revision supports an increased use of peer reviewing and individual writing conferences in L2 classrooms which complement the traditional teachers’ written feedback (Ferris, 2003, p. 69).

3.3.3 Genre-based approach to writing

There are distinct differences among the genre definitions and realisations among the theorists and practitioners and as Tardy (2006) notes “if genre scholars across disciplines share one point of agreement it is the complexity of genres” (cited in Johns et al., 2006, p. 248). But to keep it simple and brief, genre refers to “abstract, socially recognized ways of using language” (Hyland, 2002, p. 114; Hyland, 2003b, p. 21). Hyon (1996) identified three broad approaches to genre theories: the English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), and the New Rhetoric. He further contends that while ESP and SFL genre approaches provide perspectives on the linguistic features characteristic of various written texts as well as valuable recommendations about the functions of these texts in writing courses, New Rhetoric scholarship, on the other hand, offers a more comprehensive insight into the sociocontextual aspects of genres by focusing more on description of academic and professional contexts surrounding texts and the social actions genres accomplish within these communities. Indeed, as Hyland (2002) states the main source of difference between genre theories is the emphasis they assign either to text or context.

The genre approach to writing emerged in reaction to the process approaches to writing (Badger & White, 2000). Despite the great influence of process approaches to writing on L2 writing instruction, their emphasis on isolated individual writers, cognitive and decontextualized dimensions of writing skill and writing process itself, have been criticized by more socially-oriented views of writing (Hyland, 2003b; Raimes, 1991). Genre-based pedagogues claim that process theories fail to consider the social nature of writing assuming it as an abstract, neutral, value-free activity whose good command is
associated with mastery of universal processes; as a result, they do not address “the forces outside the individual which help guide purposes, establish relationships, and ultimately shape writing” (Hyland, 2003b, p. 18). They further assert that genre-based pedagogies address this restricted view of writing process by recognizing it as a purposeful, socially situated response to particular contexts and communities. In other words, from genre perspective “literacies are community sources which are realized in social relationships, rather than the property of individual writers struggling with personal expression” (Hyland, 2002, p. 126). Based on this assumption, students write in order to accomplish different purposes in different contexts by making use of various linguistic and rhetorical options. Therefore, devoting some time and efforts concentrating on the understanding of the complex variables in text composition, rather than on the production of a single writing process or personal languages and voices would better prepare students to perform writing tasks in academic essay writing classrooms (John, 1995). To meet that purpose, students are not left alone and accountable for discovering rules and typical text patterns on their own, but teachers actively support them within a contextual framework to accomplish their writing tasks not only by explicit instruction of the appropriate generic structure and convention of target text types, but also by meaning construction and demonstration of how various types of texts are organised in distinct ways in terms of their purpose, audience and message (Hyland, 2003b, p. 19). Genre classrooms, then, involve gradual introducing, modelling and analysing target genres in terms of their linguistic and structural features (Johns, et al., 2006) followed by developing multiple drafts of papers through collaborative negotiation with teachers playing a key role; that is, scaffolding the student writers to move through their zone of proximal development and gradually withdrawing by engaging student peers in the activity and ultimately encouraging them to construct a text independently.

Process approach adherents, on the other hand, reject this allegation (Berkenkotter, 1981; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Witte & Faigley, 1981, cited in Gebhardt, 1983, p. 294) highlighting that purpose, audience, and identifying the rhetorical problems are central in the writing process. These researchers and several others believe that treating revision as an integral part of composing implies abandoning the three-stage, linear model of writing and admitting it as a recursive, highly fluid process during which expert writers constantly revise and change and reconstruct their drafts by discarding chunk of discourse or their original plans in the middle of generating a text in an attempt to select appropriate types of discourse, and to make rhetorical, organisational, and stylistic
decisions in order to meet their audience expectations and to ensure their intended messages are clearly expressed. They, in turn, attack genre based pedagogies for being prescriptive and structuralist, focusing primarily on linguistic aspect of writing (like product oriented approach) as well as discouraging students’ creative writing (Hyland, 2003b). Badger and White (2000) acknowledge that there may be some commonalities between genre and product approaches to writing; however, they underline that genre approaches to writing possess a distinct feature as “they emphasize that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced” (p. 155). Also, as Paltridge (2006) notes variations within specific genres are normal as genres vary in terms of their typicality. That is, a text may be a typical example of a genre or a less typical one, but still be an example of the particular genre (Johns, et al., 2006, pp. 235-236). This is emphasized by Hyland (2003b) as he puts it:

genres are not overbearing structures which impose uniformity on users. There is huge potential for internal heterogeneity of genres, and issues of unity and identity are frequently raised in the literature... while a shared sense of genre is needed to accomplish understanding, it is not necessary to assume that these are fixed, monolithic, discrete and unchanging (pp. 23-24).

In fact, from Badger and White’s (2000) point of view, these three approaches to writing instruction are complementary if the positive aspects of each of them are adapted in an eclectic method they refer to as “process genre approach” (p. 157). That is what Raimes (1991) calls balancing the four elements of form, the writer, content, and the reader as integrated entities referring to the complexity of writing process and writing context. Such an approach recognizes L2 students’ need of linguistic knowledge about the texts, understands the importance of the skills involved in writing, and acknowledges that writing is a social practice with special attention being paid to purpose and audience. Writing classrooms, then, typically involve providing students access to different types of texts by highlighting their purposes and social contexts. This is achieved by drawing on three potential sources: the teacher, student peers, and models of the target genre. Students are also provided with linguistic skills, such as planning, drafting, and re-drafting skills as well as linguistic knowledge, such as knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and organisation which guides them to produce a text which meets the requirements of a particular genre. Likewise, Hyland (2003b) argues that genre-based instruction is not an alternative to process approaches to writing
but simply requires process informed writing activities “be used in the transparent, language-rich, and supportive contexts which will most effectively help students to mean” (p. 27). Earlier, Benesch (1995) also expressed a similar view as she stressed process approaches to writing were compatible with socially informed theories of writing maintaining “we do not need not to abandon brainstorming or revision, for example, to attend to role, audience, and community as well as to other features of the social context” (p. 194).

3.3.4. L2 writing pedagogies and SCT

As was discussed in section 3.2, interaction, collaboration, and communication are at the heart of sociocultural learning framework (Nassaji & Swain, 2000). Hence, product based writing pedagogy with its mechanistic model to teaching and learning (Zamel, 1987) is not compatible with SCT due to the pivotal role given to social aspects of human learning and development in this framework. In fact, the over emphasis on text as a finished product and the nature of relationship between teachers and learners do not provide any opportunity for mutual collaboration and co-construction of knowledge - in this case writing proficiency - and the summative assessment of the end products merely aims at justifying the assigned grades rather than scaffolding learners to improve the quality of their written works.

On the other hand, process approach addresses some of the criticisms raised against product pedagogy. The shift to cognitive models of writing (Hyland, 2003b), focus on cyclical, interdependent nature of writing processes (Zamel, 1982), and attention to writing for a real purpose and audience and meaning making function of writing (Zamel, 1987), establish a dynamic relationship between the writer and the reader and facilitates negotiation of meaning between them (Caulk, 1994; Reid, 1994; Zamel, 1983, 1987). However, sociocultural perspective of development moves beyond that and its advocates assert that cognition and knowledge are inherently social and are dialogically constructed and shared within a social world (Alfred, 2002; Lantolf, 2000, 2006; Swain, et al., 2002). Hence, learning is a much more complex activity than merely individual processing of knowledge (Alfred, 2002; Palinscar, 1998), and social, cultural, and historical context shape learning and development (Frawley & Lantolf, 1985). Consequently, even though process pedagogy facilitates increased use of interaction in composition classrooms (Ferris, 2003), its focus is more on isolated individual writers, cognitive and decontextualized dimensions of writing skill rather than its social aspect (Reder, 1994, cited in Baradaran & Sarfarazi, 2012, p. 28).
Finally, as demonstrated in section 3.3.3, genre-based model considers writing a purposeful, socially situated response to particular contexts and communities (Hyland, 2002). Based on this assumption, students write in order to accomplish different purposes in different contexts by making use of various linguistic and rhetorical options (Badger & White, 2000). This framework also provides an opportunity for readers and writers to actively interact and collaborate with each other in order to produce a meaningful text which addresses the expectations of the social community in a supportive atmosphere (Silva, 1990). Hence, it can be argued that the genre model fits well with SCT which also perceives writing as a social act (Santos, 1992). In other words, genre pedagogy or more specifically process genre approach as was explained in the concluding paragraph of section 3.3.3 and sociocultural theory of learning form an integrated package which inform incorporation of peer collaboration activities in a typical EFL composition course as underpinning feature of the current study.

3.4 Feedback

Feedback has long been a central aspect of L2 writing programmes, both for its potential for learning and for student motivation (Hyland & Hyland, 2006b). Arndt (1993) highlights the importance of feedback as a “central and critical contribution to the evolution of a piece of writing. Feedback informs the writing process, permeating, shaping, and moulding it” (cited in Tsui & Ng, 2000, p. 148). Keh (1990) defines feedback as “input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision” (p. 294). The reviewer’s evaluations, questions, criticisms, and suggestions help the writer to develop a reader-based-prose. However, this simple definition of feedback as “information on performance” seems narrow in terms of its scope and is not suitable to cover the whole issue especially self-provided feedback. Making a distinction between external (peer or teacher) and internal (self) feedback sources, Narciss (2008) provides a clearer account; “all post-response information that is provided to a learner to inform the learner on his or her actual state of learning or performance” (cited in Gielen, et al., 2010, p. 305). As was discussed in section 3.2, SCT with its emphasis on co-construction of knowledge through communication between members of the social community encourages extensive incorporation of feedback particularly its oral form in educational settings. The extended version of this theory, in particular, supports the dialogic, meaningful interactions, and mutual scaffolding between reviewer - either teacher as an expert or peer as equal status
member - and writer in composition classes which aims to produce meaningful texts and as a result to develop writing skill competence. It can be argued that feedback which is characterised by evaluating, advising, and extending support to develop a better quality paper, is in fact what SCT refers to as dialogic conversations between members of the community - composition class. More precisely, feedback practices in writing classrooms, whether between students and teachers or between peers, can be regarded as one of the tools by which writing skill as a form of higher mental ability is developed and internalised. Its absence in composition classes, on the other hand, treats writing as an individual engagement in which learners attempt to express their messages without having an opportunity to discuss them with their audience and taking advantage of sharing and pooling expertise.

Feedback can be both qualitative and quantitative and should motivate the writers to produce improved revised drafts otherwise it does not function as feedback (Lamberg, 1980). Arguing that not all feedback lead to performance improvement, Gibbs and Simpson (2004) state that it positively affects students’ performance under certain conditions:

*Feedback should be (a) sufficient in frequency and detail; (b) focused on students’ performance, on their learning, and on the actions under students’ control, rather than on the students themselves and/or on personal characteristics; (c) timely in that it is received by students while it still matters and in time for application or for asking further assistance; (d) appropriate to the aim of the assignment and its criteria; (e) appropriate in relation to students’ conception of learning, of knowledge, and of the discourse of the discipline; (f) attended to, and (g) acted upon” (cited in Gielen, et al., 2010, p. 304).

As Sommers (1982) puts it, the instructors’ feedback serves three major purposes. First, it enables student writers to check if their intended message is expressed properly. Second, it helps them realize the potential ambiguities their papers may have caused in their audience and makes them aware of the questions their pieces may have raised in the minds of their reviewers. Finally, it encourages the students to revise their papers; otherwise, they may leave them as it is. In other words, feedback messages can have three broad meanings. Sometimes they carry motivational meaning and are used to increase a general behaviour. In some cases they include reinforcement meaning and
aim to reward or punish particular behaviours. At times they express informational meaning and attempt to change performance in a particular direction (Nelson & Schunn, 2008, p. 376).

Writing instructors face a wide range of options to respond to students’ papers. They can correct the errors directly, or indirectly point the flaws by underlining, coding, circling, and highlighting them and requiring the students themselves to find the accurate forms. They can also provide general feedback on content and organisation by giving opinions, criticizing or praising or make text-specific comments by asking questions, making suggestions, and providing solutions (Raimes, 1991). Finally, they may want to include and encourage peer as well as self-evaluation in their writing courses. However, as Hyland and Hyland (2006b) point out, there is still no consensus among L2 researchers concerning the issue of feedback especially in L2 writing context which needs further investigations. Such uncertainties focus on issues like feedback efficacy, feedback strategies, types of feedback, extent of feedback, focus of feedback, and the role culture plays in this domain (p. 83). However, over the past two decades, changes in writing pedagogy and insights gained from research studies have transformed feedback practices, with summative feedback being replaced or supplemented by formative feedback and feedback mechanism in L2 writing being viewed from a sociocultural theory of learning perspective rather than cognitive stance (Nassaji & Swain, 2000).

3.5 Feedback Strategies

There is selection of decisions to be made by L2 instructors before addressing student papers. In their error correction practices, writing teachers have to consider their own approaches or guiding principles concerning issues such as giving direct rather than indirect feedback on students’ errors, marking student papers selectively rather than comprehensively, and prioritising students’ written texts local errors rather than global problems – or reverse order. In what follows, each of these pedagogical strategies will briefly be elaborated. Besides, as it will be illustrated later in section 4.10, in the present study the participants’ written drafts were marked comprehensively, equal emphasis was placed on both local and global issues, and language and mechanics errors were addressed using indirect feedback (Appendices 7 and 8). Hence in each of the following sections, I will justify the correction strategies adopted in this investigation with reference to the literature, SCT framework, and the proposed research questions.
3.5.1 Direct vs. Indirect

Direct or explicit feedback occurs when the teacher identifies a linguistic or structure error in the student’s paper and provides the correct form. Direct feedback may take various forms including substitution, insertion, deletion, or reformulation and requires students to transcribe the teacher’s corrections into their revised drafts. Indirect or implicit feedback, on the other hand, refers to those instances when the teacher indicates the presence of an error but does not provide correction, thereby leaving the student with the responsibility to diagnose and fix it (Bitchener, et al., 2005; Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 2003, 2006; Ferris & Roberts, 2001). Teachers have a selection of choices to make in order to call the student’s attention to a particular problem. They may use standard code which not only points to the exact location of an error, but also shows the type of error involved, or may mark the mistake by means of underlining, highlighting, or circling (Ferris, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2006b; Lee, 2008). As Witbeck (1976) argues, providing students with direct feedback makes the revision task a very mechanical one while indirect feedback may encourage learners’ self-editing by making them think about their own errors. In other words, less explicit comment is preferable as it engages students in “guided learning and problem solving” and, therefore, promotes the type of reflection that is more likely to foster long-term development (Lalande, 1982, p. 141). However, as Ferris (2003) stresses “indirect feedback assumes a relatively advanced level of formal knowledge and/or acquired competence in the L2 student writer” (p. 143). Therefore, teachers should carefully consider students’ level of formal linguistic knowledge in providing indirect feedback. In fact, lower proficiency students may be unable to correct errors even when they have been marked for them. In such cases, direct feedback, even if it only directs the students to recopy the accurate forms, may be more advantageous. Having explained the rationale behind employing direct and indirect feedback strategies, it can be argued that as indirect feedback provokes thinking, it requires students’ more active participation in revision tasks. More precisely, it provides a suitable opportunity for engagement and interaction. Hence, students can use the guides to interact, pool their knowledge, and scaffold each other to improve their writing quality rather than passively incorporate the accurate forms into their texts. As SCT advocates assert, development is socially and dialogically constructed (Alfred, 2002; Lantolf, 2000, 2006; Swain, et al., 2002). In that sense, indirect method is advantageous over direct approach since it facilitates active engagement, communication, and negotiation opportunities between classmates.
A number of researchers have examined the relative merits of these two contrasting types of feedback and have investigated the extent to which they facilitate L2 learners’ writing performance (Ferris, et al., 2000; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris, 2006; Lalande, 1982; Robb, et al., 1986). While most of these studies have found that indirect feedback helps students reduce their errors over time more than direct feedback does (Ferris, et al., 2000; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris, 2006; Lalande, 1982), only one study has reported minimal difference across feedback types in long-term gains in accuracy (Robb, et al., 1986). It is worth noting that the participants of Lalande’s (1982) investigation included sixty intermediate German language students at Pennsylvania State University. Ferris and her colleagues (2000), Ferris and Helt (2000), and Ferris (2006) reported studies which involved the revision success of ninety-two ESL writers at a U.S. university. Robb and his colleagues (1986), on the other hand, drew their conclusions from investigating a total of 134 EFL Japanese college freshmen students assigned to four feedback groups. These results may imply that less time-consuming methods of addressing students’ surface errors (indirect feedback) can also serve overburdened L2 instructors’ pedagogical purposes which is moving students to an autonomous state so that they would be able to self-revise their own compositions without their teachers’ assistance as such methods provide the cue students need to fix their mistakes (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Robb, et al., 1986).

On the other hand, Ferris (1999) made a distinction between “treatable” errors such as verb tenses, articles, pronouns as they “occur in a patterned, rule-governed way”, and “untreatable” ones like word choice or word order as “there is no handbook or set of rules students can consult to avoid or fix those types of errors” (p. 6) suggesting that indirect feedback is more useful for “treatable” errors while “untreatable” errors can be addressed more directly. This probably justifies Ferris and Roberts’ (2001) findings as in their investigation of seventy-two ESL students and eight teachers at California State University, they noticed that teachers tended to mark “treatable” errors indirectly and “untreatable” errors were most of the time addressed directly possibly because they believed students might be unable to self-correct complex and idiosyncratic problems of their texts (Ferris, 2006; Lee, 2008).

In summary, according to some researchers (Ferris, 2003, 2006; Lee, 2008; Witbeck, 1976) it may seem safe to propose that an ideal approach in responding to students’ papers would be a judicious combination of direct and indirect feedback which varies according to error type and considers a variety of issues, including learners’ prior
experience with revision, their L2 writing proficiency level, their needs and motivations, as well as teachers’ own goals for providing feedback. However, Ferris (1995, 2003, 2006) and Lee (2008) emphasise that if L2 instructors decide to use indirect feedback in their writing classrooms especially in coded form, they should make sure that their students understand their response strategy and do not get confused and misinterpret the feedback. For instance, they can do this by taking time early in the term to explain their response policy and to introduce the coding system they intend to apply to the students.

3.5.2 Local vs. Global

Errors can be of two types; local or global. Local errors are mainly linguistic and minor in that they do not significantly hinder the comprehensibility of the text. Global errors, on the other hand, cause a reader to misunderstand a message or to judge it as incomprehensible (Ferris, 2003). Whereas local feedback addresses mechanics, linguistic and vocabulary mistakes, global commentary concentrates on ideas, content, clarity, and organisation of a written text (Montgomery & Baker, 2007). Indeed, the major difference between local and global feedback is that while the former merely involves manipulation of the sentence level concerns of the text (Zhu, 2001), the latter affects discourse-level problems by “adding, deleting, or rearranging the ideas” (Paulus, 1999, p. 275).

Responding to students’ papers requires writing instructors to make a decision about the order of form/content feedback they deliver. One group of researchers (Sommers, 1982; Zamel, 1985) claims that students benefit more if feedback on surface errors is delayed until the final stage of composing. In fact, by adopting this strategy of feedback provision, composition teachers comment on content and organisation issues on preliminary drafts and switch their focus on linguistic mistakes such as grammar, word choice, or mechanics on final draft of a written text (Ferris, 2003). In this way students may learn that revision is beyond the limited act of editing or proofreading and issues like meaning, content and organisation are of primary value (Zamel, 1983, 1985). They further assert that following this pattern is advantageous for several reasons. First, it may be inefficient to mark or correct sentence-level errors on early drafts, as first drafts may be deleted, rearranged or modified throughout the writing process (Ferris, 2003; Sommers 1982; Zamel, 1985). Second, premature emphasis on surface level issues of language and mechanics may distract students from more significant aspects of their writing; that is, their textual level weaknesses (Montgomery & Baker, 2007, p. 95).
This, in turn, may discourage students from making further major attempts to improve the global aspects of their compositions even when it is necessary (Zamel, 1983). Finally and most importantly, teacher’s attention to form throughout the writing process may be misinterpreted by the students as it can indicate that the product, not the process, is the most salient to the teacher (Hamp-Lyons, 2006, cited in Montgomery & Baker, 2007, p. 85).

On the other hand, it has been argued that although the recommended pattern of content comment followed by form feedback seems reasonable, there is no empirical support for the claim that simultaneous attention to content and form confuses students or cognitively overloads them during revision process. In contrast, in several studies in which comments on content and form were provided together, L2 students could benefit from both types of feedback in their subsequent revisions (Ashwell, 2000; Fathman & Whalley, 1990, cited in Ferris, 2003; Ferris, 1997). Such findings were reported from investigating fifty EFL Japanese students at a university in Japan (Ashwell, 2000), seventy-two ESL student writers at two U.S. colleges (Fathman & Whalley, 1990), and forty-seven ESL freshmen composition students at a large public university in California (Ferris, 1997). Further, studies surveying L2 students’ perceptions of and preferences for types of feedback have reported respondents’ strong preference for local feedback to improve their writing (Cohen 1987, cited in Montgomery & Baker, 2007; Ferris, 1995; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994; Satio, 1994). These investigations elicited the opinions of various cohorts of L2 learners. For instance, Cohen (1987) questioned two hundred seventeen ESL students at a U.S. university. Ferris (1995) surveyed 155 ESL composition students with different linguistic backgrounds from California State University. Hedgcock and Lefkowitz’ survey (1994) involved wide range of L2 learner population including 137 foreign language (FL) and 110 second language (SL) university students. Saito (1994) also used questionnaire to elicit thirty-nine ESL students’ perceptions of feedback at a Canadian university. Finally, two investigations conducted by Zamel (1985) and Ferris (2006) on responding behaviours of three and fifteen ESL writing teachers at two different U.S. universities have also shown that L2 writing teachers focus more on form rather than content when they address L2 students’ papers. These findings can be interpreted as L2 teachers’ awareness of their students’ great need for support with their surface errors. So, they might argue ignoring feedback on form until the end of the writing process will deprive learners of the critical information they need about their writing errors (Ferris, 2003, p. 152).
To sum up, as Ferris (2003) has noted, “the distinction between ‘content’ and ‘form’ may well be a false dichotomy, as content determines form, at least to some extent, and faulty form can obscure meaning for a reader” (p. 23). Hence, skilled teachers should provide balanced coverage in their comments and tailor their feedback according to the target genre, the ability, and the personality of each individual student (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Ferris et al., 1997). Having said that, my extensive experience in teaching writing in EFL context as well as findings of the research surveying the feedback preference of L2 students with similar characteristics (Ferris, 1995, 1997; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994; Satio, 1994), convinced me to pay simultaneous attention to both aspects of students’ written works in the current study. Indeed, I believe EFL learners make more linguistic errors as they write compared to their L1 or ESL peers. Hence, not only they need to write accurately, but also develop their ideas fluently.

3.5.3 Selective vs. Comprehensive

Selective/comprehensive priority in correcting students’ errors is another fundamental issue writing teachers should consider. Many error correction advocates have advised against comprehensive error feedback asserting that selective approach to error correction might be more beneficial for both instructors and students while correcting every error is counter-productive. The primary reason behind this, of course, is that by choosing several major and serious patterns of errors in a student paper to mark rather than providing an excessive amount of feedback or correction, teachers not only avoid exhausting and frustrating themselves, but also allow students to focus on their more serious writing problems without being unnecessarily overwhelmed cognitively or emotionally (Ferris, 1995, 2007; Hendrickson, 1978, 1980; Lee, 2008). Those in favour of comprehensive error correction, on the other hand, argue that students need such detailed feedback in order to prevent fossilization. Further, selective marking of errors may mislead learners about the accuracy of their papers (Lalande, 1982). Finally, they claim marking errors comprehensively is not only a reaction to students’ preference who want to know what errors they have made, but also L2 instructors’ responsibility which makes students aware of their weaknesses (Lee, 2004). Considering the viewpoints of both sides of the issue as well as bearing in mind that selective feedback strategy normally needs long period of time, comprehensive approach was found to be more appropriate for the purpose of this study. First, students needed an overview of all types errors they made during their writing, so they could discuss them in detail during peer
review and collaborative revision sessions. Second, the course and especially its writing phase was short and there was not enough time to address one group of errors at a time and leave the rest for the following sessions/drafts. Third, students were already introduced to some other innovative strategies/techniques such as collaborative work, multiple drafting, indirect coded feedback and introducing them to a new approach such as selective feedback strategy could be counter-productive as it could distract the students from the focus of the study, made the process more complicated and overwhelmed the learners. Finally, most studies reporting L2 students’ reflections on feedback on their written work conclude that they expected all their errors to be addressed by their teachers (Komura 1998; Rennie, 2000, both cited in Falhasiri, et al., 2011, p. 255; Lee, 2005; Leki, 1991; Radecki & Swales, 1988). It is worth stating that while Lee (2005) used a questionnaire to elicit the expectations of 320 EFL secondary students in Hong Kong, Radecki and Swales’ (1988) as well as Leki’s (1991) surveys asked two groups of ESL students’ preferences at two different U.S. universities (the first study involved 59 participants and the latter 100).

3.6 Feedback Delivery Options/ Methods

Broadly speaking, feedback can be delivered through three main ways. Indeed, students often receive feedback on their papers in written, oral, or electronic formats. Sometimes, a combination of feedback methods is used to address a piece of written text. For example, a one-to-one writing conference between teacher and students is an option several writing researchers prefer (Bitchener, et al., 2005). Proponents of this approach to feedback delivery claim that teacher-student conferencing can potentially be more advantageous compared to written form as it provides an opportunity for negotiation, clarification, instruction, and decision-making (Ferris, 2003). They also maintain that the two-way interaction which occurs during oral feedback prevents appropriation of students’ papers (Sommers, 1982; Zamel, 1985). Finally, it has been suggested that certain types of writing problems are too complex to be tackled through written commentary and require oral feedback to be addressed more effectively (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999).

On the other hand, the scant literature implies that teacher-student oral feedback can be successful and very effective not only for improving L2 learners’ writing skill, but also for fostering their confidence in oral communication provided that conference sessions are well planned and appropriately prepared (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Patthey-
Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Keh, 1990). While Goldstein and Conard (1990) drew their conclusions from their investigation of three international students with different cultural backgrounds studying at a U.S. university, Patthey-Chavez and Ferris’ (1997) research involved four composition teachers, six international students, and two sophomore native speakers of English. To make teacher-student writing conferences more efficient, Ferris (2003) stresses that L2 writing instructors “should be sensitive to differences across cultural expectations, personality, and language and writing proficiency in conducting conferences with ESL writers” (p. 40). She further argues that as conferencing situation places additional stress on L2 students’ aural/oral skills, L2 teachers should create an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable to actively participate in the discussions.

Electronic feedback is also rapidly gaining popularity as an option due to the recent advances in technology and more availability of computer facilities as well as instructors’ and students’ increased computer-literacy. At present, many teachers welcome these developments and integrate computer technology into their writing classrooms and lots of students receive feedback on their electronically produced and submitted papers by their tutors, their peers, or by the computer itself (Hyland & Hyland, 2006b). However, writing instructors should carefully consider the rationale behind using computer-based feedback, students’ target needs and abilities as well as the potential benefits it might have for them, and the best way to use it into a coherent L2 writing program. Besides as Ferris (2003) argues, empirical research evaluating the merits and demerits of this stimulating feedback delivery alternative to traditional forms is still in its early stages and its impact on the development of L2 writing has yet to be systematically evaluated.

Two other feedback delivery forms, which deserve attention, are teacher written feedback and peer review. In what follows, each of these methods is discussed and elaborated separately.

3.6.1 Teacher written feedback

Despite increasing enthusiasm for the use of other forms of evaluation such as one-to-one conferencing and peer assessment, teacher written response still remains the most traditional and the most important component of L2 writing classrooms (Ferris, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2001, 2006b; Paulus, 1999). However, many writing instructors admit that making substantial comments on students’ papers can be the most frustrating,
difficult, and time-consuming part of their job (Keh, 1990) and are concerned whether it facilitates students’ writing development and produce the desired results over time.

A substantial body of research has investigated the feedback typically provided by instructors and many of them have questioned the effectiveness of teacher feedback as a way of improving students’ writing (Sommers, 1982; Zamel, 1985). Sommers (1982), for instance, studied the commenting styles of thirty-five teachers at two U.S. universities and observed that “most teachers’ comments [were] not text-specific and could be interchanged, rubber-stamped, from text to text” (p. 152). The author further added that instructors appropriated their students’ texts and took their attention away from their own original purposes (149). Zamel (1985) also arrived at a similar conclusion. Examining fifteen university-level ESL writing instructors’ responses to student writings, she reported that:

\[
\text{ESL writing teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments, provide vague prescriptions, impose abstract rules and standards, respond to texts as fixed and final products, and rarely make content-specific comments or offer specific strategies for revising the text. (p. 86)}
\]

She then argued that while we expect our students not to be general and vague in their writing, we actually teach them the opposite in our written annotations.

However, studies examining students’ use of feedback have demonstrated that L2 students value and welcome it, attend to it, incorporate it into their revisions, and feel it helps them improve as writers (Ferris, 1995, 2006; Hyland, 1998; Goldstein, 2004). Such positive attitudes were reported by researching 155 ESL composition students with different linguistic backgrounds from California State University (Ferris, 1995), ninety-two ESL/International undergraduate students at California State University (Ferris, 1996), and six international students from Far East studying within the context of English proficiency program (EPP) in New Zealand (Hyland, 1998). Teachers also feel that written feedback is an important pedagogical opportunity which “reinforces the instruction given in class” (Ferris, 2003, p. 123). Further, more recent research suggests that feedback can cause writing progress (Ferris, 2003). For example, a study performed on forty-seven ESL freshmen composition students at a large public university in California by Ferris (1997), revealed that longer, clear, concrete and text-specific teacher comments in which contextual factors such as student personalities were taken
into consideration promoted student revisions and had positive effects on their writing. Ferris’ (2006) analysis of ninety-two ESL/International undergraduate students’ revision behaviours also yielded similar results as her findings demonstrated that instructors’ written feedback helped L2 writers successfully progress in accuracy both from one draft to the next and over time. Besides, Bitchener (2008) conducted a study on seventy-five international low-intermediate EFL students in two private language schools in New Zealand and found that written corrective feedback led to significantly greater long-term accuracy in two functional uses of the English article system, a finding that supported some of the earlier studies.

In conclusion, considering teacher written feedback dynamics and constraints as well as L2 students’ reactions, expectations and needs, it is safe to argue that teachers’ feedback practices are influenced by “multiple contextual, teacher and student factors interacting and mediating each other” (Goldstein, 2004, p. 67). Hence, L2 researchers have recommended that teachers need to change their responding behaviour to enhance the effectiveness of their commentary and the students’ revisions. For example, they need to replace vague commentary and references to abstract rules and principles with clear, elaborate, focused and text-specific directions, guidelines, and recommendations that meet individual student’s needs (Ferris, 2003; Zamel, 1985). They have also advised L2 instructors to construct an interpersonal relationship with students through written commentary in order to provide them useful and appropriate intervention to avoid appropriation and misinterpretation (Goldstein, 2004) and therefore, to facilitate L2 students’ writing development (Hyland & Hyland, 2001). Finally, L2 writing teachers have been recommended not only to discuss their commentary philosophy, the rationale behind their feedback practices, and the way their comments should be interpreted and enacted with the students, but also to consider students’ preferences and expectations (Ferris, 2003; Goldstein, 2004). As Hyland (1998) puts it:

*Written feedback from teachers can play a significant, if complex, role in students’ writing development. A better understanding of both the positive and negative aspects of teacher written feedback is necessary if writing teachers are to exploit its potential most effectively (p. 281).*

### 3.6.2 Peer feedback

Peer feedback, also referred to as peer review, peer response, peer assessment, or peer editing has been defined as “the use of learners as sources of information, and
interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other’s drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing” (Liu & Hansen, 2002, p. 1). As a transitional assessment of performance against writing criteria supplemented by comments for progress, peer feedback is expected to reinforce learning process (Falchikov, 1996, cited in Gielen, et al., 2010, p. 304) and if performed appropriately, it can improve not only the local but also the global aspects of students’ compositions, their intercultural communication, and their sense of collaboration (Hansen & Liu, 2005). The learning benefits of peer feedback is mutual since not only the student writers but also reviewers can improve their writing skills by means of observing their classmates’ approaches to writing, and internalizing writing criteria and standards. In what follows (Sections 3.7-3.12), different issues concerning peer feedback will be discussed and scrutinised in detail.

3.7 Peer Evaluation Strategies

The idea of students receiving feedback on their papers from their peers was initially developed in L1 as an essential component of composition classes and has been increasingly transferred to L2 contexts as an alternative/complement to teacher-directed evaluation (Ferris, 2003; Hyland, 2003a). A number of researchers have proposed some practical suggestions and techniques which they believe can help L2 practitioners implement effective peer review practices in L2 composition classes and obtain satisfactory results. Even though these guidelines are generally proposed for L1 and ESL learners and do not address some of the concerns specific to EFL contexts such as cultural and social issues, for example gender issues in segregated contexts like Iran, they are still are very helpful for Iranian course developers and teachers as their careful consideration can help them realise the sensitivity of the issue, incorporate the techniques into their essay writing courses efficiently, and prepare themselves to tackle the potential problems they may face during execution of this technique.

Witbeck (1976), for example, disappointed by conventional method of written teacher feedback and not being sure about its effects on student composition improvement, recommended extensive application of peer correction in ESL writing courses as an alternative. He believed it had several merits; (a) enhancing oral communication skill of the students, (b) raising their awareness of writing rules and conventions, (c) providing them with the opportunity to amend their texts before being evaluated and marked, and
(d) helping them to notice the occurrence of errors in other second language learners’ compositions that could be interpreted as sign of their cognitive development. He, then, proposed a four step procedure for peer response implementation in ESL composition classes: (1) all students of the class evaluate a model text with the teacher monitoring and intervening the activity whenever needed. (2) Pairs of students trade first drafts and provide their peers live and immediate feedback which is followed by paper re-drafting. (3) Teacher supports the student dyads and directs them on which areas of the papers to focus in order to avoid confusion on students’ side. (4) Students evaluate and correct selected essays individually and then jointly with their classmates. These strategies, Witbeck claimed, could motivate the students to develop more accurate papers (p. 325).

Observation of over 100 peer response sessions as well as 5 years experience of working with instructors engaged in this type of activity enabled George (1984) to identify problems that could occur during peer evaluation sessions and to provide solutions which could facilitate group work dynamics. In other words, her extensive observations of interactions which typically occurred between students helped her identify some of the weak points inherent in peer groups such as; students’ scepticism about the validity of their peers’ comments, their low level of engagement in the task, their distraction by the topics of the essays and hence discussing ideas in isolation rather than critically analysing the content of the written papers, and their inability to provide concrete and useful feedback. George also emphasized the demanding nature of peer evaluation activity as it requires the students:

> to engage in a specific kind of reading, the kind of reading that it takes most writing instructors much practice to master,…to interact in a group situation that may pose a threat,…to listen critically and openly and to take one another seriously in this activity,…[and] to accept advice from their peers in addition to advice they might get from the instructor (p. 323).

She then proposed a number of tactics to facilitate interaction among group members including writers’ requests for advice by asking ice-breaking questions regarding the weak points of their essays which engages other members of the group, writers’ initial reviewing and summarizing of their papers, and taping the discussions as it allows the students to listen to the conversations afterwards. In short, she concluded that carefully planned peer response sessions, together with appropriately prepared students, could result in better outcomes.
In his paper, Hafernik (1984) also discussed some of the issues concerning peer editing and provided some guidelines for in-class peer editing. He began by indicating the advantages of peer editing by stating that: (a) it raises the students’ consciousness regarding their audience and writing purpose. That is, peer editing can help them notice the misunderstandings. (b) It can help students gain self-confidence as they take more risks expressing their voice and tone which in turn requires them to be responsive about the decisions they have made and justify them. (c) It creates a more friendly environment in the class as the students realize the purpose of joint involvement which is supporting each other improve their writing skills. (d) It enables instructors to use it as a diagnostic and pedagogical tool since by reviewing the students’ comments teachers can detect their strengths and weaknesses. He then continued by offering some procedural instructions regarding the implementation of peer editing in writing courses such as creating trust among students, explaining the rationale for incorporating it in class, providing students a reviewing framework which matches with the input they have already received in order to keep them on task and decrease confusion, and organizing the group/pair structure considering some purposive criteria like group members’ background language, abilities, and needs. Finally, he pointed out that students should be taught to be selective in addressing surface level mistakes. In addition, in response to the criticisms articulated describing the task a time-consuming activity, he stressed its value by claiming that:

Students learn from editing others’ papers and from having their papers edited. Students who become good editors generally become good writers. Editors begin to look at their own papers differently and more carefully. After a time, peer editing can contain a self-evaluation component also (p. 55).

In their thorough review of peer response groups, Dipardo and Freedman (1988) affirmed the complex nature of forming response groups successfully in writing classes especially in terms of classroom power and control dynamics. Though, they claimed it performs a distinctive status in writing pedagogy as it allows on-going response to student writings, collaborative pooling of ideas, focus on audience needs, and interaction with peers in a supportive atmosphere which can entail cognitive growth. Reporting a number of research conducted focusing on peer response mechanism in L1 writing context, the authors contended that:
Ideally, peer talk about writing should occur in an environment that is flexible and attentive to the role of individual differences and that fosters communication about issues of genuine significance to students—a workplace organized and guided by a teacher, but offering the writer opportunities to solicit feedback from peers as well as from the teacher in support of one’s evolving, individual needs (p. 145).

Keh (1990) also stressed the significance of training students to focus more on global issues rather than local issues. She admitted that such training might seem difficult, but would be rewarding. The model she proposed was providing the student reviewers with more structured guidelines earlier in the course and proceeding to less structured, no-guidelines at later stages of the course when the students get familiar with the task (p. 297).

Arguing that Elbow’s (1973) unstructured method of peer response groups did not fit ESL writing courses, Bell (1991) proposed an alternative approach which he believed could yield invaluable results. In his paper, he recommended ESL practitioners (a) to explain to their students the rationale behind their use of peer review groups in class and brief them about the procedures they would go through, (b) to model the activity so the students could practically observe the process and reproduce it in their groups, (c) to form groups of not more than three members who are more likely to collaborate together rather than disapprove each other, this works best by matching students with heterogeneous levels of writing proficiency and diverse L1 languages, (d) to make sure each paper receives equal consideration in terms of the time allocated by other members of group to be reviewed, and (e) to monitor the process and observe if the group is on-task and following the procedures. Berg claimed that applying such a transitory method worked well in his upper intermediate/advanced ESL college writing courses as both the students and himself found it very beneficial. As a final remark, he noted the importance of creation of a cordial and pleasant climate in maintaining fruitful group revision sessions (p. 70).

Rollinson (2005) also listed some of the arguments for and against peer feedback incorporation in L2 writing classes and provided some practical suggestions which he claimed could facilitate effective peer reviewing practice in such contexts. Drawing on literature, he cited some of the advantages of using peer feedback in ESL writing classroom as it enabled L2 learners to (1) grow as analytical writers and readers, (2)
provide themselves immediate, real, and more sympathetic audience, (3) spend more
time negotiating meaning, and (4) maintain collaborative, informal, and bilateral
interaction. He also stressed that L2 students could provide valid feedback, incorporated
a high rate of peer advice into their subsequent drafts, and addressed more specific
issues in their suggestions. Despite all these benefits, Rollinson asserted that (i) whether
oral or written, peer evaluation is time consuming, (ii) it requires preparation, and (iii)
to yield successful outcomes, L2 students’ characteristics such as age, interlanguage
level, and culture should be taken into account. Further, he pointed out the invaluable
role of designing effective procedures and sufficient coaching in overcoming such
practical and instructional concerns. To address procedural issues, he suggested
instructors to consider the group size, number of drafts to be written, evaluation
mechanism, mode of feedback delivery (oral/written or both), organisation of peer
review sessions, and peer evaluation structure and focus before introducing it to their
writing classes. As for student training, he proposed two phase preparation. While pre-
training activities primarily concentrated on developing students’ awareness, generating
constructive group communication, and supporting informative feedback and revision,
intervention training was designed to amplify the benefits of peer feedback task for each
group and each student. As a concluding remark he admitted the difficulty of peer
evaluation task, yet he rejected its worthlessness by supporting Bartholomae’s (1980)
view and maintained:

It is easier to teach students (as readers) an editing procedure
than it is to teach students (as writers) to write correctly at the
point of transcription. Consequently, by giving the students
practice in becoming critical readers, we are at the same time
helping them towards becoming more self-reliant writers, who
are both self-critical and who have the skills to self-edit and
revise their writing. This may in the end be a more achievable
pedagogical objective than getting them to do it right first time
(p. 29).

Acknowledging the significance of well-planned and purposeful peer evaluation
activities in ESL and EFL contexts, Hansen and Liu (2005) developed some guiding
principles which they believed could eliminate instructors’ doubts regarding its efficacy
provided that L2 writing practitioners tailored them according to their classroom
conditions. They categorized peer evaluation strategies into pre-, during and post peer
response activities. According to them, pre-peer response principles involved (a) introducing peer collaboration at earlier stages of writing process (pre-writing) allowing the students to work with their peers through the entire writing process (b) not providing teacher feedback on students’ earlier drafts and leaving it for later drafts after peers have evaluated each other’s papers, (c) eliciting students’ perceptions of joint work and discussing their prior experiences of engaging in the activity, (d) establishing a mutual trust atmosphere among the students in the class, (e) deciding which type of peer response mode is more practical in their particular context, (f) supplying the students with customized peer review frame works based on the input they have received and the writing genre, (g) modelling the peer evaluation task, (h) allocating some time so that students internalize the task demands and procedures, (i) allowing students to select their partners and establish their own rules, and (j) equipping the students with appropriate rhetoric and linguistic strategies. During peer response techniques, on the other hand, encompassed (a) encouraging students to focus on negotiation of meaning, and (b) observing group activities. Finally, post peer response strategies included (a) requiring students to record the comments they have received and to report their reactions to them, (b) linking peer evaluation activity to other in-class assignments, (c) requesting the students to review the revisions made and check the effects of collaborative work on their final drafts, and (d) uncovering students’ overall evaluation of the task and discussing its merits and demerits. Following their recommended procedures Hansen and Liu claimed, would develop the notion of peer evaluation beyond merely an editing task to “language development activity that spans all four skill areas,…and helps learners to develop communicative competence by addressing sociolinguistic, linguistic, strategic, and discourse aspects of communication” (p. 38).

3.8 Peer Interaction

Several empirical studies have investigated peer and group work dynamics in L2 contexts. One strand of research has examined the nature of peer discussions and documented the stances students take towards peers’ texts, as well as the patterns, functions, contents, and focuses of the peer interactions. Reviewing such investigations can help L2 scholars in general, and Iranian researchers and practitioners in particular to be aware of the peer collaboration mechanisms, the advantages and disadvantages of implementing such techniques in their writing courses, and the potential challenges they may encounter. Hence, they can plan ahead to lessen the problems and enhance the
quality and efficiency of collaborative tasks in their classes. In what follows, I will provide a comprehensive overview of the research performed to probe the nature of peer interactions in ESL/EFL contexts. This includes information about the participants, their size and English language proficiency, the instruments employed and the major findings as well as the conclusions drawn in each research.

In an exploratory study, Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger (1992) investigated the characteristics of written peer evaluations produced in response to a sample student paper. In particular, the main purpose of their study was to address the stances students adopted towards a text developed by a writer they had never met. 60 advanced ESL undergraduate composition students from the University of Arizona with different educational backgrounds were investigated in this study. All were familiar with the peer review process as their teacher had introduced it to them at the beginning of the course. As an in-class assignment, then, they were allocated 30 minutes to evaluate an anonymous essay in addition to making suggestions for its revision. Peer responses fell under three categories – interpretive, prescriptive, and collaborative. Taking such factors as course grade, and gender of the reviewers, etc. into account, they also analysed textual features, and focus of written peer reviews. Of the 60 responses, 45% were labelled as prescriptive, 32% fell under collaborative category, and 23% were placed in the interpretive category. While identifying and fixing surface level mistakes was the dominant feature of prescriptive stance, the main characteristic of interpretive stance was appropriation of the written text. Collaborative stance, on the other hand, neither did dictate a particular type of revision nor appropriated the author’s intention. Further, they found that student reviewers who adopted a collaborative stance received the highest grades in their composition final exam compared to interpretive and prescriptive reviewers. Noticing that most students adopted a prescriptive rather than collaborative stance as they responded to their peers, they emphasised the necessity of peer review techniques instruction as well as construction of a collaborative and supportive atmosphere between students in ESL composition courses (p. 249).

Nelson and Murphy (1992) conducted a case study research at a large metropolitan university in the U.S. to explore the content of students’ talk in an ESL peer writing group in terms of task and social dimensions. The data was collected from four intermediate participants over a six-week period and included videotapes, interviews, and students’ journals and written papers. The researchers observed that 73% of students’ comments fell under “the study of language” category indicating that students
spent most of their allocated time focusing on task and discussing each other’s papers. However, an analysis of the group’s dynamics indicated that the social dimension was less successful as one of the participants’ unconstructive criticism created an unfavourable social relationships among group members. The researchers, therefore, commented that the roles group members took during peer evaluation sessions greatly influenced their perspectives towards group work and their writing. In their final remarks Nelson and Murphy asserted that ESL teachers cannot guarantee productive interaction among members of writing groups unless they are adequately trained “to establish trust and commitment, to develop collaborative skills for critiquing drafts in a way that is not negative, and to learn needed social and listening skills” (p. 189).

Caulk (1994) investigated the quality of written comments offered by intermediate and advanced ESL composition students evaluating their classmates’ papers and those of a writing teacher; herself at a large metropolitan university in Germany. As a researcher, she was particularly eager to understand the similarities and differences between these two types of feedback sources. Evaluating students’ comments in terms of validity, she found that most of (89%) their advice was valuable, the majority of which (60%) had been missed by the instructor. Furthermore, only a small portion of students’ suggestions overlapped with those of hers. On the other hand, she realised that the students’ comments were more specific and geared towards a particular problem, whereas her suggestions were more general and took the whole piece of writing into consideration. Besides, both the students and the instructor behaved the same in addressing the types of problems. However, while the instructors’ greater emphasis was on form and clarity, more focus on content was observed on the students’ side. Thus, Caulk claimed that both types of feedback complemented each other in developing students’ writing abilities by suggesting that “teacher and student responses give students alternative ways to think about and understand the problem, which may make it easier for students to understand the point” (p. 186).

In their study of 12 international graduate students at a U.S. university, Mendonca and Johnson (1994) examined the interaction characteristics of six student dyads involved in a peer review session and evaluated the extent to which such negotiations shaped L2 students’ revision activities. Of the six pairs, four were composed of students in the same field of study, whereas the other two pairs had students in different disciplines. They were particularly keen to explore negotiation mechanisms, feedback incorporation degree, and reflections of students engaged in the task. To serve this purpose, they
audio-taped the participants’ discussions, collected their written texts, and interviewed them. The results of the recorded data analysis indicated that students’ negotiations mainly focused on asking questions (request for explanation or comprehension check), explanations (unclear point, opinion, and content), restatements, suggestions, and grammar corrections with all but one type of interactions initiated by the reviewers – explanation of content. Moreover, they reported that despite different peer review dyads configurations, overall patterns of negotiations were quite similar. They also found that students incorporated more than half (53%) of their peers’ comments into their revised drafts. Yet, they ignored 10% of the suggestions they had received from their classmates and 37% of their revision instances had not been discussed during peer evaluation indicating that instead of passively incorporating the feedback into their revised drafts, students critically evaluated their validity. In their interviews, all students reported that they had found the peer review activity constructive, saying that the task had “helped them see points that were clear in their essays and points that needed revision” (p. 764). They also found reading their peers’ papers a pleasant experience providing them the opportunity “to compare their writing with that of their peers and to learn some new ideas about writing” (p. 765). In short, peer review was found to develop student writers’ sense of audience and allowed them to explore and discuss their ideas (p. 766).

Adapting Vygotsky’s theory of social-cognitive development, de Guerrero and Villamil (1994) studied the dyadic oral interactions during peer revision in an L2 writing classroom at Inter American University of Puerto Rico. Their participants included 54 intermediate ESL students whose negotiations were recorded two times during the study once when they were discussing their narrative essays and later as they were negotiating their persuasive papers. Through an iterative process, they analysed the audio transcripts both quantitatively and qualitatively in terms of types of episodes (on-task, about-task, and off-task), cognitive stages of regulation (object-regulated, other-regulated, and self-regulated), and social relationships (symmetrical and asymmetrical peer interactions). Results obtained from the data revealed that 84% of the student discussion episodes focused on the task with writer/reader interactive revisions where both reader and writer discussed revision of a trouble source being the most common (77%). While writers were typically more other-regulated (where learners are guided by their peer), self-regulation (where learners are capable of independent problem-solving) was more evident among readers. Moreover, the asymmetrical relationships were dominant (69%) among different patterns of social relationships. As a concluding remark, de Guerrero
and Villamil supported the incorporation of collaborative activities in writing classrooms contending:

*The Vygotskian paradigm captures like no other the subtle interplay that exists between collaborative interaction and independent intellectual functioning. In peer revision, the cognitive processes that are required for successful task completion are exercised in collaboration and then presumably internalized for eventual independent problem-solving (p. 493).*

In a follow up study, Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) strived to shed light on other aspects of peer revision interaction using the data collected in 1994 from the same group of participants. This time they focused on the revision activities peers performed, the strategies they employed, as well as the social behaviours they exhibited during peer revision sessions. Audio recording transcripts of the dyadic discussions, students’ original and final drafts, and peer review sheets were then used for recursive qualitative data analysis. The findings revealed that during their interactions participants engaged in a wide variety of social-cognitive activities including reading, assessing, dealing with trouble-sources, composing, writing comments, copying, and discussing task procedures. Besides, they resorted to five different mediating strategies such as symbols and external resources, first language, scaffolding, interlanguage knowledge, and private speech to facilitate peer revision process. Management of authorial control, collaboration, affectivity, and adopting reader/writer roles were also significant aspects of social behaviour observed in the dyads’ interactions with collaboration being the most common. As Villamil and de Guerrero reported, the participants in their study respected each other’s roles and “tried to establish a working atmosphere of camaraderie and compromise” (p. 68) which contrasted Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger’s (1992) findings. In conclusion, while the researchers admitted the problems that might occur during peer evaluation sessions, they recommended the practitioners to equip both themselves and their students to bridge them as smoothly as possible and referred to peer revision as a valuable activity which

*constitutes a unique opportunity for L2 students to discuss and formulate ideas about the content of their writing as well as to assist each other in the development of writing skills and discourse strategies. It is in the exchange of ideas during*
Focusing on pair interactions and negotiations, Lockhart and Ng (1995) also designed a two-stage research to study peer response dynamics of 27 ESL dyads at City University in Hong Kong. In fact, they were looking for the stances the participants adopted and the language functions they performed during peer response activities. Students’ written drafts and audiotapes of dyadic interactions constituted their two main sources of data. They identified four types of reader stances during peer response sessions: “authoritative” stance (9 cases, 33%) characterized by the reader’s dominance of the discussion and his/her tendency to appropriate the writer’s text with little or no attention to the writer’s intention, “interpretive” stance (6 cases, 22%) in which the reader imposed his/her personal preferences proposing suggestions for text improvement, “probing” stance (9 cases, 33%) during which the reader sought the writer’s clarification of intended meaning, and “collaborative” stance (4 cases, 12%) represented by an attempt by both the reader and the writer to co-construct text through negotiations (p. 614). Further, they analysed selected peer discussions and categorised 23 language functions employed by the participants with “give suggestion, opinion, information” being the most common. They also noticed some differences across four groups of readers; that is, while authoritative and interpretive readers used “give opinion” function more frequently perceiving themselves as evaluators and trouble-shooters, the probing and collaborative readers focused more on “giving information” distinguishing their role as facilitators and meaning co-constructors. In short, they maintained that although students benefited from all types of stances, the benefit offered by the collaborative readers was maximum as it engaged “the students in fuller understanding and deeper reflection of the writing process” (p. 647). Based on their findings, they argued that:

Teachers can influence students’ perceptions of peer response and thereby shape the way students engage in this activity.

Teachers should establish a supportive learning environment, one that respects the writer’s intention and encourages mutual discovery. The teachers’ feedback to student texts should therefore be collaborative rather than evaluative and critical (p. 648).

de Guerrero and Villamil (2000) performed a further study in which they aimed to observe the mechanisms of scaffolded help in peer revision. To serve their purpose, they
selected 2 male intermediate ESL writing students, native speakers of Spanish, one writer and one reviewer, and audiotaped their negotiations as they jointly revised a narrative piece of writing. To analyse the interaction data, they used Vygotsky’s microgenetic approach and results revealed that by establishing a supportive scaffold, the reader mediated the writer to move from other-regulated state to more self-regulated condition especially in the first half of the revision task. Besides, the pair was successfully able to create a state of inter-subjectivity characterized by the reader’s affective involvement in the task and respect for his partner’s viewpoints and the writer’s enthusiasm in receiving help and not being defensive. Peer revision also helped both students to move within their ZPDs. The writer, for instance, became gradually a more self-regulated writer by adopting a more active role in the interaction and revision process. The reader, on the other hand, benefited from the task as he could practice and enhance his assistance strategies and collaboration. Overall, the researchers maintained that peer revision was an invaluable experience for both cases as it provided them the opportunity for mutual scaffolding: “the students reciprocally extended support and the task regulation became more symmetrical, important lessons were shared and new knowledge was learned” (p. 65).

In an article published in 2001, Zhu reported a case study research in which the characteristics of interactions in terms of participants’ turn-taking behaviours and language functions employed during peer discussions in mixed response groups were studied. Participants of the study were 8 native and 3 non-native speakers of English enrolled in a freshman writing course at a university in the United States. Transcripts of tape-recordings of peer communications as well as participants’ written comments on peer review sheets were used as data sources. The turn-taking behaviours of native and non-native speakers were examined according to the specific roles they played during peer response: as a writer and as a reviewer. As writers, ESL students took fewer turns (three times less) than native speakers and although they took more turns as readers, their performance was still less than that of their native speaker group members. Moreover, it was the native speakers who initiated all the negotiations and interrupted ESL feedback providers in nearly all but one instance. Zhu then coded the language functions used by the participants and found that while non-native speakers acting as writers mainly engaged in “responding” to the feedback they received, native speakers tended not only to “respond” to the comments but also to “clarify” their intentions. Besides, as readers ESL students applied limited types of language functions in their conversations compared to their native speakers counterparts with “announcing” and
“questioning” being the two major functions they engaged in. Native speakers, on the other hand, used a variety of functions with “advising”, “reacting”, and “announcing” being the most frequently occurring ones (pp. 265-268). Finally, reporting the results obtained from analysis of students’ written comments, Zhu maintained that non-native speakers were similar to native speakers in terms of their concentration on macro-level issues (p. 268).

Storch (2002) also investigated the nature of peer interactions in an adult ESL classroom in a semester-long research project at a large Australian university. His classroom-based study included 10 intermediate level pairs of students who were required to do three different tasks collaboratively. Audiotaped pair talk, researcher’s observation field notes, students’ written texts, and questionnaire survey constituted the research data. Data analysis was performed in two stages. The first stage focused on dyadic interactions analysis; that is, inductive and recursive creation of conversation categories. The second stage, on the other hand, traced the influence of pair interactions on individuals’ subsequent performances. As the researcher reported, student pairs displayed four patterns of interaction; “collaborative, dominant/dominant, expert/novice, and dominant/passive” with the collaborative pattern being the most predominant. Data analysis also revealed that collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interactions led to more positive change in the participants’ consequent performances. Given that scaffolding can occur during joint work, Storch stressed that “such scaffolding is more likely to occur when pairs interact in a certain pattern: either collaboratively or in an expert/novice pattern” (p. 147). He then concluded that encouraging the construction of such relationships between L2 learner dyads can facilitate second language learning in general and writing in particular (p. 149).

A more recent study of a group of 24 Japanese university students carried out by Suzuki (2008) also aimed to investigate the content of L2 writing learners’ negotiations during self-revision and peer revision sessions. The researcher was particularly eager to explore the aspect of writing skill that L2 writers could or could not improve as they engaged in self- and peer revision activities. Consequently, she randomly assigned the participants into two groups according to their English and L2 writing proficiency and collected four types of data; think-aloud protocols of participants’ self-revisions, transcriptions of peer negotiations recordings, stimulated recall interviews, and students’ original and revised texts. Data analysis indicated that participants made significantly more text changes to their written compositions during self-revisions (287 text changes) than they did during
peer revisions (166 text changes). However, more negotiation episodes occurred during peer revisions (682 episodes) compared to self-revisions (522 episodes) and the length of a unit of negotiation during peer revisions was longer than self-revisions. Moreover, peer revisions mainly addressed global issues of the written texts; whereas, self-revisions more widely focused on surface level changes (vocabulary/word choice). Drawing on these findings, Suzuki concluded that peer revision and self-revision could supplement each other in L2 writing classes with the former improving the content and the latter the form of student papers.

3.9 Feedback Incorporation

A series of studies have been undertaken to probe the impact of peer and teacher feedback on L2 students’ subsequent revisions. Indeed, the principle aim of the majority of this group of research has been to explore whether L2 students did equally incorporate their instructors’ and peers’ suggestions into their subsequent drafts. As it will be demonstrated in this section and also in sections 3.10 and 3.11, one of the main concerns of incorporating peer evaluation techniques particularly into centralised educational contexts is lack of trust between learners and their over reliance on their writing teachers as the only valuable source of knowledge and expertise. This issue jeopardises the efficiency of the technique and requires researchers and practitioners to address it in a proper way. Otherwise, the main purpose of peer evaluation which is training autonomous learners through creating collaborative and friendly atmosphere may not be met.

Nelson and Murphy (1993) conducted a 10-week long case study research involving four ESL intermediate students at a large metropolitan university in the United States in an attempt to examine the extent to which L2 students incorporated their peer feedback into their subsequent drafts. Indeed, the researchers were keen to find out if L2 students acted upon their peers’ suggestions and applied them in their revised drafts. To serve this purpose, they collected videotaped data, and students’ first and revised drafts as their data sources. The results of their investigation showed that students did apply their peers’ suggestions into their subsequent drafts but the degree of incorporation greatly depended on the group members’ ability to establish a cooperative and constructive atmosphere for practicing the activity.

A small-scale research carried out by Connor and Asenavage (1994) at a large, urban Midwestern University in U.S. investigated the effect of peer and teacher response on
the revisions of ESL undergraduate students as they wrote and revised essays over a 15-week period. The participants formed two groups of four peers with equal language proficiency. Data sources included students’ generated drafts along with their audi-taped interactions. The findings indicated that while a small number of revisions (5%) were the result of peer comments, teacher’s feedback was much more (35%) incorporated into the revised texts. Surprisingly, self/other sources of feedback influenced most of the revisions being made (60%). Further, 70% of the peer-influenced changes and 22% of the teacher-influenced changes were found to be global changes, with 52% of the changes made from an outside source being text-based changes. Noticing that peer suggestions accounted for a very small portion of student revisions, the researchers felt disappointed and proposed some suggestions that could help student writers take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by peer response; that is, (a) distinction and clarification between surface and meaning-level revision notions, (b) peer response extensive training, (c) students’ more involvement in the task through both oral and written communication, (d) careful structuring of peer groups, and (e) teacher’s active role in the activity.

In a study of 14 Spanish speaking ESL college students at a large private university in Puerto Rico, Villamil and de Guerrero (1998) examined the influences of peer feedback on L2 learners’ final drafts across two different types of essays: narration and persuasion. The data consisted of dyadic interactions audiotaped transcripts, students’ original and revised texts, and peer review sheets. As they were mainly concerned about trouble-sources in students’ texts, they categorized five different types of problems which covered content, organisation, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Results obtained from quantitative data analysis revealed that less than twenty per cent (18%) of the readers’ suggestions were not used by the writers in their subsequent drafts implying that peer revision had substantial effect on the participants’ revision practices on the one hand, and participants’ selective adoption of their peers’ advice on the other. However, incorporation rate in narrative essay was slightly higher than that of persuasive essay. Self-revision, on the other hand, accounted for 39% of total number of revisions indicating “symptoms of self-regulatory behaviours” among the writers (p. 504). In addition, while grammatical changes ranked as the highest in both types of texts, 31% in narrative and 38% in persuasive mode, content (27%) and vocabulary (22%) aspects were detected as the second major revisions made in narration and persuasion genres respectively. 7% of the revisions were also noticed being incorrectly changed representing “typical behaviours of students whose linguistic systems are in a state of
development” (p. 507), thus not being able to move beyond their maximum immediate zone of proximal development. Calling peer revision an intricate process which complements teacher comments instead of substituting it, Villamil and de Guerrero maintained that:

*The experience of peer revision provided our students with an unparalleled opportunity to discuss textual problems, internalize the demands of two rhetorical modes, develop self-regulatory behaviors, acquire a sense of audience, and in general become sensitive to the social dimension of writing* (p. 508).

Paulus (1999) also reported a classroom-based study carried out for ten weeks with 11 undergraduate international students enrolled in a pre-freshman composition writing course at a public American university. The objective of this study was to find out the type and source of the revisions students made as well as to check the quality of student papers over drafts in a multiple-draft, process approach to writing. The procedure involved producing multiple-drafts of a persuasive paper by the participants applying the feedback and suggestions provided by their classmates and teacher/researcher. The researcher then used think-aloud protocols, audio-tapped data, peer feedback forms and revised written drafts of the students to identify the source of the revisions. She also employed an Essay Scoring Rubric in order to determine whether feedback practices students performed and revision processes they went through improved the overall quality of the essays produced. The analysis of collected data revealed that surface-level changes including both formal (editing) and meaning-preserving changes (paraphrasing and re-arranging the original concepts without adding new information to it or changing its meaning) were the most common types of revision students made to their essays (p. 281). Further, although students incorporated peer and teacher feedback into their subsequent drafts, the majority of the revisions were influenced by other sources including the students themselves. Finally, in spite of the fact that the data showed weak, positive correlation between those essays that experienced the most frequent revisions and those essays that improved the most, the researcher concluded that a tendency toward essay improvement as a result of revision could be traced claiming that producing several drafts of the same text improved the essay scores of the participants.

Yang and his colleagues (2006) also reported a comparative research whose primary objective was investigating teacher and peer evaluations in two EFL composition groups at a university in China. Indeed, upon noticing the negative effect of class size
and exam-focused programs as two major constraints on feedback activities in Chinese composition courses, they decided to examine peer feedback as an alternative/complementary resource to address this issue. Thus, the researchers performed their investigation in two parallel writing classes. Both groups were treated the same except for their feedback sources: in the control class (n=41) it was the teacher who addressed students’ papers in written form; whereas, in the experimental class (n=38) the students responded to their peers’ texts using a peer review sheet and oral communication. They gathered three sets of data from the whole class; students’ original and revised texts, questionnaire survey, and teacher/researcher’s field notes. This was supplemented by two data sets which were collected exclusively from 2 focus groups each comprised of 6 cases from each class. The first data set included video recordings of interactions between three pairs from the peer feedback class and the second data set involved interviewing all focus group members (n=12). The analysis of students’ papers over drafts indicated that revision improved the overall quality of student papers final products, yet teacher feedback led to greater improvement. A further examination of focus group texts showed that the teacher provided the students more feedback than the peers did reviewing their classmates’ papers. Besides, students incorporated teacher comments in their revisions more frequently (90%) than peer comments (67%). As expressed during interviews, they believed that teacher feedback was “more professional, experienced, and trustworthy” (p. 188) compared to peer feedback and peer advice was typically referred to as invalid. However, peer comments resulted in slightly more successful revisions (98%) than teacher’s comments (87%). The researchers attributed this finding to the difference in types of feedback deliveries. They asserted that while written feedback could easily be misinterpreted by the students, face to face interaction reduced the possibility of misinterpretation and enhanced mutual understanding. Surprisingly, student feedback led to more meaning-level changes (27%) than did the teacher feedback (5%). It also encouraged students’ autonomy as self-correction occurred more often among this group. In summary, the researchers reflected the participants’ appreciation of receiving peer evaluation in writing courses and concluded that “using peer feedback on drafts followed by teacher feedback on final texts can be a useful resource to enable teachers of English working in China to better help their learners develop their writing skills” (p. 194).

Hypothesizing that certain potential mediating features facilitate external variables to influence the writer’s feedback incorporation, Nelson and Schunn (2008) conducted a study to identify and understand such conditions. The researchers argued that while
examining writing quality of papers produced by students as a result of peer feedback was worthwhile, studying feedback implementation also required more attention. Hence, they selected novice ESP writers to study their peer-reviewed writing assignments. The comments provided by the reviewers, the evaluations made by the writers regarding the usefulness of the feedback they had received, and the participants’ initial and revised drafts served as 3 sources of data. In terms of accuracy, they found 92% of the feedback delivered by the peers being valid. The obtained results demonstrated that students acted on feedback if they had understood it. Understanding, on the other hand, occurred when a suggestion was offered, the problem/mistake instances were explicitly detected, and feedback included a summary. The researchers were amazed noticing that the writers’ agreement with the statements made by the reviewers did not necessarily lead to incorporation.

### 3.10 Feedback Effectiveness

Over the past decades, a number of studies have been conducted into the efficiency of teacher or peer feedback in facilitating revisions of L2 student writers. Most of the research has focused on comparing the relative effectiveness of peer with teacher feedback in creation of better quality papers. For instance, in an attempt to examine the impact of oral peer feedback compared to written teacher feedback, Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1992) designed an experimental research on 30 basic French writing learners at Michigan University in the United States. In fact, the researchers strived to explore the effects of these two different feedback sources on writing performance as well as self-correction of novice FL writers. The instructional material for both experimental and control groups were similar except for the feedback delivery mechanism. While students in the former group responded orally to their classmates’ developed essays in small groups, the teacher solely supplied the latter group written comments. Evaluation of the final drafts produced by both groups demonstrated that students who received only oral peer feedback produced significantly better quality papers than those who received only written teacher feedback. They also maintained that written teacher feedback resulted in more changes on local level in the control group; whereas, more global changes were made in the experimental group. In conclusion, the researchers stressed that:

> If carefully implemented, the peer oral/aural technique might offer several practical advantages. First, peer revision can free
the teacher from time-consuming, painstaking correction which frequently leads to little or no change in learners’ long-range writing competence... Moreover, the establishment of peer-review groups and the periodic application of sequenced oral/aural evaluative tasks focusing on learner-produced text provides an opportunity for verbally mediated, meaning-centered communication in the target language (pp. 264-265).

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) conducted a longitudinal study inspired by Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory of mind and ZPD as one of its fundamental notion to observe the role corrective feedback (other-regulation) played in enhancing learning of 3 ESL students participated in tutor-tutee (novice-expert) collaborative revision conferences. Using a narrowing strategy and two different types of developing criteria – one the traditional, product oriented approach, and another developed out of ZPD concept – the researchers assessed the participants’ level and degree of movement from other-regulated to self-regulated states. Based on their analysis of audio recording transcripts, the researchers pointed out that learning is a social activity requiring other individuals’ collaboration. Given that individual L2 learners are unique regarding their capabilities, effective feedback in the ZPD should be contingent on, and tailored to, the learners’ specific needs and potential level of development. In other words, as the ultimate goal of interaction in ZPD is gradual movement from reliance on expert (other-regulation) towards reliance on the self (self-regulation) so that the novice can perform the task independently (appropriation), the feedback (scaffolding) provided by the expert should be relevant to potential level of development of each individual L2 learner (p. 480).

Storch (1999) conducted a small-scale study on the effectiveness of peer negotiations on grammatical accuracy of intermediate to advanced ESL learners at a large Australian university. The in-class based research required the participants to perform three different language exercises – cloze test, text reconstruction, and composition - both individually and in pairs. Each exercise had two isomorphic versions. Descriptive statistics drawn from analysing the student performances demonstrated that cloze exercise completed jointly was generally more accurate compared to the one done individually. Besides, the findings showed that when students reconstructed a text in pairs, they performed the task more effectively with greater percentage of decisions concerning grammatical choices being accurate. Finally, the researcher reported that having the pairs to produce collaboratively a composition had positive effect on
developing error-free texts. However, the texts produced under this condition were shorter and less linguistically complex compared to the compositions written individually. In short, Storch asserted that “overall, when students completed tasks in pairs their joint effort was more accurate” and collaboration motivated the students to revise their product a number of times before they submitted it to the researcher (p. 370).

Nassaji and Swain (2000) also performed a case study whose main objective was a systematic comparison of the impact of scaffolded feedback provided within the ZPD with those offered randomly and irrespective of the learner’s ZPD. Hence, they examined the interaction data generated during the tutorial and “student-specific, task-related” cloze tests taken from 2 intermediate Korean L2 writing learners for tracing any improvement on their knowledge of English articles. Unlike the ZPD student who received feedback within her ZPD based on the scale developed by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), the non-ZPD student received random support regardless of her ZPD in no collaborative negotiation context. The qualitative and quantitative data analysis indicated that collaborative help was more helpful than random support as the ZPD student could consistently produce more error-free compositions in terms of article usage over a five-week span, yet such a pattern was not observed in non-ZPD participant’s performance. Further, the ZPD student outperformed her non-ZPD counterpart in the final Cloze tests. The researchers linked this aspect of their research findings to Vygotsky’s theoretical framework in which they stressed “knowledge is defined as social in nature and is constructed through a process of collaboration, interaction, and communication among learners in social settings and as the result of interaction within the ZPD” (p. 49). Nassaji and Swain, on the other hand, noticed that the non-ZPD participant also benefited from more direct and explicit feedback as 62.5% of correct answers provided in the final cloze tests were associated with the more explicit feedback she had received during tutorial.

Liu and Sadler (2003) reported a study they designed in order to compare the scope, the type, and the nature of comments made through electronic versus conventional modes of peer evaluation at a large south-western university in the United States. They also investigated the effects each of them had on revision activities of the participants. The participants were 2 heterogeneous groups each consisting of 4 ESL students selected from two writing classes and the raw data included students’ original and revised drafts, informal interviews, follow-up-questionnaires, and transcripts of peer review
interactions. Both groups followed the same procedures, yet the “technology enhanced” group’s activities (experimental group) were computer mediated. They used computer writing their assignments, commenting on each other’s papers, and communicating with each other. Written data analysis indicated that the experimental group made larger number of comments compared to their control counterpart (316 versus 180). However, their feedback was much more local in terms of scope (72% versus 58%). Moreover, the most frequent type of feedback provided by the students in technology-enhanced group required alteration (about 47%); whereas, students in traditional group tended to make more evaluative comments (nearly 60%). On the other hand, 92% of comments made by the former group fell under revision-oriented category by nature requiring revision, compared to 75.6% for the latter group. Nevertheless, the findings of peer review interactions were inconsistent with written peer review data. Most importantly, it was evident that the percentage of revisions made based on revision-oriented comments was much lower for the technology-enhanced group compared to the traditional group (27% versus 41%). Therefore, in general the comments made by the experimental group did seem to be less effective. Drawing on the findings the researchers stressed that:

As the overall number of comments made with electronic peer review was larger, and because the percentage of revision-oriented comments was larger for the technology-enhanced group as well, thus resulting in a larger number of revisions overall, it is suggested that the use of electronic peer review may serve as an effective tool for the peer review and revision processes and be worthy of further exploration (p. 221).

Indeed, Liu and Sadler believed traditional and technological modes of peer reviewing could complement each other and could enhance students’ motivation, lessen their anxiety, and increase their involvement in the activity (p. 222).

Kamimura (2006) also studied the impact of peer feedback on two groups of Japanese EFL university students with different levels of English language proficiency attending a composition course. After engaging both the low and high proficient participants in some preliminary feedback training activities, she required them to work in pairs and help their partners improve their papers with oral and written comments. Consequently, the results she extracted from data analysis indicated that the overall quality of participants’ papers improved significantly both in short and long term. Whereas high proficient students’ long-term improvement was greater, low proficient students
evidenced more positive changes in the short run. Further, regardless of levels of proficiency, most of the comments tended to focus on macro features of writing. Finally, both groups incorporated most of peer comments into their subsequent drafts (93.75% and 98.15% in high and low groups respectively). In her concluding remarks, she argued that “peer feedback was found to be significantly useful for the Japanese EFL student writers, who came from a non-Western rhetorical/cultural tradition” (pp. 32-33) maintaining that such finding was inconsistent with the claims regarding the incompatibility of peer review to collectivist cultures (Carson and Nelson, 1994, 1996; Nelson and Carson, 1998).

Interested in examining the effects of peer evaluation on the reviewers’ own writing and seeking if it makes them better writers and self-reviewers, Lundstrom and Baker (2009) reported a study they performed on 91 lower and upper intermediate ESL writing students at an American University. They divided the participants into two groups; “givers” who merely reviewed essays and offered feedback without receiving any feedback from their classmates, and “receivers” who received feedback but did not review other students’ papers. While the experimental group was trained providing feedback, the control group was coached incorporating feedback into their subsequent drafts. Using the grading rubric introduced by Paulus (1999), all participants’ sample and final essays were collected and then assessed against this holistic scoring rubric. The statistical data analysis demonstrated that treatment differences contributed in differences in gain scores for the giver versus receiver groups. Indeed, the students who were taught to give feedback significantly outperformed those who were trained to interpret peer feedback in terms of overall writing abilities as well as global aspects of writing. The researchers used these findings to argue that:

*Reviewing other students’ papers is a viable and important activity to improving one’s own writing, findings which can benefit students on several levels (Bell, 1991; Paulus, 1999). By participating in these activities, students may develop the ability to critically examine even their own writing, which offers them self-feedback and greatly improves their writing skills (p. 39).*

3.11 Student Reactions to Feedback

Several different studies have surveyed and/or interviewed L2 writing students to elicit their perceptions of and attitudes towards teacher and peer feedback. The focus of these
studies has been on L2 learners’ views about the efficiency and value of teacher and peer advice and the relative appeal of each of them. For instance, reporting her Cantonese students’ perceptions of peer feedback, Keh (1990) argued that students benefited from it as it helped them gain a greater sense of audience because they knew from the beginning that their papers would be reviewed by readers other than their teachers. They also found peer evaluations useful in terms of receiving immediate, live feedback and developing their critical thinking and “analytical power” (p. 269).

Noticing the mismatch between needs and perceptions of ESL writers and the content-oriented pedagogies in writing courses at U.S. universities, Leki (1991) surveyed 100 college-level ESL composition students to gain insight into their concerns and expectations about error correction. Based on the researcher’s findings, a significant majority (91%) of the respondents perceived that accuracy in writing was very important to them. In addition, more than two-third of the students preferred their teachers address both their major and minor errors (comprehensive error correction was privileged over selective error correction) and 67% wished their teachers not only to locate their errors but also to give them a clue about their accurate forms. Despite the increasing popularity of peer-evaluation in L2 writing contexts, the participants judged their teachers as the most valuable source of feedback; whereas, fellow ESL students were reported to be the least beneficial. In the conclusion of her survey, Leki argued that ESL students are greatly in favour of developing error-free essays and ignoring their expectation of avoiding error in written work could frustrate them. Hence, she suggested:

*Teachers might consider setting aside class time to discuss with their students both the methodologies they prefer and the research evidence supporting those preferences. It seems at best counter-productive, at worst high-handed and disrespectful of our students, to simply insist that they trust our preferences (p. 210).*

In an attempt to address some of the reservations expressed concerning the application of peer review in ESL composition classes, Mangelsdorf (1992) reported a study at the University of Arizona during which she explored 40 heterogeneous advanced ESL composition students’ perceptions of peer review activity as they had experienced it. Her data was composed of students’ written responses to four questions eliciting their opinions about such issues as peer evaluation usefulness, the focus of peer comments,
students’ feedback preferences, and the value of peer-review process (pp. 275-276). She also asked course instructors to write down their reflections on advantages and disadvantages of peer review technique. Then, she examined both students’ and teachers’ responses in terms of ‘communication unit’, finding that 69% of the communication units expressed by students and 60% of those expressed by teachers assumed peer review technique beneficial. Both students and teachers confirmed that peer evaluation could help student writers to understand their audience expectations, to view their texts from their perspectives and to clarify the misunderstandings if needed.

Yet, many of the student respondents indicated the obstacles they faced during peer review process; that is, their unfamiliarity with the task demands and their limited English proficiency which in turn deprived them from providing/receiving valid critique on their texts. This latter view was also endorsed by the instructors. Drawing on her findings, Mangelsdorf suggested some techniques which she believed could improve the efficiency of peer review sessions including; modelling the technique, briefing students about the purpose of the activity, having students to jointly review an essay, conferencing with students and supporting them in the revisions they make after the peer review sessions, carefully structuring the groups, and allocating a percentage of the course grade on peer review practices. She concluded that “peer review takes patience – from both students and teachers”, yet it is worthwhile and can be efficient provided that it is carefully structured (p. 283).

Hyde (1993), however, asserted that the general assumption regarding the value of pair work in educational setting was by no means based on empirical research. He criticized teachers’ adoption of this technique without considering students’ preferences and being clear on pair selection criteria. Hence, he elicited 20 EFL students’ attitudes towards pair work employing questionnaire and interviews. The participants included young adults from Europe and the Far East, with both sexes. The findings indicated that students were not concerned about gender and age difference but their partners’ personalities and characteristics. The respondents also preferred working with different partners and did not like dyads to remain constant during the term so that they could experience a wide range of ideas. As for peer selection, participants expected their teachers to assign their partners in order to avoid bias. Of the four types of interactions, the traditional teacher-cantered form during which the whole class interacted with the teacher was judged to be the most favourable with pair work being the least preferred one trailing behind group work and individual work. In short, Hyde maintained that he did not intend to reject the use of pair work in classrooms but to raise practitioners’
awareness and consideration of “the student as an individual, socially, culturally and psychologically” (p. 347) and recommended group work as a better alternative since it would offer students a wider choice.

In an article published in 1994, Carson and Nelson argued that “ESL students’ writing performance and development are being affected to some degree by the social situations in which they find themselves” (p. 27). They stressed that while peer reviewing is well received and delicately practiced by the students in L1 context due to its compatibility with individualist cultures, it may be problematic for ESL students with different backgrounds; namely those who come from collectivist cultures. In other words, whereas the ultimate purpose of performing group evaluation in composition classes is helping individual students to improve the quality of their papers, the activity may be counter-productive in some educational settings like collectivist cultures where in personal goals are subordinated by the goals of the groups to which individuals belong. Consequently, the expected objectives may never be met. As a solution, they called for empirical research investigating the issue and trying to shed light into the peer review mechanism in multicultural settings.

In a 6-week long microethnographic research, Carson and Nelson (1996) themselves studied the issue by recruiting 3 advanced Chinese ESL university composition students and investigating their negotiation dynamics besides their reflections concerning peer response groups. During this period, the participants’ interactions were videotaped and their reactions to the activities were elicited through retrospective interviews. The interviews mainly focused on the group interactions and were audiotaped. The study also included two Spanish-speaking students as a point of comparison; however, as the researchers stressed their inclusion was merely a matter of interview data triangulation. Data analysis yielded valuable information about the participants’ perceptions of peer response group interactions. Specifically, the researchers found that Chinese students refrained from critiquing their peers’ papers as they were concerned not to hurt the writers’ feelings. They also avoided generating conflict within the group. Therefore, they refused to argue with their peers as they thought it would harm productive group relations. The other reason they articulated for not providing their peers with honest feedback was their limited language proficiency and their inability to offer valid alternatives. Finally, the findings of their study convinced the researchers to assert that although the students perceived the goal of writing groups as criticizing each other’s drafts, the Chinese students’ “primary goal was to maintain group harmony, and this
goal affected the nature and types of interaction they allowed themselves in group discussions” (p. 7). They emphasized that this view was in sharp contrast with “highly individualistic cultures” in which “writing groups...function more often for the benefit of the individual writer than for the benefit of the group” (p. 2).

In a questionnaire-based study, Zhang (1995) surveyed 81 tertiary level ESL students, 86% of whom were from Asia, who were studying in the U.S. They were reportedly of high, upper intermediate, and lower intermediate proficiency and their length of residence in an English-speaking country differed though all had had adequate exposure to three types of feedback – teacher, peer, self. In fact, Zhang’s primary concern was to verify whether the alleged affective benefits attributed to peer feedback practices in L1 context was applicable to ESL instruction. Following some statistical analyses, he reported that an overwhelming majority (93.8%) of respondents showed a very strong desire for teacher evaluations over other sources of help in their writing. However, the students admitted that peer feedback was preferable (60.5%) to self-feedback. Consequently, he concluded that the fact that his ESL participants’ favourite feedback source sharply deviated from their L1 counterparts was consistent with the earlier empirical research and emphasized that the claimed affective appealing of peer feedback in L2 writing was an assumed advantage without having been subjected to much empirical evidence. Finally, he recommended ESL investigators to critically re-examine and make necessary modifications to “L1-based theoretical stances or pedagogical emphases” (p. 218) before extending them to ESL environment.

In a 1998 study, Jacob and his colleagues surveyed 121 ESL undergraduate university students’ reactions to peer feedback as an on type of feedback source on their writing and also offered some implications for successful administration of this activity in L2 writing context. The study was conducted in Taiwan and Hong Kong – pedagogically teacher-centred context - and the respondents’ level of language proficiency ranged from lower to upper intermediate. Indeed, they questioned Zhang’s method of inquiring ESL students’ feedback preferences, as he had required them to choose “between teacher feedback and non-teacher feedback” (p. 309). This choice, Jacobs and his colleagues argued, was a “false dichotomy” (p. 308). Therefore, they changed the question and asked the participants if they liked their papers be reviewed and commented on by their classmates as one type of feedback. The important distinction between this survey and that of Zhang’s was that respondents were not forced to choose between teacher and peer feedback but rather to focus exclusively on whether they liked
or disliked peer response. Based on the elicited data and their statistical analysis, the researchers found that a great majority (93%) of the students welcomed receiving feedback from their peers on their writings as one of the feedback options. The two most frequent responses the participants stated in their written comments to justify their attitudes were that “peers provided more ideas and were able to spot problems they had missed” (p. 312). Consequently, they suggested a “middle path” which was a “judicious use of a combination of feedback sources; teacher, peer, and self-directed feedback” (p. 314) that they claimed could contribute to the widening of horizons in the ESL writing pedagogy.

Zhang (1999) rebutted the concerns raised by Jacob et al. (1998) regarding forcing the participants to choose either teacher or peer feedback. He also reiterated his claim and stated that his findings, in fact, had been corroborated by Jacobs and his associates. He added that the findings of Jacob and his colleagues also “served as a renewed challenge to the assumed affective advantage of peer feedback over teacher feedback in the ESL writing class” (p. 322).

Using interviews supplemented by participant observation, artefact inventories, and questionnaires, Amores (1997) investigated the peer-editing behaviours of 8 undergraduate students attending a Spanish composition and grammar review course over four months. Amores found that peer-editing activity was counterproductive for this group of students and the participants did not like their papers being evaluated and criticised by their classmates whose level of competence was the same as their own. Acknowledging her Spanish learners’ views, she suggested that peer reviewing could be more productive and more positive experience for EFL writers provided that (a) the drafts being edited did not belong to a member of the group, (b) joint revision took place in a non-threatening and friendly environment, (c) students were briefed about the purposes of the task from the outset of the session, (d) teacher modelled peer editing session for the class, (e) and pairs were carefully formed (pp. 519-520). Finally, she concluded that students’ and teachers’ goals of implementing peer editing sessions did not match. While L2 writing scholars and practitioners are concerned about “the pedagogical and linguistic” aspects of peer editing activity expecting it to be helpful in improving their writing skill, students focus more on “the personal, social, and emotional aspects” of the interactions. Accordingly, teachers fail to understand the discomfort L2 students usually express performing this task in spite of the fact that it helps them improve their L2 writing skill.
Nelson and Carson (1998) also investigated 11 advanced ESL students’ perceptions of peer feedback effectiveness at a large metropolitan university in the U.S. Data sources included videotaping of all peer response group sessions, followed by interviewing 5 key participants (3 Chinese, and 2 Spanish). Using stimulated recall method, the interviewers tried to elicit interviewees’ responses regarding the discussions they had while performing the activity. Qualitative data analysis revealed that all participants appreciated constructive feedback as it contributed to the writers’ making revisions and led to improved drafts. Besides, they were more in favour of teacher’s comments compared to peer’s response. Yet, Chinese students’ perception of the main purpose of peer feedback differed from their Spanish classmates. That is, while Chinese students referred to group consensus as the main objective of peer review, Spanish students’ main focus was on the task and improving the papers of the group members. According to the findings, the researchers concluded that application of peer response practices in ESL composition classes should be re-evaluated as L2 students are still in the process of learning second language and are not confident enough of their capabilities. Moreover, they come from divergent cultural backgrounds which may cause disagreement among group members, and are educated in teacher-cantered environment where in peer’s views are not that much valued (p. 129).

Informed by the research expressing some reservations regarding the efficacy of peer work in L2 context, Roskams (1999) also conducted a comprehensive survey study to elicit 217 Chinese business students’ perceptions of peer collaboration and assessment at the Chinese university of Hong Kong. Students used pair works both in and out-of-class to practice their communication and writing skills and they were surveyed two times during the study; once before and then after experiencing collaborative learning. Descriptive statistics indicated that respondents (a) had stronger collectivist motivation than achievement motivation, (b) showed more positive reactions to joint work compared to working on their own, (c) were more in favour of teacher comments, but also considered partner feedback useful, (d) did not believe collaboration motivated them to work harder than they would have worked alone, (e) claimed they benefited from the pair work as it helped them establish new relationships, share the burden of the tasks, broaden their horizon, and get better marks, (f) generally considered peer feedback a valuable learning mechanism stressing that they learnt more by working with their partners than they would have by working alone, (g) found the experience pleasant, (h) assumed peer assessment and offering feedback more beneficial than being assessed and receiving feedback; however, they expressed doubts regarding the quality
of peer assessment practices, and (i) did not feel peer evaluation caused losing their faces. Roskams concluded that assigning students into pairs or groups and merely asking them to work jointly does not imply forming successful collaborative learning environment as teachers are expected to “train students explicitly in collaborative skills, ensure individual accountability, monitor the groups and inculcate a theme of cooperation” (p. 103).

Tsui and Ng (2000) also designed an investigation which focused primarily on feedback incorporation behaviours of 27 Chinese pre-university L2 writers in Hong Kong. Utilizing a mixed methodology, they gathered both qualitative and quantitative data – questionnaire, students’ original and revised drafts, and follow-up interviews – to compare the relative effectiveness of teacher and peer comments in facilitating revision over a three-month span. Statistical analysis of students’ responses to the questionnaire indicated that students demonstrated more positive attitudes towards teacher comments than peer comments and they preferred reviewing their classmates’ texts significantly more than reading their written comments or listening to their oral feedback in response sessions. Respondents also claimed that they addressed teacher suggestions in their revisions more frequently than peer comments. The findings of the survey were also supported by the interview data as the students were given the chance to elaborate their perceptions in more detail. While the teacher’s capability in delivering more specific, better quality, and concrete advice accounted for the students’ more positive reactions to the comments they received from them, distrust in peers’ responses counted as the most salient reason of non-incorporation. However, students credited four advantages to peer evaluations admitting that it fostered their sense of audience, improved their self-monitoring skill, boosted collaborative learning, and promoted the ownership of the text (pp. 166-167). Finally, the researchers offered two recommendations to consider for peer response to work well in a process-oriented approach to writing courses:

*Firstly, the use of written comments as the only means of providing feedback to peers may not be sufficient and could also be too demanding for L2 learners. Opportunities should be provided for learners to discuss the comments orally. Secondly, since some L2 learners are sceptical about getting feedback from their peers, as part of learner-training, the teacher should highlight the fact that responding to peers' writings is a learning process that will raise their awareness of what constitutes good...*
and poor writing, help them to identify their own strengths and weaknesses in writing, and make their texts more reader-friendly (p. 168).

Referring to the scant research studying peer assessment issue, Saito and Fujita (2004) performed a comparative study on 61 Japanese business management students at a university in Tokyo in order to understand peer evaluation characteristics as well as student reactions to this activity. Indeed, their research strived to explore the similarities/differences among self-, peer, and teacher ratings of written papers and factors affecting student attitudes in EFL writing courses. Following some rating instructions, the participants’ assessed both their peers’ and their own essays employing a simplified essay evaluation model developed by Jacobs et al (1981). To address the questions raised at the outset of the investigation, the researchers utilized some statistical data analysis procedures which demonstrated remarkable similarities between the peers’ and instructors’ scoring methods, yet highlighted some differences between these two and self-ratings. They also found that students expressed favourable attitudes towards peer evaluation regardless of the score they had received from their classmates. Consequently, the researchers concluded that their data somehow contradicted the negative beliefs voiced by practitioners regarding the invalidity of peer assessment and supported students’ capability in delivering quality feedback in EFL writing courses as an alternative to the “traditional one-way teacher-to-student route of evaluation” (p. 48).

Morra and Romano (2009) performed a survey study involving 108 EFL undergraduate students along with interviewing two teachers at the School of Languages, National University of Córdoba, Argentina. The primary objective of conducting such a large-scale exploratory investigation was to explore the reactions of EFL undergraduate students to peer feedback. In fact, the study was designed to address not only the increasing dissatisfaction of EFL teachers of that institutional context concerning the current peer feedback approach which was implemented in EAP writing classes, but also feelings of discomfort and reluctance of EFL students involved in this activity. The broader objective of the researchers was, then, to provide some suggestions to bridge this problem and improve the instructional approaches of EAP writing courses. By analysing participants’ responses they concluded that providing appropriate training together with establishing friendly and stress-free atmosphere among peer review group members and breaking down the activity or restricting students’ focus for revision seem to be especially valuable for the success of peer review sessions. In so doing, students’
feeling of uneasiness and distrust will be replaced by respect and mutual trust and peer reviewing turns to a productive, valuable, and pleasant experience for EFL students.

Finally, Kaufman and Schunn (2011) also investigated the origin of students’ resistance to peer evaluation in writing and its relationship to their revision activities. The findings of their questionnaire based study which gathered responses of 250 undergraduate students in ten disciplines across six universities and a follow-up interview with 84 participants indicated that students expressed the most negative opinions about peer evaluation as being unfair and unreliable especially when their fellow students were the only source of grading without any further assessment done on their papers by their instructors. Further, after engaging in peer assessment their doubts about the quality of their peers’ feedback increased sharply. The findings also showed that students paralleled fairness of peer assessment with the content and usefulness of the feedback they received and their perceptions regarding peer assessment did not influence their revision behaviours. The researchers, then, suggested that instructors could alleviate students’ concerns about the fairness of peer assessment by participating in the grading process and providing them with training and support for performing peer assessment. They stressed that such instruction “enables students to give more positive, useful feedback to their peers” and “would likely improve students’ perceptions of fairness regarding the peer review process” (p. 404).

3.12 Peer Review Instruction

As discussed in sections 3.8 – 3.11, a number of scholars (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Morra & Romano, 2009; Paulus, 1999; Storch, 2002; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996) have stressed the importance of training in the success of peer collaboration activities in L2 writing classrooms. On the other hand, there is a considerable body of literature that has explored the effects of training students for peer response tasks. Studies along this line of research have examined ways of enabling L2 students not only to respond more effectively to their peers’ writings, but also to participate more actively and constructively in peer interactions through providing appropriate and carefully planned instructional interventions. To make ESL students aware of the qualities of a good piece of writing and to equip them with criteria to assess their own and their peers’ papers, Rothschild and Klingenberg (1990) conducted a two stage pilot study on two groups of upper intermediate adult ESL students at a Canadian community college. While stage
one concentrated on selecting a proper scoring rubric and training the experimental group to employ it evaluating their own and their classmates’ writings, stage two was mainly devoted to judging the long term influence of such training and its consequent practices on students’ concept of a well written paper and eliciting their perceptions towards writing compared to the control group. Analysing the performance of both groups in terms of rating their peers’ end-of- the term papers, the researchers mentioned that the results were inconclusive failing to display positive relationships between training and establishing a well-informed, and skilled concept of assessing compositions in experimental group. However, the experimental group offered more comments on content and organisation and fewer comments on structure and mechanics than the control group. In addition, they showed more positive attitudes towards writing.

Stanley (1992) investigated the issue of peer review preparation and its consequences on revision practices of 2 groups of ESL composition students at the University of Hawaii. In her explanation of the distribution of participant variables, such as their age, writing performance, length of residence in the U.S., first language, etc., she reported the peer training procedure as the main source of difference between the two groups. That is, while the intervention group was provided with extensive training techniques in peer evaluation and engaged in various activities such as role-playing, discovering “rules” for effective communication, and analysing the genre of student writing during the first four weeks of a 15-week semester, the control group, on the other hand, just participated in a brief training session watching a model peer evaluation scenario presented by the course instructor and the researcher followed by class discussion highlighting the value of peer response. Data sources included student texts developed before and after peer evaluation activities and audiotaped student interactions. Data analysis, then, focused on evaluating the impact of coaching on students’ interactions as well as examining the extent to which they incorporated their peers’ suggestions into their subsequent drafts. Employing a conversational analysis approach, the reviewers’ responses were assigned into seven categories: pointing, advising, collaborating, announcing, reacting, eliciting, and questioning and the writers’ reactions were assigned into four categories: responding, eliciting, announcing, and clarifying. Results revealed that coached students generated substantially more specific comments in more tactful way. A subsequent analysis of student papers also evidenced more revisions in response to peer evaluation in the trained group compared to their untrained counterparts. Finally, Stanley concluded that “Peer-evaluation groups can be very productive, but this study shows
that the productivity does not come without a considerable investment of time and effort in preparing students for group work” (p. 230).

Motivated by research on the importance of preparing students for cooperative group activities, McGroarty and Zhu (1997) performed a quasi-experimental research at an American university to explore the role peer revision instruction played in enhancing students’ evaluation skills and their overall writing quality, as well as the impacts it might have on their perceptions concerning peer revision. Adopting combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, the study involved 169 students (144 native speakers of English and 25 ESL learners) and 4 instructors. While the experimental group received systematic training for revision through teacher-student conferences, the control group did not. Data triangulation included collecting data using various methods such as students’ written drafts and comments, tape recordings of peer revision sessions, questionnaire, observation field notes, and interviews with the instructors and the program director. The statistical data analysis indicated that compared to the control group, the experimental group produced significantly more comments with a great majority of them being specific, addressing meaning-level problems. This finding was also supported by the instructors during the interviews as they stressed the usefulness of peer revision training in improving the experimental group’s evaluation skills. The instructors reported that the students in this group were more enthusiastic and provided more critical comments to their group members. The instructors also believed peer training conferences were effective as they coached the students how to provide feedback, equipped them with the skills they needed for peer evaluation, and assisted them gain confidence engaging the task. Further, the researchers’ examination of student conversations led to emergence of two overarching negotiation categories; “reader-reporting” category in which the readers controlled the discussion and it was typical in communications in the control group, and “reader-writer sharing” category which represented the discussions in experimental group during which both the writer and reviewers actively engaged in discussion and negotiation of meaning. The assessment of students’ revised drafts and writing portfolios to determine short and long term effects of peer revision training on students’ writing performance also showed that overall writing quality of both groups was similar both in terms of short and long term achievements. Moreover, the results derived from questionnaire data demonstrated that students in experimental group reacted more positively to peer revision. This was endorsed by students’ responses to an open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire which elicited their opinions on the use of peer revision groups in the
class. 69% of the responses from the experimental group were positive as compared to 36% of the control group. In short, McGroatry and Zhu concluded that “despite the obvious success of the training in improving students’ peer revision skills and attitudes, the quality of writing by the experimental and control groups showed no significant difference, whether measured by the quality of individual essays or by the cumulative writing portfolio grades” (p. 35).

To discover whether coached peer response had any effect on ESL students’ revision types and yielded higher quality essays, Berg (1999) reported an quasi-experimental research she conducted during two eleven-long terms with two intermediate and two upper-intermediate groups of ESL students at a large university in the U.S. Her hypothesis for comparing students with different levels of proficiency was that language competence would not be an influential factor on writing outcomes of the participants if they were equipped with adequate peer review instructions. She called the approach she applied in her classes “product-oriented process approach” in which she taught her students writing process while the focus of the courses were on the final product they generated (p. 222). To determine types of revisions students performed, she utilized Faigley and Witte (1981) taxonomy of revisions and to measure students’ revisions quality, she employed a holistic approach to score writing (Test of Written English Placement Test). Drawing on findings of the study Berg claimed that peer review training positively affected student revision types in intervention group in that they made more meaning-level changes while generating their revisions than their untrained counterparts. The results also revealed that peer review instruction accounted for improved writing quality in experimental group’s revised drafts and they received higher writing grades compared to the untrained ones regardless of their proficiency level. Taken together, she concluded that peer response instruction and training the students on how to participate in peer review activity could result in more meaning-type revisions, which in turn might result in improved writing performance.

Claiming that the main reason for the failure of peer review sessions to meet the expected outcome in EFL writing courses was students’ lack of education and involvement, Min (2005) conducted a class-based study in a composition course at a large university in Southern Taiwan. The purpose of her investigation was twofold; (a) whether peer response training could help student reviewers provide higher quality feedback on the one hand, and (b) if it could facilitate feedback incorporation of student writers on the other. Training sessions involved two in-class modelling which briefed
the students how to examine and provide feedback to a former student paper followed by teacher-student conferences outside the class. The data collected prior and after peer training from 18 undergraduate English majors with intermediate level of proficiency, were both quantitatively and qualitatively analysed. In fact, quantitative data analysis served two purposes; (1) comparing the frequency of comments before and after the instruction, (2) checking the number of comments on local and global issues. Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, was used to analyse student perceptions of the training as well as the stances they took in peer review sessions after being introduced to new techniques. Results showed that preparation significantly increased the number of comments produced by the students and engaged them more in the activity. In addition, student reviewers provided more text-specific, helpful, idea-based, and meaning-level feedback after feedback. She also found that students generally credited training and believed it helped them become better reviewers and writers. Specifically, while student reviewers stressed that instruction helped them in such areas as “skill improvement, language acquisition, self-monitoring, and confidence building” (p. 301), student writers asserted that they benefited from it in areas like “audience awareness and idea organisation” (p. 302). As her concluding remark, Min stressed the students can skilfully participate in peer response activities provided that they are given the opportunity to learn how (p. 306).

In a 2006 article, Min tried to shed light on other issues relevant to peer evaluation training in an EFL context. Using the data gathered from the same group of participants, her main concern in this follow up research was to explore the impact of peer response instruction on EFL students’ revisions, both in terms of revision types and quality. Indeed, she aimed to investigate not only the rate of peer-influenced revisions, but also the impact of such incorporation on revision quality prior to and post peer review training. Student preparation activities occurred both in and outside class (Min, 2005) and she employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyse the collected data. To evaluate and compare the overall quality of students’ revised drafts before and after peer review training, she applied multiple-trait scoring rubric. The quantitative analysis, on the other hand, was mainly a text analysis, comparing the number of reviewers’ comments used in revisions and the ratios of peer-initiated revisions before and after peer review instruction. Min found that while student writers addressed 68% of the total comments provided by their peers in their subsequent drafts before training, they incorporated a significantly higher rate of suggestions (90%) into their revisions after it. The results also showed that peer review instruction led to more valid comments
on the reviewers’ part and this in turn improved the overall quality of students’ revisions. Reporting the positive effects of peer review coaching on revision process, Min concluded that the success she noticed could be attributed to “the individual teacher–reviewer conferences and the instructor’s grading peer review comments” (p. 134).

Hu (2005) also reported an exploratory action research which was carried out with three groups of Chinese ESL learners over three years in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing course. As she claimed, such a longitudinal research could help her develop some instructional insights into the peer review activities mechanisms and hence facilitate L2 students’ acquisition of academic writing skill. She noticed that her first year implementation of peer evaluation failed to yield the expected results due to two main factors; ineffective preparation of the participants to perform the activity, and inadequate teacher follow-ups to student performances. Most of the participants expressed negative attitudes towards the activity claiming they did not benefit from it. Further, the responses focused more on surface errors, students did not trust their peers’ comments, and were inattentive to the feedback they received. Therefore, she decided to improve her instructional practices and develop a more professional and comprehensive approach. Her observations of the last group of students demonstrated that extensive and carefully designed training accompanied by adequate teacher support accounted for not only alleviation of most of the previously noticed problems but for successful peer evaluation practices as students developed the most positive opinions towards peer review and took it “seriously and made good use of the learning opportunities it created to develop their understandings not only of the peer review process but also of writing itself and how to work productively on it” (p. 338).

Finally, Van Steendam, et al. (2010) performed a quasi-experimental research which compared the effects of observation and practicing as two instructional strategies followed by either dyadic or individual emulation on 247 Belgian EFL university students’ feedback quality. Hence, they designed four experimental conditions; observation followed by individual imitation group (OI), observation with subsequent dyadic imitation group (OD), practicing followed by individual copying group (PI), and practicing with subsequent dyadic imitation group (PD). Pre and post-test materials and emulation materials constituted their raw data upon which they performed quantitative analysis. The analysis of the participants’ scores in pre-test showed that they were mainly concerned with surface level errors and mostly focused on the word and
sentence level problems. Post study results, on the other hand, showed if emulation took place individually, then observation and practice were equally effective for strategy acquisition. Further, for pair emulation to be productive, it needed to be preceded by observation. The researchers concluded that not only the interactive aspects of receiving peer feedback affected students’ performance, but also the efficiency of an instructional strategy aimed at teaching revision standards in order to encourage more focus on macro-level features when evaluating a peer’s texts, was influenced by individual or collaborative work.

3.13 Revision

As discussed in earlier sections particularly in 3.4, the ultimate aim of providing feedback by reviewers is to enable the writers recognise the potential ambiguities in their texts and to help them revise their papers in order to make them more reader-based prose. Revision, or the transformation of text through multiple drafts, is assumed as a necessary element in achieving quality in writing (Sommers, 1980; Zamel, 1983). Traditionally writing was viewed as a linear process with revision being one of the stages performed after writing as a tidying-up activity mainly focusing on mechanical mistakes like grammar, punctuation, spelling, and dictation. This overly simplistic view of composing is no longer supported (Fitzgerald, 1978; Faigley & Witte, 1981). In fact, writing scholars (Sommers, 1980; Gebhardt, 1983; Zamel, 1983) maintain that traditional perspective is incapable of explaining the composing processes of writers since composing is a recursive process during which both novice and experienced writers constantly review their texts and make necessary changes even in the middle of developing their papers. However, experienced and inexperienced writers may behave differently in terms of their revision scopes.

Several researchers including Faigley and Witte (1981) have made efforts to categorise revisions. In their classification, Faigley and Witte made a distinction between two types of revisions; those that influenced the meaning of a text –“text-based changes” and those that did not change the meaning of the text –“surface changes”. They further developed two sub-categories for each of those two broad revision types. Hence, surface changes were divided into “formal changes” which focused on editing, and “meaning-preserving changes” which restated the concepts of the text without changing its theme. Text-based changes, in turn, were classified as “microstructure changes” which were minor meaning changes mostly limited to sentence or paragraph level, and
“macrostructure changes” whose scope of change was broad, sometimes covering the whole written piece. Then, they examined the applicability of their taxonomy by conducting two studies. In the first investigation, they compared the revised papers produced by inexperienced and advanced student writers as well as professional adult writers. Analysing the changes made over drafts revealed that advanced students made the most frequent revisions (282 times per 1000 words) followed by inexperienced students (173 times per 1000 words); whereas, professional writers made the least number of revisions (144 times per 1000 words). In addition, they found that expert writers and advanced students made more revisions during composing their first drafts compared to novice writers indicating different composing strategies the skilled and unskilled writers utilized. Overall, while novice learners’ main concern was surface amendments, expert writers made more meaning changes during composing activity.

Calling the results yielded from the first study unconvincing, they justified that “some expert writers are able to develop a text in their minds and to perform revision operations mentally before committing a text to paper. This ability may account for why the expert adults made far fewer revisions than the advanced students” (p. 409). Hence, they performed a follow up study during which they copied the first drafts produced by inexperienced writers and asked the expert adults to revise them. The results corroborated their previous findings demonstrating considerable variation between the two groups in terms of revision strategies they employed. Finally, they asserted that type and extent of revision not only depend on the skill of the writer but on several other variables called “situational variables” of composing and claimed that:

*Successful revision results not from the number of changes a writer makes but from the degree to which revision changes bring a text closer to fitting the demands of the situation. Revisions of inexperienced writers often do not improve their texts. Such writers tend to revise locally, ignoring the situational constraints (p. 411).*

Sengupta (2000) designed a longitudinal quasi-experimental study to investigate the effect of systematic instruction of revision strategy on performance and perceptions of L2 secondary students in Hong Kong. While one group of students did not receive any explicit revision training, the other groups were taught how to develop more reader-friendly papers moving from extensive receiving support at stage one to controlled integration of peer and self-evaluation at second stage and minimal instruction at stage
three. Then, the pre- and post-study writing tasks produced by all participants were analysed employing holistic impression grading. The results indicated that overall revision groups performed better than traditional group and got better grades in their post study writing assignment. The descriptive statistical analysis of the questionnaire data which elicited students’ reactions to the new pedagogy revealed that although revision group expressed positive views towards their new learning experience and they thought more globally about writing, they were more in favour of the traditional methodology. This was endorsed by interview data extracted from 8 participants who received revision instruction as they found the instruction useful just in terms of preparing them for exam and familiarizing them with the teachers’ criteria for grading. Referring to what was found during the study, Sengupta claimed that “the concept of reader seemed to have started to take shape in the students’ minds as both the questionnaire and interview data show” (p. 110) and recommended inclusion of revision instruction and multi-draft writing in L2 writing courses as alternative to traditional pedagogy.

3.13.1 Collaborative revision

As was stated in Chapter 1, section 1.4, L2 literature, unfortunately, sheds little light on this aspect of revision. Thus far, to my knowledge, joint revision activities during which students work together to revise their compositions using the response and comments provided by the instructor has rarely been investigated empirically in L2 writing research. There is also no known study which examines the possible benefits of collaborative revision activity and compares peer review and collaborative revision activities mechanisms in an L2 writing context. As it has been illustrated at several points in this thesis, peer review and collaborative revision tasks are treated as two distinct techniques. While both activities derive from the social constructionist theory of learning, the former is exclusively used by student pairs as they exchange, review, and evaluate each other’s essays and provide their partners with written and oral feedback, yet in the latter students jointly revise their drafts using the feedback and comments provided by their instructor. In this respect, this research would be one of the first which looks at these tasks from Vygotsky’s Social Development Theory and its key tenets scaffolding and ZPD in an essay writing course by examining the interactions, revision behaviours, writing performance, and reflections of EFL university students involved in peer review and collaborative revision tasks.
3.14 Writing Performance Evaluation

Evaluation, as Hyland (2003a) defines it, “refers to the variety of ways used to collect information on a learner’s language ability or achievement” (p. 213). In other words, evaluation is a crucial aspect of instruction as it identifies students’ strengths and weaknesses; that is, the gap between students’ current and target performances and can positively influence their learning process (Gennip, et al., 2010). Evaluation thus provides data that can be employed to assess student improvement, recognise problems, recommend pedagogical solutions, and evaluate program efficiency. In terms of purpose, evaluation can take two forms; formative or summative. According to Cooper (1975) formative assessment is simply a “response and feedback to a writer’s efforts”; whereas, summative evaluation is an attempt to determine “how much a student has grown as a writer” (cited in Rothschild & Klingenberg, 1990, p. 52). Strijbos and his colleagues (2010) compared these two types of evaluation in more detail and stressed that while the former is contextualized and an integral part of a learning process aiming to construct a broad description of writers’ qualities, the latter is decontextualized and isolated from the learning process. They further maintained, “formative assessment focuses on cognitive, social, affective, and meta-cognitive aspects of learning, often applies a multi-method approach and it leads to a profile instead of a single score”. On the contrary, “summative assessment focuses strongly on the cognitive aspects of learning, often applies a single performance score, and it is designed and conducted by the instructor” (p. 265).

Any type of assessment inevitably involves designing a set of criteria. In the past, writing instructors commonly utilised norm-referenced approach to scoring and judged student’s writing performance against the accomplishments of their peers. However, this traditional approach to marking papers was replaced by criterion-referenced methods where the quality of each essay is assessed in its own right against some external criteria including surface level accuracy and text-based appropriateness. As Hyland (2003a) puts it, criterion-referenced approaches to scoring fall into three main categories: “holistic, analytic, and trait-based” (p. 226). Holistic scale offers an overall impression of the quality of a writing sample. Analytic scoring, on the other hand, assesses each category of a piece of writing such as language and mechanics, content, and organisation separately. Trait-based scoring rubrics are different from the first two methods in that they judge the texts against the features of particular genres and the assigned prompts (Hamp-Lyons, 1991, cited in Min, 2006, p. 135). Finally, portfolio
assessments evaluate students’ writing abilities by collecting their writing samples of various genres in more natural and less stressful contexts (Hyland, 2003a, p. 233). Considering the advantages and disadvantages of the aforementioned writing assessment methods, I found multiple-trait scoring rubric the most useful. As it will be discussed in the following chapter, participants were introduced to two different genres during the course; process and argumentation. They were also encouraged to focus simultaneously on both surface and meaning level features of their papers during the collaborative tasks. Further, the peer review forms matched with the instructions the students received. Hence, the performance assessment method needed to be in harmony with other elements of the instruction and practice. Indeed, multiple-trait scoring rubric is the most appropriate assessment method to be used in such situations as it evaluates not only students’ awareness of different genres, but also their writing performance in terms of local and global features. Further, it allows the writing instructors to alter scoring rubric descriptors considering the genre and the assigned topic as well as the input the students have already received.

3.15 Conclusion

In sum, even though a growing number of studies have been undertaken in the ESL/EFL contexts to probe different aspects of peer feedback, their findings have been inconclusive particularly in terms of peer comments incorporation rate, feedback efficiency, and L2 writers’ feedback preferences. Further, whilst a great majority of the research has been performed based on the cognitive perspective to learning, little research has examined peer response interactions in light of sociocultural framework. Finally, despite the potential value of collaborative revision research especially in EFL settings, such research and its relative merits/demerits compared to peer evaluation has not been explored yet.

Hence, the controversial results on the efficacy of peer feedback, the need for further research investigating the nature of peer collaboration based on sociocultural theory of second language learning perspective, and the scant research investigating collaborative revision activity in L2 writing context, formed the main motives of conducting this comprehensive research. More precisely, the focus of the current study is (a) to understand EFL students’ interactional dynamics during peer review and collaborative revision activities (b) to gain insight into the scaffolding strategies they employ as they cooperate together, (c) to examine the relative impact of these tasks on participants’
revision behaviours and writing quality outcomes, and (c) to elicit participants’ reflections about these tasks after being exposed to them.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the theoretical framework underpinning the study, research methodology, and the methods employed. In what follows, I will first outline the research objectives and questions which guided the project. Next, I will discuss the theoretical framework utilised to best address the research questions of the investigation as well as the rational for adopting multi-case study approach. I will then describe the research instruments employed, provide details of context and participants of the study, and highlight the role I played as a researcher in the study. Thereafter, an account of data collection procedures along with data analysis processes will be presented. Finally, I end the chapter by addressing the issue of ethicality relating to the project.

As stated earlier, the broad aims of the present inquiry derived from Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory of learning and development and one of its essential tenets – scaffolding. Indeed, incorporation of this concept to the context of second language writing in general and peer reviewing and collaborative revision techniques in particular contributed in shaping the focus of current study. More specifically, this empirical research was set out with the following objectives in mind (Figure 4.1 also represents an overview of the research objectives):

- gain insight into the nature of peer discussions during the two activities
- understand the participants’ revision behaviours and the extent they incorporated their partners’/instructor’s feedback into their subsequent drafts
- evaluate the students’ papers over drafts and assess their overall progress/regress
- uncover the students’ views and perceptions regarding peer review and collaborative revision tasks as well as process oriented approach to writing.

To serve these ends and to achieve the above mentioned objectives, four research questions were proposed which are re-formulated here again to inform the discussion of the current chapter:

1. What is the nature of peer reviewing/collaborative revision interactions?
2. To what extent do EFL students incorporate their peers’ oral feedback into their revisions in a multiple-draft, process approach to L2 writing?

3. To what extent do peer reviewing and collaborative revision activities improve the overall writing quality of EFL students?

4. What are EFL students’ perceptions regarding peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple-drafting activities?

Figure 4.1. Scope of the research project

4.2 Theoretical Framework

As Richards (2003, p. 28) indicates, one can ignore thinking about the theoretical foundation of a research he/she is conducting; however, this may lead to serious confusion and waste of time. This is emphasised by Pring (2000) as he argues “Without the explicit formulation of the philosophical background …researchers may remain innocently unaware of the deeper meaning and commitments of what they say or of how they conduct their research” (p. 90). Grix (2004) also adds that knowledge of
philosophical assumptions that underpin a research are essential since having a clear theoretical stance at the outset of the study not only helps the researchers to justify their choice of methodology and methods and understand their interrelationships, but also enables them to defend their views and evaluate other researchers’ works (p. 58). Another way to put it is the way Crotty (1998) proposes. He states that the two key issues all researchers should be concerned about at the very beginning of their research are: (1) the choice of methodology and methods, and (2) justification of the employed methodologies and methods. He further suggests that as these issues are informed by the purpose of the study, the researchers should eventually be clear about two fundamental points which are associated with their assumptions about reality that they bring to the inquiry and the way they are going to approach their research problem. Therefore, developing a theoretical framework at the outset of the study is advantageous as it involves detailing philosophical/ideological foundations of the research. These are typically represented as a stance toward the nature of social reality (ontology), and views on knowledge and its generation (epistemology) which are seen to inform the methodology adopted in any given research investigation (Crotty, 1998; Creswell, 2003; Richards, 2003; Grix, 2004).

The ontological and epistemological foundations of an inquiry are often discussed along with methodology, with reference to a particular research paradigm which Guba (1990) defines as “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (p. 17). A paradigm constitutes a way of looking at the world, of interpreting what is seen, and deciding which of the things seen by researchers are real, valid, and important enough to be documented (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). However, following Crotty (1998) I prefer to use the term “theoretical perspective” rather than “research paradigm” since the latter sometimes denotes the idea of sharp contrast among different ways of conceptualising and conducting research. Guba and Lincoln (2005, p. 191) underlie that researchers are now increasingly embracing such a view as borders and boundaries between research traditions become blurred.

In general, three theoretical perspectives namely scientific, interpretive-constructive, and critical theory inform the investigations performed by educational researchers. My research project can be seen as interpretive-constructive by nature. That is to say, as explained below, it is closely aligned with interpretivist-constructivist ontology and epistemology given that it seeks to capture the participants’ experiences of and reactions
to peer reviewing and collaborative revision activities, and to check their overall writing quality after performing the tasks in an L2 Essay Writing course.

4.3 Interpretivism

In undertaking this project which aimed to address the aforementioned research questions, interpretivism (also referred to as constructivism or naturalism) was found to be the most appropriate stance. In fact, commitment to this theoretical framework not only informs the conduct of my study, but also justifies its research methodology principles. Interpretivism contrasts with positivism as it attempts to understand and explain human and social reality. According to Schwandt, “interpretivism was conceived in reaction to the effort to develop a natural science of the social. Its foil was largely logical empiricist methodology and the bid to apply that framework to human inquiry” (1994, p. 125). Based on this theoretical perspective, methods applied in natural sciences are not appropriate to illuminate social science phenomena (Crotty, 1998) and in order to “understand this world of meaning one must interpret it” (Shwandt, 1994, p. 118). As Hughes (1976) puts it, “Human beings are not things to be studied in the way one studies rats, plants or rocks, but as valuing meaning-attributing beings to be understood as subjects and known as subjects” (cited in Radnor, 2002, p. 20). In other words, for interpretivist researchers, reality is not discovered but is envisaged as the product of human experience created out of interaction between human beings and their world (Crotty, 1998; Guba, 1990; Pring, 2000; Richards, 2003). Thus, referring to interpretivist tradition as the underpinning theoretical framework of the present research implies the researcher’s priority in acknowledging each of participant’s uniquely constructed version of reality and his attempt to understand and interpret their meanings through negotiation and interaction on one side, and to provide a thick description of the phenomenon under study for the potential audience on the other. This can help them find the opportunity to make their own inferences and interpretations of the findings based on what is presented.

Many researchers, including Guba and Lincoln (1994), Esterberg (2002), Ritchie and Lewis (2003), Creswell (2007), and Cohen et al. (2007) have listed a range of characteristics of an interpretive inquiry and set implications to conduct such type of research, thereby creating a highly interdependent and logical description to assist in undertaking a well-established rigorous research method. This study is no different from other studies that have employed such an approach and its characteristics comprise:
conducting the research in a natural setting (L2 Essay Writing Course) rather than in an abstract world, understanding how L2 students construct and interpret social reality (peer review and collaborative revision activities) rather than discovering and predicting it, making an interpretation of what is found (participants’ behaviours and reflections) rather than trying to explain and seek causal and mechanical relationships, grounding the theory in the data generated by the research act through constantly comparing emerging patterns and making sense of them rather than testing a theory through hypothesis generation and trying to verify or falsify it, and directing attention to specifics of particular cases rather than attempting to create generalisation.

Further, as it was discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, sociocultural theory of learning and its key concepts such as scaffolding and ZPD highlight the interdependence of social and individual processes that promote development (knowledge co-construction). The framework also locates all human activities in a particular historical, cultural and institutional context (Alfred, 2002; Lantolf, 2000, 2006; Swain, et al., 2002). Hence according to advocates of this theoretical perspective, in order to understand the learning behaviours of the learners, not only the face-to-face interactions between members of the community, but also the broader cultural and political context of education should be considered (Renshaw, 1992). As Wertsch (1991) argues, such issues “are best examined through genetic, or developmental, analysis” (cited in John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 192). The main concern of genetic analysis is the process of development and not its product and since contexts within which learning and development take place are constantly changing, “there can be no universal schema that adequately represents the dynamic relation between external [social] and internal [individual] aspects of development” (John-Steiner & Souberman, 1978, cited in John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 195). Having said these, it is safe to argue that interpretivism can provide an appropriate framework for studying developmental processes in learning and teaching environments as it facilitates employing research methods, which not only capture the dynamics of the interactions and collaborations between members of the community, but also provides a rich description of the features of the context within which developmental processes occur. More precisely, interpretivism leans towards the collection of qualitative data and uses methods such as observation, interview, audio-recording to provide insight into the meanings of social behaviour. Hence, conducting a research through the lens of interpretivism and employing combination of qualitative methods enable those who work within SCT framework to gain access to the developmental processes and experiences of the learners in their natural settings, as well
as to examin and understand their learning processes (see Section 4.6). Indeed, SCT and interpretivism properly match with each other and share several common principles/characteristics as both of them ground the theory in the data rather than imposing theories and laws on them, study the phenomenon within a broader social and contextual framework, and assign a pivotal role to co-construction of knowledge.

There are a number of research methodologies, which are closely associated with interpretive approach. Broadly speaking, all these embrace the idea of multiple realities and share the goal of collecting and providing an in-depth account of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories. These strategies usually require close contact between the researcher and the research participants and emphasise understanding social processes in the context. Further, they begin by examining the empirical world; that is, the social world and in that process develop a theory consistent with what is being observed. Finally, the data gathered by utilising such strategies are value-laden in nature and include the values and biases of the researchers. In recent years case study has formed itself into an increasingly distinct methodological choice and emerged as a strong contender for consideration for research studies which seek out an enhanced insight, and a deep and rich understanding of specific individuals’ behaviours, performances, and perspectives. Since this was the central aim of this investigation, it became the methodology of my choice.

4.4 Research Design (Methodology)

Theoretical assumptions are closely connected to methodology and methods of a study and altogether constitute an integrated package to address research questions (Grix, 2004). Indeed, the philosophical stance of a researcher provides the basis of the research methodology and different world views form different ways of studying it (Crotty, 1998). Decisions about research methodology and methods are also informed by the nature of the research questions as well as aims and objectives of the inquiry. Therefore, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods, research question, and objectives are inevitably interwoven and as Guba and Lincoln put it, “methodology can no longer be treated as a set of universally applicable rules or abstractions” (2005, p. 191). Crotty defines methodology as “the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes” (p. 3). Method then includes a series of approaches and techniques
adopted to collect and analyse data associated with particular research question or hypothesis (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 47).

Given the exploratory nature of the current study, case study appeared to be the most appropriate choice to explore and provide a detailed account of individual cases’ experiences, actions, and reflections attending an L2 essay writing course during which a new approach to L2 writing and revision was introduced; that is to say, peer review and collaborative revision tasks. To serve this purpose several methods of data collection including observation, audio-recorded conversation, interview, and written texts were utilised. Figure 4.2 provides an overview of the research framework:

![Research Framework Diagram](image)

**Figure 4.2. Research framework**

### 4.5 Case Study

Case study is not actually a data-gathering technique, but a methodological approach that incorporates multiple sources of data collection instruments such as observations, interviews, documents, audio-visual material and artefacts (Berg, 2001; Creswell, 2007;
Punch, 2009). Stake (1994, 2005) distinguishes three types of case studies in terms of the intent of the case analysis: intrinsic, instrumental, and multiple or collective. While by performing an intrinsic case study a researcher wants to better understand a particular case because the case presents an unusual or unique situation, in instrumental case study the case actually becomes of secondary importance as the investigator aims to understand an issue or a problem. Collective case study, on the other hand, involves an in-depth, detailed study of several instrumental cases. Case studies can also be exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive (Yin, 2003). That is, not only are they used to generate hypotheses that can be tested in other forms of research, but also can establish cause and effect relationships, or illustrate a rich and vivid description of events (Cohen, et al., 2007).

As Yin (2009) puts it, “case studies are the preferred method when (a) ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posed, (b) the investigator has little control over events, and (c) the focus is on contemporary phenomenon with a real-life context” (p. 2). In other words, it is used when an investigator strives to effectively understand a real-world and dynamic phenomenon in depth without isolating it from its context. It is also a preferred research method when the investigator has limited control over the behavioural events (Ibid, 2009). Case studies have several claimed strengths and weaknesses. Cohen et al (2007) and Dornyei (2007) suggest that case study research (a) is strong on reality and recognizes the complexity of social issue embedded within a cultural context, (b) offers rich and in-depth insights about a target phenomenon, (c) can manage unpredicted events and uncontrolled variables, and (d) its results are comprehensible for the readers. All these positive characteristics make case study an attractive strategy of inquiry for some researchers. On the other hand, some researchers may view case study as a less desirable form of inquiry claiming that it may lack rigor due to researcher’s being selective and biased and its results are not normally generalizable. However, as Yin (2009) argues, bias may occur in other forms of research. He further states that considering the fact that no single experiment can lead to the formulation of theoretical principles and several experiments are needed to establish a scientific fact, the same approach can be used in case study. Indeed, he addresses this concern by stressing that “case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (p. 15). In addition, as Punch (2009) puts it, sometimes the intention of a study is to get an in-depth understanding of a unique and complex case or issue within its context and it is not concerned with generalizability.
Given the complexity of researching the nature, revision behaviour, writing performance, and perceptions of L2 writing learners involved in two novel revision tasks during a naturally occurring essay writing course, multiple case study was decided to be compatible with the purpose of the study and the phenomena examined. Further, a case study approach was adopted because it is flexible and can involve qualitative or quantitative data or both. However, focusing on multiple cases in a study may cause the researcher to face a dilemma; that is, lack of thick and in-depth description of the cases’ behaviours, and feeling for the situation (Creswell, 2007). To address this concern, the project was undertaken through two distinctive writing cycles over rather a long period of time (one semester), drawing on multiple sources of information such as audio-recorded materials, observations, interviews, and students’ produced texts. I believed that employing these strategies could make data triangulation possible which consequently contributed to the credibility of the findings.

4.6 Instruments

Drawn from the tradition of interpretative research, a variety of data gathering instruments were used including audio-recoded interactions, individual, pair, and group semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and written essays. Indeed, the diversity of the collected data could ensure triangulation which entails “inspection of different kinds of data, different methods, and a variety of research tools” in a single investigation. (van Lier, 1988, cited in McGroarty & Zhu, p. 3). Marshall and Rossman argue that the technique of triangulation allows corroboration, elaboration, and illumination of the issue in question and will enhance the validity of the findings (2006, p. 202). Thus, this study integrated a variety of research methods to contribute to a richer understanding of the complex mechanism of peer collaboration in a L2 essay writing course, than might be possible through the examination of single data collection method. More precisely, the classroom observations served as a means to examine how the students approached peer review and collaborative revision activities. They were also used as a cue for eliciting questions for the interviews and provided further insights into the understanding of the issues which would emerge during the research by other data sets. The audio-recorded data involved examining the nature of peer discussions and the extent the participants were able to scaffold each other to fix the errors and the ambiguities of their papers. The interviews focused on questions that elicited the participants’ perceptions and experiences of main issues such as peer review,
collaborative revision, and process writing. Finally, students’ texts were used to explore the participants’ reactions to the suggestions they received from their peers and the extent to which peer support improved the quality of their essays. Table 4.1 demonstrates the data collection methods employed to address each of the research questions and proposed earlier in Chapter one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1</th>
<th>Nature of dyadic interactions</th>
<th>Audio-recordings Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>Participants’ feedback incorporation behaviour</td>
<td>Students’ essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ3</td>
<td>Participants’ writing performance</td>
<td>Students’ essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ4</td>
<td>Participants’ perceptions of performing collaborative tasks and process writing</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1. Instruments used to address research questions

4.6.1 Observation

Alder and Alder (1998) define observation as “gathering impressions of the surrounding world through all relevant human faculties” (p. 80). Based on the nature of their investigations, researchers can use observation to find facts, understand events, or explore behaviours. It also enables them to gather data on the physical setting, the human setting, and the interactional setting (Morrison, 1993, cited in Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 397). Hence the unique strength of observation as Cohen et al. put it is that it “offers an investigator the opportunity to gather ‘live’ data from naturally occurring social situations” (2007, p. 396). In other words, instead of relying on perception based data, the investigator has direct access to the authentic data in its natural setting.

Observation has several advantages. First, as a non-interactionist method of data collection and due to its unobtrusiveness, it does not manipulate or stimulate the participants like other research strategies (Alder & Alder, 1994). More precisely, the presence of the researchers does not interrupt the behaviours or interactions and the observers simply follow the flow of events. Hence, they can gain entrée to settings with less difficulty compared to other means of data collection. The other strength of observational research lies in its emergence. That is, instead of concentrating on pre-developed categories and classifications, observers construct theories that generate categories and posit the associations among them. Finally, observation produces great rigor when used with other research methods. Indeed, Researchers’ observations of their settings and subjects combined with the information gathered through other sources of
investigations can add the depth and breadth of research findings (Alder & Alder, 1994, 1998).

Observation can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured (Cohen, et al., 2007). Structured observations are very systematic in that the investigators already know what to focus on and normally use pre-developed and very detailed observation schedules (Punch, 2009). In semi-structured observations, they have an agenda of issues but are open to collect other data, which help them to have an in-depth understanding of the issue (Cohen, et al., 2007). Unstructured observation, on the other hand, means making observations in a more natural, open-ended way. That is, the researcher enters the setting without any pre-set observational categories or schedules, observes the events, gathers data, and eventually decides on their significance to the research (Grix, 2004). As Punch (2009) argues, “the logic here is that categories and concepts for describing and analysing the observational data will emerge later in the research, during the analysis, rather than be brought to the research, or imposed on the data, from the start” (p. 154). Besides, the role an inquirer can play during an observation in terms of involvement may range around a continuum from complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer, to complete participant (Wellington, 2000; Radnor, 2002). Observers can thus take roles that range from complete detachment to complete involvement depending on the circumstances and progress through each of these roles as their fieldwork progresses (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). However, as Alder and Alder (1994, p. 379) argue, the researchers can also develop a variety of membership identities in the communities they study including; the complete-member-researcher, the active-member researcher, or the peripheral-member-researcher to increase their level of involvement in the activities and events they investigate.

Considering the great potentials of observation as a method of data collection, which could enable me to gain an in-depth understanding of the behaviours and interactions of L2 learners in an essay writing course natural context, I decided to employ it as one of my research data sets (Appendix 1). Hence, by following Alder and Alder (1994), I took an active-member role in the essay writing class and actively participated the course activities without fully committing myself to the students’ goals and targets. More precisely, while I aimed to help them develop their academic writing competence, I did not view the course as a compulsory module which I had to attend, do its assignments, take the final exam, and pass. Hence, I played dual roles. As a writing instructor, I not only assumed responsibilities that advanced L2 students’ writing skill such as teaching
them English academic essay conventions, but also supported them to engage in peer collaboration tasks and process writing. As a researcher, on the other hand, this active engagement offered me the advantage of great depth, yielding insights into core meanings and experiences of teaching and researching non-native English writing students.

On the other hand, since observation only enables gathering data from the observable phenomena and the unobservable processes are normally neglected, and it does not necessarily lead to understanding the reasons behind the events and behaviours (Dornyei, 2007), I also audio-recorded dyadic negotiations and interviewed the participants. This allowed me not only to understand the way L2 students accomplished peer review and collaborative revision activities, but also to explore the interaction dynamics of the focus group and the rationale behind their behaviours.

4.6.2 Audio-recording

Audio-recordings as data have a vast array of applications (Berg, 2001) since they allow researchers to access the details of personal meanings which may be missed or unreachable by other data collection methods. According to Rapley (2007), language is not a neutral and clear means of communication, but is abstract and those who analyse language are interested to understand how it is used in particular contexts and situations (p. 2). The major advantage of this type of data is preserving all the details of a social phenomenon which allow the researchers “to analyse how interactants meaningfully orient themselves to one another in their utterances, and how they cooperate to achieve, in a fixed time and place, inter-subjectively determined constructions of reality” (Bergmann, 2004, p. 299). On the other hand, analysing the recorded data requires relatively heavy investment of time and effort (Richards, 2003).

One of the main data collection methods in this research project was the participants’ audio-recorded interactions. By recording naturally occurring interactions between pairs during peer review and collaborative revision sessions, I tried to understand the dynamics of conversations as they actually and routinely occurred rather than relying solely on researcher-led information elicited from participants’ self-reports and accounts of what they did during collaborative activities. The research, thus, made use of this method as a complement to other sources of data, especially interviews and observations.

Besides, in order to make sure that recordings did not influence the on-going conversations between peers, I placed a digital recording equipment next to each pair
well before the start of joint revision activities; during the first part of the programme (see also 4.10). Also, to address the ethical concerns regarding the sensitivity of audio-recorded data, I sought each participant’s consent specifically for recording their voices during class time and assured them that the recordings would not be used for the purposes outside the scope of the research I had already explained to them.

4.6.3 Semi-structured interview

According to Kvale, “interview is a specific form of conversation where knowledge is produced through the interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee” (2007, p. xvii). It is “an artifact, a joint accomplishment of interviewer and respondent” (Dingwall, 1997, p. 56). In other words, it is “a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard” (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 349). Indeed, it can be argued that interview is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to get to know how other people experience and understand their world (Fontana & Frey, 1998, 2005; Kvale, 2007).

Interviewing can happen in three levels; structured, semi-structured, or unstructured (Fontana & Frey, 1998; Grix, 2004; Wellington, 2000). There is very little flexibility in the way questions are asked or answered in the structured interviews and the interviewer rigidly controls them. The interviewer asks each respondent a series of pre-formulated questions with a limited set of response categories in a specific order (Fontana & Frey, 1998, 2005). Further, this interview framework requires the interviewer to remain as neutral as possible (Esterberg, 2002). Semi-structured interviews, on the other hand, are much less rigid than structured interviews. In fact, they involve some kind of interview guide or checklist to be covered and their goal is to explore a specific topic in an open-ended format and to gain rich information from the perspective of individuals on a particular issue (Esterberg, 2002; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). In other words, the interviewer has in mind a number of questions that wish to put to interviewees, but which do not have to follow any specific, predetermined order (Wellington, 2000). Unstructured interviews, as the label implies, are the most fluid of all and are used in an attempt to explore the complex characteristics or behaviours of the interviewee without imposing any structure on the respondent’s response (Fontana & Frey, 1998, 2005). Of all interview types, unstructured interview sounds to be the most ‘real’ conversation as its format is non-standardized and the interviewer does not seek normative responses to compare them, rather wishes to acquire personalised perspectives of individual interviewees (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Esterberg, 2002; Cohen, et al., 2007).
Interviewing can also take a variety of forms including focus group interview. In a focus group interview, several individuals are interviewed simultaneously in a dynamic process (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). The advantage of focus group interview is that it provides the researcher depth and breadth to a new domain (Kvale, 2007). It can also help the researcher to gather the data not accessible through individual interviews. The group interview has the advantages of not only being relatively economical, but also aiding memory of the respondents and increasing their feeling of security (Fontana & Frey, 1998, 2005; Wellington, 2000).

Interviewing the participants could provide another perspective on their experiences of the whole program and enabled me to understand and evaluate their attitudes and beliefs about collaborative activities performed in the composition class. I used it in conjunction with other methods with the purpose of looking at the same phenomena from different angles to ensure a more balanced approach to the object of study and shed more light on it. Therefore, the retrospective individual, pair, and focus group interviews were carried out with the students within a week of each writing cycle and focused on their reactions to peer review and collaborative revision activities and sought their responses to these issues. The reason for three different interview schedules was that I believed the intervals between interview sessions could help me organize interview sessions more properly while offering the interviewees the chance to think more deeply about the experience. It also enabled me to compare participants’ responses over time and in different situations (either alone or at presence of their peers or other participants). That is, while individual interviews were arranged to gain greater depth from individual respondents, pair and focus group interviews aimed to collect greater range of responses from the participants. Finally, as one of the purposes of focus group interview is to evaluate the success, strengths, and weaknesses of a methodological technique and to elicit students’ opinions or attitudes about it, I employed it in order to explore the participants’ reactions to the novel feedback techniques and writing approach adopted in my composition class. Hence, to organize my thoughts I designed three interview sessions and used three protocols with different number of questions which some of them overlapped. The interview prompts were informed by reviewing the relevant literature and my personal observations of peer collaboration sessions. A list of core questions which were used as prompts for the student interviews is shown as Appendix 2. Probing questions were also asked in response to the answers provided by students. In general, the interview questions focused on participants’ experience of performing peer review and collaborative revision activities, developing several drafts.
of the same essay, and a number of other issues relevant to these themes. Before interviewing the focus group I arranged some mock interviews with other students of mine who were interested and not only piloted the questions in terms of clarity and simplicity, but also practised some interview techniques which could help me get more experienced collecting this type of data. It should be noted that all interview sessions were audio-recorded and to make sure the identities of the speakers were understood with no difficulty and their responses were recorded clearly three different digital recording devices were placed in three different suitable sites during the focus group interview.

4.6.4 Written texts

Written texts can provide researchers a rich source of information about the activities, intentions and ideas of their creators (Punch, 2009; Silverman, 2001; Wolff, 2004). They are called unobtrusive method of data collection by a number of researchers (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005) since the data is non-interactive and does not require active participation of research participants and therefore does not face ethical constraints. However, in this particular research, collecting students’ produced texts can be referred to as both obtrusive and unobtrusive. It was obtrusive as it involved students’ active participation and development of a number of compositions. On the other hand, it was unobtrusive as developing papers in an essay writing course is a routine and expected task and does not intrude on students’ normal activities.

The rationale for using students’ written texts in this project was twofold. First, I intended to examine the quality of participants’ papers over drafts in terms of local and global issues in its own right. In fact, content analysis facilitated tracking students’ writing performance after participating in peer review and collaborative revision activities. My second purpose was supplementing interaction and interview data. That is, analysing participants’ compositions helped me triangulate interaction findings and students’ accounts. In this sense, combination of different data sets allowed me to evaluate the results from different angles and to validate findings of other methods. For instance, I believed examining written data could better reflect students’ writing performance compared to merely relying on their responses to the interview questions. Hence, I could double check whether students’ responses were consistent with what they actually did or they were articulated based on their personal, social, or cultural concerns and in order to please me as their teacher/researcher. As for interaction data,
written texts could reveal the effect of dyadic interactions on the subsequent papers students produced. In other words, examining participants’ interaction dynamics and focus and tracing its potential effects on their revision behaviours was an interesting issue which deserved attention.

4.7 Setting

The research project took place at a medium-sized, private university of nearly 15,000 students, located in a city of about 500,000 population, near Tehran, the capital of Iran (see also Chapter 2). Each year, it enrolls about 100 English translation major undergraduates and these English translation majors need to complete language, English literature, translation, linguistics, teaching and testing courses during their 4-year university studies. The Essay writing course for them, totalling about 25 teaching hours, is guided by the requirements of the National Teaching Syllabus for University English Translation Majors passed by the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran and is compulsory from the fourth academic semester. As stated by the guidelines, the intended learning outcome of Essay writing course is preparing the students for academic writing by developing their writing skills. However, in practice, despite the popularity of process oriented approach to L2 writing and the pedagogical shift to multiple-drafting and to between draft feedback by L2 writing instructors around the world, this approach is not yet well received by most of the English language teaching institutions and universities in the country and the majority of L2 writing instructors still adhere to product-oriented, form-focused models of writing and feedback. Indeed, many L2 writing teachers consider single-draft student products as language practice rather than written expression and fail to address meaning-related problems of their students’ texts for the sake of formed-based ones. A look at the textbooks, the hand outs, and the exams in writing courses as well as a look in writing classrooms where the researcher teaches, as in much of higher education suggest that practice reverts more to the older product paradigm. There is considerable variation in this, but rhetorical modes of development (e.g., narration, description, comparison/contrast, etc.) are still explicitly taught in many, if not most, essay writing classes, with examples drawn from essay models, and focus on form and structure, topic and mode, and formal conventions of the essays being a standard procedure. Therefore, students attending such courses typically expect writing in English to improve their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary they have already learnt. In other words,
administrative constraints, class size, and instructors’ workload leaves no space for teacher-student and student-student interactions and team working, and in practice, the focus of the course is on students’ one-draft papers developed in solitude.

However, this study took a distinct pedagogical stance. The traditional practice of writing one draft of different essay modes was replaced with producing multiple drafts of merely two types of essays. Oral peer feedback and collaborative revision were also an integral part of writing instruction. In these respects, the classroom and the type of instruction were not similar to most essay writing courses at Iranian universities. Course materials included a textbook entitled Creative Essay Writing (Memari Hanjani, 2005) and instructor’s hand outs, together covering three areas: (1) writing process, (2) essay structure, and (3) essay genre.

### 4.8 Participants

The participants in this small-scale study were English language translation majors enrolled in a semester-long essay writing course, the focus of which was to develop essay writing skills. This course met once a week (approximately 90 minutes) for 15 weeks over the spring semester in 2010. Altogether 135 students were involved in four classes that constituted the study – two on Mondays and two on Tuesdays. However, the classes which were held on Mondays were used for piloting the study. That is to say, any problems, deficiencies, limitations, or ambiguities whether pedagogical or practical observed in these two classes were immediately addressed and amended for the classes which met the consecutive day. For instance, in Monday classes and during the first writing cycle, I noticed that it was impractical to ask the students to review and provide feedback to each other and to write their subsequent drafts during class time and in just 90 minutes. Students themselves also complained about the time constraint. So, I changed the procedure for Tuesday classes and let the students spend the whole class time reviewing and discussing each other’s papers and develop their revised drafts at home and submit it a few days later.

The students came from a middle class community. Mirroring the English Language translation student demographics, the great majority of L2 essay writing classes were female. All students had studied English for 7 years before entering the university and some of them had experienced learning English in private language institutes. On average, they had been studying English for between 8 to 12 years. In their profile questionnaires students responded that they had no formal, systematic previous
exposure to multiple-drafting, peer review, and collaborative revision activities although they had other opportunities to write English than in the current study and course. Indeed, all of them had previously attended Paragraph Writing Module as a requirement in which they had received feedback from their instructors primarily to justify their grades but not to help them revise the texts under consideration or, in other terms, they were exposed to product-centred instruction and their instructors’ feedback was summative rather than being formative. Students had also attended English grammar courses during two semesters and were assumed to have firm grasp on formal terms and rules of English grammar. Yet, despite passing two pre-requisite grammar courses as well as a course in paragraph writing, most of the students had minimal writing practice in English and even in their L1 and they were not aware of writing demands due to the fact that writing instruction and composition are not important aspects of educational system even at the university. At the time of the investigation, almost all of them were approaching the end of their second year at the university.

From the outset of the course all of students were informed that they would be introduced and exposed to a new approach to L2 writing and feedback delivery over the semester which was different from what they used to know or practice before. Besides, some other issues such as course requirements, class participation, attendance policies, and grading structure were discussed in detail. Most of the students were enthusiastic and showed great interest for engaging in a new experience; whereas, very few were horrified and came to me at the end of the first class claiming that my initial explanation had scared them. Hence, they intended to withdraw from the course as they felt they would be overwhelmed by the course demands and were concerned their incapability to cope with this new approach would end up in their failure. I, however, assured them about the comfortable, friendly, and supportive environment of the class and recommended them not to do it.

After explaining the purpose of the research, many students expressed willing to participate. However, I selected just six focus dyads from a pool of 135 students. In fact, peer dyads were formed based on two criteria in mind: (1) L2 writing proficiency, and (2) gender. The underlying rationale for the first criterion was that since sociocultural theory and one of its key concepts - scaffolding - informed the study, it seemed reasonable to establish pairs with slightly different writing proficiencies as well as dyads with the same level of competence in order to check their scaffolding mechanisms. In addition, exploring the role of gender and its possible association with
the phenomenon under the study also looked appealing. Because it provided an opportunity for my better understanding of the role of gender in dyads’ interaction dynamics especially in a L2 context like Iran where due to cultural norms and religious rules the society and education are segregated in some respects.

To assign the focus dyads, I required all of the students to compose an out-of-class piece in response to the prompt “You have the opportunity to visit a foreign country for two weeks. Which country would you like to visit? Why? Give specific reasons and details to support your choice.” during the first week and submit it the following week. The scripts were believed to represent the participants’ writing abilities in a natural and stress free condition because they had one week to organise their thoughts and develop an out-of-class paper. This allowed me to not only use the data for organising writing dyads, but also to have a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the students’ writing skills. The sample papers were evaluated using a multiple trait scoring rubric specifically developed to address the requirements of this topic in terms of content, organisation and structure, and language and mechanics. According to Hamp-Lyons, the advantage of multiple-trait scoring rubric is that the traits are specific to the task. In other words, the method judges the texts against not only the features of a particular genre, but also an assigned prompt and the goal is to create criteria for writing that are unique to each prompt and the writing produced in response to it (1991, cited in Min, 2006, p. 135). As a result, six target pairs were assigned and remained constant over the study since I wanted to observe how differently the same pair of students approached the tasks in two different genres; process and argumentation. I also assumed that pair cohesion and effectiveness were more likely to develop if dyad members remained stable. Other students formed their self-selected pairs and collaborated with the partners they preferred for the rest of the semester. Further, all had a chance to participate in the trainings and activities designed for the study; however, only twelve students provided the data for the research project. The pairs were native speakers of Persian, and according to the sample essay they produced during the first week and their own self-assessment, their English proficiency level ranged from lower intermediate to upper intermediate with the majority of them being novice English writers which represented the proficiency level of the Essay Writing course student population. Of the 6 dyads, 3 were composed of two females, two of a male and female, and one of two male participants. Unfortunately, the two-male dyad withdrew at the end of third phase of first writing cycle without providing any explanations which made me very upset.
depriving me to have access to a rich source of data which could have been collected from the only two-male pair of the study. Table 4.2 shows the composition of the pairs and the characteristics of each participant. To protect participants’ anonymity, pseudonyms are employed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>English experience (Year)</th>
<th>Language variations</th>
<th>Peer reviewing</th>
<th>Revision</th>
<th>Collaborative revision</th>
<th>Collaborative revision</th>
<th>English proficiency</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nasrin</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lower Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mani</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lower intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maryam</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Lower intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lower intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mahdi</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Roya</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lower intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Upper intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Azam</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lower intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fariba</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lower intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2. Participants’ demographic information overview

4.8.1 Participants’ Profile

As stated earlier, initially twelve students were selected from the four essay writing classes: Nasrin, Mina, Mani, Maryam, Tina, Mahdi, Roya, Afrouz, Azam, Fariba, Reza, and Amir based on purposive criterion sampling strategy. However, two of them – Reza and Amir – withdrew at the end of third phase of first writing cycle. All participants were born in Iran, were native speakers of Persian language and had never been abroad. The personal profile of each participant is presented below:

**Nasrin** was born in 1989. Considering her two years exposure to English language at the university, she had been learning English for eight years. Her expectations of essay writing course was not only getting a good mark at the end of the term, but also improving her essay writing skills as she wrote: “*I do want to be a good writer who writes essays without any mistakes*”. She also planned to become a university instructor in future.

**Mina** was born in 1986. Before entering the university, she had learned English as a compulsory course for nine years in middle and high school, as well as private institutes. She hoped to increase her “knowledge of writing” and felt she needed it in future. She
chose English translation major primarily for becoming a translator or instructor in future. She was also thinking of using it to pursue her studies in an English speaking country.

Mani was born in 1987. Altogether, he had been studying English for ten years. His aim of attending essay writing course was enhancing his writing skills and as an ambitious student he wanted “to be an instructor of one of the best universities in the world” as he noted.

Maryam was born in 1987. She had experienced learning English for ten years. As she stated very succinctly, she wanted to write “good essays” and become a teacher in future.

Tina was born in 1987. She had been studying English for 10 years and had been awarded an English diploma by National English Institute. Her goal was passing the essay writing course and developing into competent writer in English. Before getting married, she intended to find a job using her qualifications; however, after marriage she changed her mind as her husband was not happy with her working out.

Mahdi was born in 1987. He had attended English language courses for eight years and wished to become a competent writer in order to “write books especially computer books”. After graduation, he wanted to pursue postgraduate studies but was also dreaming of becoming a composer or a singer.

Roya was born in 1989. She claimed she had been studying English for twelve years and she expected to be able to write error-free essays after attending the course. She intended to continue her studies in higher levels and become a good interpreter or a lecturer.

Afrouz was born in 1983. She had attended English language courses for twelve years and felt aside from the formalities which required her to pass the module as a compulsory subject. She wanted to develop as a competent writer as well since she enjoyed writing. As a childhood dream, she still intended to become a university lecturer.

Azam was born in 1988. She had been learning English for 8 years and had recently realized a good learner should also be competent in writing. Hence, she had decided to enhance her writing skill. She also enjoyed teaching and felt nowadays knowing a foreign language was crucial. She hated being unable to communicate with native speakers when she met them.
Fariba was born in 1986. She speculated she had been studying English for about seven to eight years. Her primary purpose of attending this course was passing it as a requirement and gaining good grasp of English writing. She did not mention any particular career which she planned to find in future and just wished a job which could help her develop her English language proficiency.

4.9 The Researcher’s Role

As the instructor/researcher, I am non-native speaker of English, male, and in my 30s with eight years of formal teaching experience with specialization in teaching English as a foreign language. As an undergraduate student I was an English translation major. After earning my BA, I joined the army to serve a 2 year mandatory military service where I taught English to military staff for about 18 months following 6 months of my military education. I began my MA in English Language Teaching right after finishing my service. My MA research dissertation focused on reading, skimming, and students’ comprehension performance. After finishing my MA, I started teaching English to Translation majors at the university where I later collected data for my PhD project and taught a number of modules with particular focus on the teaching of English paragraph, letter, and essay writing. Noticing the inefficiency of traditional, product-oriented pedagogies in terms of students’ written performance and observing the negative views of my students’ towards writing as a boring, laborious activity prompted me to consider other alternatives in order to make the atmosphere of my L2 writing courses more pleasant on the one hand, and to increase the productivity of my training on the other. In 2008 I had the chance to attend the University of Exeter as a PhD candidate in the Graduate School of Education. Thanks to the training I received during my MSc in educational research, the School helped me broaden my horizons and provided me with the opportunity to get familiar with current issues in education, research, writing, and especially second language writing. Eventually, L2 writing with a particular focus upon peer evaluation, joint revision, and writing as a process became my principal research interest.

As stated earlier acting both as an instructor and as a researcher, gave me a unique chance to have an extended involvement with the setting and the participants. Indeed, by developing an active-member researcher identity, I actively joined the L2 writing course procedures from the outset of the study without fully committing myself to the students’ goals and targets (Alder & Alder, 1994, p. 380). More precisely, while I aimed
to help them develop their academic writing competence, I did not view the course as a compulsory module which I had to attend, do its assignments, take the final exam, and pass. Hence, not only did I instruct L2 writing students the English academic essay generics, such as its structure and conventions by providing them models and asking them to do some follow up activities, but also familiarised them with writing process by discussing and practicing writing stages like pre-writing, drafting, and revision. Further, while they were engaged in collaborative tasks of peer review and joint revision I consistently supported them to accomplish the novel activities and as a result to improve the quality of their written texts. This extended involvement, in turn, benefited me greatly as I could gain valuable insights into the nature of relationships and behaviours of non-native English novice writers in a naturally occurring essay writing course. In fact, this emic (insider) stance privileged me to build a better rapport between the students and myself and thereby provide a richer and fuller account of the phenomenon under study.

On the other hand, in some cases my teaching role could interfere with my researcher role. That is, being absorbed in teaching duties and my involvement in class could negatively affect my sensitivity to some data by assuming them to be already known. In such situations, outsiders may be able to obtain richer information and develop a more critical stance to generate new insights that may not be visible to insiders. Besides, as a writing instructor I had several responsibilities. I not only had to prepare learning materials, devise relevant practical activities as well as monitor the quality of teaching and assess students’ progress over the semester, but also was committed to provide feedback to around 135 student drafts during writing cycles as well as to provide advice and support to students on a personal level. At the same time, as a researcher, I had to arrange schedules, ensure that the targets were met, and plans were completed efficiently. This dual role and heavy workload could potentially influence the quality of both my teaching and research.

4.10 Data Collection Procedure

This investigation was carried out as an exploratory study within the natural setting of L2 essay writing course with no changes to the schedule apart from the introduction of peer review, collaborative revision and multiple drafting, hence reducing the number of essay types and topics completed by the students. After gaining access to the context, I collected all students’ demographic information at the beginning of the semester using a
personal information sheet (Appendix 3). It was clear from the preliminary survey that students were not familiar with peer evaluation, collaborative revision and multiple drafting activities. Indeed, before this course, they had been exposed to little formal instruction on writing or rhetoric at the university, and they had not practiced writing at the secondary school level at all. These students had enrolled in a 15-week essay writing course that met once a week, with each class lasting ninety minutes. The overall course objective as outlined by the curriculum documents was to help the students develop their academic writing competence.

Table 4.3 presents the module syllabus at a glance. As it is shown, the course policies and objectives, the time frame and the content of each session, as well as the activities and assignments were explained and clarified from the outset of the course. In this respect, this course was unique compared to many other courses run in the department and even at the university with students hardly being aware of the course purpose and structure. The pedagogy I adopted in this course can be described as “process genre approach” (Badger & White, 2000, p. 157). That is, process-oriented, genre-centred, and task-based composition pedagogy with the textbook Creative Essay Writing (Memari Hanjani, 2005) supplemented by hand-outs I prepared weekly and distributed among the students (Appendix 4 contains some sample materials prepared for the students during the first part of the course). As Table 4.3 depicts, the course was generally composed of two main parts. Before writing cycles begin and during the first part of the course which lasted for six weeks, we focused on writing generics and students were introduced to the composing process such as pre-writing, drafting, and revision, as well as the structure and components of English academic essay. Indeed, class lectures and discussions emphasised the important role writing process played in producing an English academic essay. In pre-writing stage, for instance, the students got familiar with the invention techniques such as brainstorming, free writing, outlining, methods of organisations, etc. Drafting stage, on the other hand, encompassed detailed instructions on the format of English academic essays like introduction, body paragraph, and conclusion. Components of each of these paragraphs were then analysed and models were provided in detail. This was followed by revision stage during which we concentrated on polishing ideas and addressed issues of coherence, cohesion, organisation, and accuracy. It should be noted that the language for whole-class instructions and activities was English. However, the social language was Persian and in order to establish a stress-free, comfortable classroom atmosphere among students and to help them get prepared for the main part of the study which concerned peer evaluation and joint revision, all in-
class activities were performed within self-selected groups of three or four students from the very beginning. At the end of session six when major writing process issues were briefly discussed and pertinent activities performed either collaboratively in class or individually at home, we moved to the second phase of the course and actually to the main part of the research; peer evaluation and collaborative revision. As part of the course syllabus, the students participated in two peer review and two collaborative revision sessions, based respectively on a process and an argumentative text produced during two writing cycles.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>In-class Activities</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1       | ➢ Course overview  
          ➢ Questionnaire completed | Course induction, background data obtained | Sample papers written and submitted next week |
<p>| 2       | ➢ Writing stages; pre-writing | Brainstorming, outlining, methods of organisation | A series of exercises requiring students to cluster ideas and to arrange scrambled sentences in chronological or emphatic order |
| 3       | ➢ Writing stages; drafting | Essay structure, organisation, and components | Some exercises focusing on introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs and their contents, e.g. motivator, thesis statement, main idea, supporting ideas, thesis re-statement, summarising, etc. |
| 4       | ➢ Writing stages; drafting (continue) | Essay structure, organisation, and components | |
| 5       | ➢ Writing stages; revision | Transition, cohesion, coherence | A number of exercises on different types of transitions and their applications |
| 6       | ➢ Writing stages; edition | Key grammatical points; sentence fragments, run-ons, parallelism, as well as punctuation | Some tasks drawing students’ attention to language and mechanics issues |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Process essay</td>
<td>Model essays discussed and examined</td>
<td>A 250-word essay assigned to be composed for week 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Peer review training</td>
<td>Using a peer review sheet, a sample essay was analysed in terms of both local and global issues</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Peer review activities</td>
<td>Papers exchanged, peer evaluation</td>
<td>2nd drafts to be developed in 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Collaborative revision</td>
<td>Joint revision</td>
<td>Final drafts to be produced in 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Argumentative essay</td>
<td>Model essays discussed and examined</td>
<td>A 250-word essay assigned to be composed for week 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Peer review training</td>
<td>Using a peer review sheet, a sample essay was analysed in terms of both local and global issues</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Peer reviewing</td>
<td>Papers exchanged, peer evaluation</td>
<td>2nd drafts to be developed in 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Collaborative revision</td>
<td>Joint revision</td>
<td>Final drafts to be produced in 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Final remarks</td>
<td>Course summary, students’ written comments, criticisms, and suggestions collected</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3. Essay writing course timetable
4.10.1 Writing cycle 1

Writing Cycle 1 lasted over four weeks and consisted of four distinct phases. A diagrammatic representation and major activities involved in this Cycle is provided below (Figure 4.3). It should be noted that after focus pairs were assigned, all participants signed a consent form (Appendix 5) allowing my access to study-related materials and information. They were also clearly briefed about the purpose and the procedures of the study and were ensured about the confidentiality of their identities the collected data. Further, to avoid the risk of inaccurate data and to familiarize the focus dyads with research mechanism, I put voice-recording devices next to each pair from the beginning of the first phase of writing cycle 1.

4.10.1.1 Phase 1

This phase mainly focused on process essay genre. To prepare students for this mode of writing, I devoted one training session describing its purpose, and discussing the steps involved in developing it followed by explaining its characteristics and providing models and analysing them (Appendix 6). The students were also engaged in some exercises which could help them get more familiar with this type of writing. All students were then required to write a 250-word essay at home individually on a topic “How to get a good mark in Essay Writing Module final exam” and submit it in two weeks. The purpose of this particular assignment was instructing the audience to accomplish a specific task that led to an expected or planned outcome. The students were reminded that the intended audience was their partners. They were also told that they should go through three drafts before final submission and while the first drafts were peer reviewed; the second drafts were subject to joint revision using the written commentary provided by me.
Figure 4.3. Writing cycle 1

**CYCLE 1**

**PHASE 1**

**WEEK 1**

- **Process Essay**
  - genre introduced and discussed
  - models provided
  - prompt assigned and students required to compose a 250-word essay for week 3

**PHASE 2**

**WEEK 2**

- **Peer Review Instruction**
  - peer response forms provided
  - peer evaluation modelled and practiced using sample papers

**PHASE 3**

**WEEK 3**

- **Peer Reviewing**
  - papers traded and reviewed
  - comments written on forms
  - peer negotiation
  - 2nd drafts developed in few days incorporating the peer feedback, comments provided by the instructor on revised drafts using indirect coded feedback

**PHASE 4**

**WEEK 4**

- **Collaborative Revision**
  - joint revision of 2nd drafts using the instructor's comments
  - final drafts produced in few days
  - follow-up individual interviews within a week
4.10.1.2 Phase 2

This phase involved peer evaluation training. As both peer reviewing and collaborative revision tasks were new activities for my students, they needed preparation before being engaged in responding to each other’s papers and in advance of peer review sessions being held. This preparation was designed to address a number of specific areas and to provide students with certain response skills by careful examination of an essay written by an anonymous student. First, I handed out the first draft of the sample student text along with a peer review sheet making sure all students had a copy of the materials they needed (Appendix 7). Then, we looked at the sample student paper together and discussed its strengths and weaknesses following the guidelines provided by peer response forms. The peer review sheet consisted of two major parts. In the first section, the reviewer had to address some questions concerning the global issues and was required to comment on content and organisation qualities of the written texts. The second section, on the other hand, focused on language and mechanics aspects of the papers. Twelve error categories were developed and coded which the reviewer was required to utilize them upon noticing those specific error types in the texts. It should be noted that the content of peer review sheet was consistent with what students had been taught during the previous session and in order to make students comfortable with the format of peer review sheet, I myself used the same form to address the sample student essay. In fact, I believed as a tool, peer review sheet not only did guide students to consider important areas that required checking and analysis, but also served to regularly remind them of the standards they should look for both in their own and in their peers’ essay drafts. Then, I modelled how as a partner they were expected to deliver feedback and make suggestions for revision to their peers’ first draft so that all students could explicitly observe the way I approached the activity by being friendly, clear, and specific. Finally, all students were provided with the imaginary student’s revised draft which was developed incorporating my advice and asked them to follow this procedure in the next week and during actual peer evaluation activity.

4.10.1.3 Phase 3

This phase involved peer reviewing. Peer review is a writing technique used exclusively between pairs of students as they interacted and provided oral feedback on each other’s papers after exchanging their first drafts and reviewing them with the instructor not playing any central participatory role. As mentioned earlier, students were required to hand in a 250-word process essay as their homework on a given topic. Students’ initial
drafts, then, underwent in-class peer review session in the third week. The peer review procedure involved students’ exchanging and reviewing each other’s essays and providing their peers with written and oral feedback using blank peer feedback forms and employing the instructions provided and discussed earlier in phase 2. More specifically, I asked my students to attend to both global (content and organisation) and local (language and mechanics) issues. This decision was based on my understanding that attending to language problems would also be a valuable language learning activity to my students, who were still in the process of learning their L2. Hence, all of them followed a three-step response procedure: (1) read silently and carefully their peers’ papers to understand their intended meaning; (2) commented on macro issues (i.e., content, organisation, and development of ideas); and (3) addressed language flaws (i.e., grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics) first in written form using teacher provided response sheets and then through oral peer interaction. The inclusion of both written and oral feedback could give the students opportunities to take advantage of the benefits that both response types could offer. As Ferris (2003) argues, this model “has several important advantages: (a) it allows students more time to think and compose helpful feedback; (b) it gives the writer a record of what was said as she or he starts to revise; and (c) it allows the teacher to hold the students accountable for giving good feedback and to monitor the effectiveness of feedback sessions, both as to types of feedback given and as to its usefulness for subsequent revisions” (p. 171). To all these I myself add one more advantage; (d) it helps the reviewers remember what they are going to discuss.

The activities were arranged so that the students had sufficient time to produce detailed and specific feedback. They were allocated 30 minutes of class time for reviewing and reading each other’s papers followed by an hour discussion of papers and feedback provision with each student taking turn as both reviewer and writer. However, the evaluations varied in length from 15 minutes to sometimes even more than an hour. During peer review session, the oral interactions were audiotaped with a separate recorder provided for each pair of participants enabling me to analyse the nature of the dyadic negotiations. It should be stressed that I did not participate in the discussions nor did I interfere. Yet, I monitored the class and provided assistance and instruction whenever asked for ensuring that the students understood the procedures. Most often I pleasantly observed the students’ enthusiasm for and commitment to the activities. Nevertheless, I sometimes noticed reluctance and conflict between pairs of students who were not able to manage productive interactions or could not get along with each other
and rejected their partners’ comments or views on their essays and called for my interference. Most of the conflicts were not that much serious; if so, I changed the composition of dyads. To hold the students accountable for providing feedback and also underlie the significance of their responsibility to consider feedback carefully, I reminded them that a major part of their module evaluation – half of their final scores would be allocated to class activities in general and collaborative tasks in particular. Following peer review session, students were asked to work at home revising their first drafts based on the comments they had received from their peers and to turn in their first and second drafts, along with peer review forms to their teachers in three 3 days.

4.10.1.4 Phase 4

The last stage of first writing cycle concentrated on collaborative revision. Collaborative revision refers to the activity during which students jointly revised the second drafts of their papers using the indirect coded feedback and comments provided by their instructor. After collecting students’ second drafts, I applied the same scheme provided in peer review sheet commenting and addressing global as well as local flaws of students’ papers. That is, I used indirect coded feedback to address linguistic mistakes and provided longer comments and suggestions on content, organisation, and idea development problems at the end of their papers. After the second drafts of student essays were returned, they were allotted the whole class time to read through their essays jointly, act on the indirect coded feedback and comments provided by the instructor, and produce the final drafts of their essays. It is worth mentioning that I deliberately used indirect coded feedback strategy during this study as I intended to help students to develop their writing skill particularly their self-editing skills. Like peer reviewing session, while students were engaged in the task I walked around the class monitoring student interactions, checking how well the students managed the task and responded to any questions that arose or dealt with any interaction problems. The collaborative revision session was also audio-recorded by placing one audio recorder next to each dyad. Third drafts were due three days after the collaborative revision activity had taken place and all students were required to submit their writing assignments in folders that comprised three drafts along with peer review forms, so I could use them later as my data sources. Writing cycle 1 ended by conducting 10 semi-structured interview sessions during which all focus participants were interviewed individually responding to the prompts that covered a range of issues concerning the activities performed during the last four weeks (Appendix 2).
4.10.2 Writing cycle 2

The identical procedure was repeated for the second writing cycle with some minor changes which were made in order to meet the specific requirements of argumentative essay genre. Figure 4.4 summarises major activities involved during this writing cycle and their timeline. As stated earlier, the focus pairs remained constant during the two writing cycles since it was assumed that inter-subjectivity and productivity were more likely to form if pairs were fixed. In what follows, I succinctly discuss the activities performed during four phases of this cycle highlighting the amendments I made for this particular type of writing.

4.10.2.1 Phase 1

This phase initiated by introducing argumentative essay. Indeed, all students were provided with necessary materials and a couple of model essays (Appendix 8) and together we spent one whole session discussing and analysing the characteristics of this type of essay including its purpose, content, structure, and requirements and engaged in exercises that underlined its essential assumptions. Then, the students were asked to complete a 250-word writing assignment supporting their stand on a controversial topic “By taking a position either for or against give your opinion whether married women should work or not. Be sure to back up your opinions with specific examples” at home and hand it in two weeks later.
Figure 4.4. Writing cycle 2

CYCLE 2

PHASE 1
WEEK 1
Argumentsative Essay
- genre introduced and discussed
- models provided

PHASE 2
WEEK 2
Peer Review Instruction
- peer response forms provided
- peer evaluation modelled and practiced using sample papers

PHASE 3
WEEK 3
Peer Reviewing
- papers traded and reviewed
- comments written on forms
- peer negotiation

PHASE 4
WEEK 4
Collaborative Revision
- joint revision of 2nd drafts using the instructor's comments
- final drafts produced in few days

Prompt assigned and students required to compose a 250-word essay for week 3

2nd drafts developed in few days incorporating the peer feedback, comments provided by the instructor on revised drafts using indirect coded feedback

Follow-up pair and group interviews within a week
4.10.2.2 Phase 2

A key point in this phase was that peer review training was repeated in the second writing cycle just before peer review session (phase 3) considering the exclusive characteristics of argumentative essay. Indeed, as the nature of two writing genres – process and argumentation - varied, their evaluation criteria needed to be different. Therefore, I decided not to use a standard peer review sheet for both tasks and designed a peer response form which not only addressed the specific requirements of this type of essay, but also matched the instructions that had been provided in class earlier in phase 1 (Appendix 9). In addition, in order to make students feel comfortable with the format of peer review sheets, I myself used the same form to address the sample student essay. I thought using the same form by me could help the students be more aware of the issues they had to consider reviewing their peers’ papers. The other point which I thought could facilitate student evaluations was typing my responses to the model essay in the peer review forms and making use of some visual aids such as underlining or highlighting the problematic areas of the essay so that students could not only observe the modelling, but also had some written feedback templates for their later use.

4.10.2.3 Phase 3

This phase was entirely allocated to peer reviewing and followed the same procedures as Writing Cycle 1. That is, first drafts were traded, reviewed, and evaluated both in written and oral form by the partners with the teacher monitoring the class interactions. Further, audio recordings of focused dyads were taken during this task as a routine and second drafts had to be revised based on the feedback students received from their peers. The original and revised drafts as well as peer response forms were collected three days later.

4.10.2.4 Phase 4

Like Writing Cycle 1, the last phase concentrated on collaborative revision. Upon receiving their second drafts, students worked jointly to revise their papers and rewrote their final drafts which were returned in three days incorporating the recommendations and feedback provided by me. Audio recordings of the peer discussions were also taken in this session. Following joint revision session, all participants took part in two interview sessions within a week; pair and group interviews. The purpose of conducting interviews was gathering information about the participants’ feelings and perceptions of the activities performed in both writing cycles (Appendix 2).
4.11 Data Analysis

To address research questions, each data source was analysed separately. The data set included completed observation field notes, audio-recorded interviews and student interactions, student compositions, together with teacher and peer written feedback. Copies of peer review sheets were also collected. According to Yin, data analysis “consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining both qualitative and quantitative evidence to address the initial propositions of a study” (2003, p. 109). Indeed, the framework for analysis of the data of the present study derived from interpretive tradition. That is, it took place inductively, recursively, and interactively. The researcher, thus, constantly returned to data at each stage of data analysis to look at the ways in which each case study was created and checked the ways in which patterns, themes, and ideas were occurring. As the collected data from case study research should be analysed based on “specific analytic techniques” which are informed by certain “general analytic strategy” (Ibid., p. 115), and as the current project investigates multiple cases, it adopts “case description” and “cross-case synthesis” as its general data analysis scheme. That is, a thorough description of each case and themes within the case, “within-case analysis”, will be followed by thematic analysis across the cases, “across-case analysis” (Creswell, 2007, p. 75).

4.11.1 Observation

As noted earlier, to get a systematic description of the events and behaviours as well as to verify other sources of data, revision sessions were also observed. Indeed, as a teacher/researcher of the essay writing course, I had the chance to observe student behaviours during regular class periods from the very beginning to the end of the research project. This could provide me with unique opportunity to have access to valuable information about context within which joint revision tasks were performed. However, the classroom observations did not examine student interactions but aimed to acquire an overall impression of the way the students approached the tasks. Indeed, as several dyads were simultaneously engaged in the activities during class period, observing all of them in detail was almost impossible. Therefore, observational field notes included some general descriptive information about the behaviours of the students and context of the study and were used in conjunction with the findings of other data sources which could potentially either corroborate or reject them. That is, they were treated as supporting data which could provide further insights into the understanding of the issues which would emerge during the research by using three
other main data sets and did not involve any systematic analysis of observation filed notes. For example, sometimes they prompted formulation of interview questions, at times they were used to describe the classroom lay out, and in some cases they were referred to support or contradict interaction or interview findings or inform the issues raised in discussion chapter.

4.11.2 Audio-recorded interaction

20 audio recordings (10 process and 10 argumentation) taken during two peer review and two collaborative revision sessions on four different occasions from five student dyads; 3 female-female and 2 male-female, constituted the data for analysis. Table 4.4 shows the amount of audio-recorded data (in minute) collected during two writing tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Process</th>
<th></th>
<th>Argumentation</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>peer reviewing</td>
<td>collaborative revision</td>
<td>peer reviewing</td>
<td>collaborative revision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>120.53</td>
<td>255.54</td>
<td>131.23</td>
<td>327.13</td>
<td>835.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4. Minutes of audio-recorded data collected during two tasks in both genres

To analyse the negotiation dynamics, a qualitative approach was followed in five stages with an emphasis on identifying and classifying the participants’ interactions and revision behaviours during peer review and collaborative revision sessions. First, recordings were listened to carefully over and over again and dyadic interactions were segmented into negotiation episodes. Each negotiation episode was defined as conversations between interlocutors which focused on revising a particular trouble-source. Following Villamil and Guerrero (1996), trouble-sources were referred to as those mistakes, faults, and deficiencies noticed by the reviewer and marked in the writer’s text and discussed later by the pairs. Table 4.5 offers the frequencies of episodes identified during the two tasks across process and argumentative genres respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Pair 1</th>
<th>Pair 2</th>
<th>Pair 3</th>
<th>Pair 4</th>
<th>Pair 5</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROCESS</td>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative Revision</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>108</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>103</strong></td>
<td><strong>125</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
<td><strong>540</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGUMENTATION</td>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative Revision</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>139</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td><strong>170</strong></td>
<td><strong>125</strong></td>
<td><strong>164</strong></td>
<td><strong>727</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>247</strong></td>
<td><strong>247</strong></td>
<td><strong>273</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>1267</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5. Frequency of negotiation episodes identified in peer discussions across both genres

The analysis of conversations between dyads resulted in 540 negotiation episodes in process and 727 negotiation episodes in argumentative essay. It should be noted that in almost all negotiation episodes the peers employed a variety of interactional strategies. Hence, the second stage of data analysis involved developing and coding interactional strategies as they occurred in pairs’ discussions. To do that, a preliminary taxonomy of interactional strategies (categories) was drawn according to one sample dyadic student negotiation. The initial categories were then added, refined and modified by listening to the rest of pair interactions. A further analysis was then conducted to determine the frequency, and percentage of each category. The third stage of audio-recoded data analysis comprised of clustering the emerged interactional strategies into three broad interactive categories: evaluative, social, and procedural negotiations. This was followed by the fourth stage during which the interactive categories were divided into sub-categories based on their features. For instance, evaluative negotiations were labelled as scaffolding or non-scaffolding dialogues, and social interactions as on-task or off-task discussions. Finally, the last stage of data analysis focused on transcribing (using standard orthography) and translating representative negotiation episodes which encompassed examples of interactional strategies. It should be noted that any confusion
in terms of categorisation of the data and clustering them were discussed with my supervisors during tutorials and were addressed with reference to the literature. Diagram 4.1 presents an overview of audio-recorded data analysis process. A sample dyadic negotiation categorisation procedure can also be found in Appendix 10.

Diagram 4.1. Audio-data analysis process

4.11.3 Semi-structured interviews

The interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions to provide more flexibility to both the researcher to ask extra questions and to the participants to offer more information (Kvale & Brinkmann 2008). All interview sessions were recorded by high quality digital recorders. Interview sessions occurred in the director of programme’s office following each writing cycle and in the students’ native language (Persian) so the interviewees could clearly express their ideas. Before starting each interview session, the rapport was developed; I gave a brief introduction about the purpose of the interviews, acknowledged the value of the interviewees’ contributions, confirmed the length of the sessions, reassured the respondents on ethical issues, obtained their consents for audio-recording their responses, and roughly explained the plans for using the results of the interviews. During individual interviews, the first and second drafts, along with the peer review sheets were presented to the interviewees to be used as a reference if needed. Further, I tried to take the role of a moderator/facilitator and managed the dynamics of the group being interviewed during
focus group interview. I also encouraged all respondents to participate and made effort
to obtain responses from the entire group to ensure the fullest possible coverage of the
topics. Table 4.6 below shows the time spent interviewing the participants during each
interview session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Interview</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>10 interviews of up to 30 minutes at the end of Writing Cycle 1</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair</td>
<td>5 interviews of up to 60 minutes at the end of Writing Cycle 2</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group</td>
<td>1 interview of 2 hours in length at the end of the term</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>12 Hours</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6. An overview of the interview data generated during the study

Interview data analysis started from the moment I listened to and transcribed the
interviews and took place at three levels; managing the data, coding them, and
providing descriptive as well as explanatory accounts for each emerged code/sub-code.
First, the ‘raw’ data was transcribed verbatim. Since several ten pages of transcript
seemed quite daunting, managing the data was essential. Data management initially
involved deciding upon the main themes or concepts under which the data would be
labelled, sorted, and summarised. Thematic framework was constructed with reference
to the conceptual perspective of the study, research questions, and the interview guides.
I also visited and revisited the data and tried to familiarise myself with the data. The
next step was to sort the data. Since the participants were interviewed on three
occasions and some of the interview questions and responses overlapped, materials with
similar content or properties were located together and under relevant main themes. The
purpose of sorting the data was to focus on each subject in turn so that the detail and
distinctions that lied within could be unpacked. The final stage of data management
involved summarising the original data and inspecting the meaning and the relevance of
the original material to the subjects under enquiry. This served to reduce the amount of
material to a more manageable level. Yet, I was careful to retain the key terms, phrases
or expressions from the participant’s own language as much as possible; hence, neither
lose the significant information nor strip it from the context. Once all the meaningful
portions of the original data had been extracted, the data was translated and
categorisation stage started.
Categorisation involved detection, and classification of the data and generating distinctive codes that were meaningful and represented the content they described. More precisely, it encompassed looking within a theme, across all cases and noting the range of perceptions and views which had been labelled or tagged as part of that theme. The codes were developed manually and the data which represented a particular code were identified by colour-highlighting. The categorisation process was comprehensive. That is, the voices of all cases were included and all the elements of relevance were incorporated in formulating the codes. The same procedure was followed theme by theme. During the coding process, the recurrence of each code and sub-code was also recorded and tabulated.

Once codes and sub-codes were generated, representative responses of the interviewees were used to support, illustrate, and clarify the significant codes/sub-codes. Finally, to interpret and explain the emerged codes and patterns within the data, the data was interrogated with relevance to the theoretical framework of the study and a number of other ways including drawing on other studies, using explicit reasons and accounts of the participants, inferring an underlying logic, and using common sense assumptions. The process was iterative and involved moving between the data and emergent explanations until pieces of the puzzle clearly fit. Interview data analysis process is summarised in Diagram 4.2. A sample interview data analysis procedure is also presented as Appendix 11.
4.11.4 Written texts

The purpose of analysing students’ written texts was (1) to explore the extent to which peer as well as instructor feedback were incorporated in participants’ revised drafts, and (2) to determine the effects of peer evaluation and joint revision on students’ writing performance. As Table 4.7 illustrates, 60 compositions were analysed to serve these ends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Draft</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7. Number of essays analysed in two writing cycles

For each genre students produced three drafts over four weeks. While the first drafts were written by the students themselves at home, they were asked to develop the second drafts utilising the feedback they had received from their peers during peer review sessions. The second drafts, then, were submitted to the instructor. Eventually, the final drafts were produced after joint revision of the second drafts using the instructors’ indirect coded feedback and comments. In order to explore the participants’ revision
behaviours and address the first objective, Microsoft Word 2007 software and a modified version of the revision categories developed by Ferris (2006) were used. First, all handwritten drafts along with the indirect coded feedback and comments were carefully typed verbatim. Next, by using the Review and Compare options of the software the changes over drafts were traced, analysed and categories were generated (Table 4.8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision Categories</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correct Change</td>
<td>Error corrected per peer/teacher’s marking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect change</td>
<td>Change was made but incorrect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>A correct element was replaced by another one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>More details added to the main ideas in the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deletion</td>
<td>The text was deleted due to redundancy, ambiguity, or inaccuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution, correct</td>
<td>An inaccurate punctuation mark, term, collocation, phrase, etc. was replaced by a correct alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution, incorrect</td>
<td>An inaccurate punctuation mark, term, collocation, phrase, etc. was replaced by another wrong alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-induced error</td>
<td>Peer feedback/comment caused student error</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8. Student revision analysis categories

To examine feedback efficiency, on the other hand, the participants’ written drafts needed to be evaluated against a criterion. Considering different text evaluation methods convinced me that multiple-trait scoring rubric could be the most appropriate as it judges the texts against not only the features of a particular genre, but also an assigned prompt (Hamp-Lyons, 1991, cited in Min, 2006, p. 135). More precisely, this assessment method is context-sensitive and rather than assuming a fixed and general view of “good writing”, it is designed to clearly define the specific topic and genre features of the task being evaluated. Further, it requires the raters not only to provide separate scores for different writing features, but also to ensure that these are relevant to the specific task. The method is thus very flexible as each task can be related to its own scale with scoring adapted to the context, purpose, and genre of the elicited writing (Hyland, 2003a, p. 230). Hence, following identical procedures, 2 distinct multiple-trait scoring rubrics (one for process and one for argumentative essay) were developed considering the genre, task requirement, input the students had received, and their knowledge of grammatical rules and vocabulary. Finally, students’ first, second, and final drafts which were produced during writing cycles were analysed and assessed against these rubrics (See also Chapter 7, Sections 7.2 and 7.3).
4.12 Ethical Issues

As Miller and Brewer (2003) define it, “[t]he ethics of social research is about creating a mutually respectful, win-win relationship in which participants are pleased to respond candidly, valid results are obtained, and the community considers the conclusions constructive” (p. 95). Since the scope of methodological approaches used in social research is wide, prescribing a fixed set of ethical rules is neither possible nor useful. In fact, researchers disagree on what actually constitutes an ethical issue. But Wellington (2000) asserts that in educational research there are some certain rules which should not be compromised and there is no room for “moral relativism” in such cases (p. 57).

Ethical responsibility is essential at all stages of the research process starting from the research questions/aims continuing through the conduct of the study and finally before and after the study (Miller & Brewer, 2003, p. 95). In other words, based on what Glense and Peshkin say “[e]thics is not something that you can forget once you satisfy the demands of human subjects review boards and other gatekeepers of research conduct…. rather, ethical considerations are inseparable from your everyday interactions with your others and with your data” (1992, p.109). In addition, the researcher undertaking a study should be cautious about ethical issues in three dimensions; responsibilities to participants, sponsors, and community of educational researchers (BERA, 2004). In what follows, I will first detail the ways in which I endeavoured to ensure that the study was ethical in its treatment of the participants. I will then discuss the potential ethical problems and challenges I faced during the course of the study.

Ethical issues were of central concern to me from early planning stages of this research project. Indeed, my critical concern was creating an atmosphere of trust and respect with each participant and I was committed to ensure that my on-going relationship with them was mindful, responsive, and ethical. Hence, to address the above mentioned ethical issues and in accordance with the requirements of the school’s ethics policy (Appendix 12), at the outset of the project I developed a code of conduct and explained clearly the process of the study to the students. It is worth noting that participation in this project was completely voluntary and the participants were selected from only those students who were willing to take part in the research. I also made clear to the participants that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without being required to disclose any explanations. Besides, they were made aware that data elicited from them would be treated in the strictest confidence and any information
gathered would be used for research purposes only. In addition, I ensured the participants of anonymity and confidentiality by not publicizing their names and identities. Thus, to sustain confidentiality and cover participants’ identities I used pseudonyms for them. Finally, written consent to use student materials, audio recording, observing and interviewing them was obtained from participants prior to the beginning of the investigation.

Observation and interviewing can potentially raise ethical dilemmas. In observing classes, the power relation between participants on the one hand and between participants and the observer on the other is a sensitive issue. Malone (2003, p. 798) points out that in all research, power relations between researchers and participants are complicated and that it is very difficult for participants to maintain autonomy during the research process. I was therefore cautious not to cause any feeling of insecurity or reactivity in students; that is, changing their natural behaviour upon understanding that they were being observed (Cohen, et al., 2007). Interviewing also needs some ethical requirements including seeking the subjects’ permission for any types of recordings, providing information about the length of the interview and its scope, and giving the interviewees the chance of verifying their stories. To address the potential dilemmas, thus, I tried to establish trust and credibility with the participants. Indeed, I strongly believe in Bruner’s (1990) argument who claims that trust has to be earned and to establish trust demands the researchers behave ethically with participants and with the information they share with them. Also, at the beginning of all interviews I informed the participants of the expected period of the interview and obtained permission from the interviewees to record the interviews on a digital recorder and confirmed that the recording would be kept securely. Furthermore, in line with BERA guidelines I took all necessary steps to reduce the sense of distress of the participants and put them at their ease by adopting such measures as interviewing them in their native language. Finally, due to the nature of the research, data was collected using multiple sources such as audio-recording, observation, interviewing, and students’ texts. Records of the data collected including transcripts and any audio recordings were stored in a secure and safe place and when they are no longer required, the written information will be destroyed by shredding and securely disposing and audio recordings will be disposed of digitally. As a concluding remark by admitting the fact that no research is complete and perfect, I acknowledge Pring’s (2000) recommendation of being tentative and modest about the findings that were reported in this study and in the following chapters.
On the other hand, while I was quite pleased that I had ready access to such a rich research site, I began to encounter issues related to power and to the reactions of the students/participants to my dual teaching/researching role. As it was mentioned above (Sections 4.7 and 4.8), the students were taking Academic English Essay writing course for credit. Even though many students expressed willing to participate, I selected just five (initially six) focus dyads from a pool of 135 students. This could have a negative effect on the rest of the students particularly those who showed interest to contribute causing them to feel underprivileged and marginalised. For instance, they might have felt that they did not receive equal attention and support as their fellow students. However, they might not dare to bring up this issue because I was their teacher and they might have believed that expressing discomfort would put them in a difficult position. A similar issue was raised by a couple of male students from the pilot classes (not from any female students despite their majority in classes; due to the sociocultural issues female students are sometimes reluctant to express their feelings to their male lecturers frankly) as they felt Monday and Tuesday classes were not treated equally. They particularly believed that class atmosphere was more supportive and friendlier on Tuesdays. I tried to convince them that it was not the case and as a teacher I was committed to treat all students equally regardless of their contribution or non-contribution in my study. Besides, the informed consent form guaranteed participants the right to withdraw at any time without problems. Even though the only male dyad withdrew from the study, the rest of the participants did not use this option and continued throughout the study given the power situation between them and me and their fear of being harmed for their change of mind. They knew their attrition would change the whole study and were aware I relied so heavily on the recordings, interviews, and scripts so they might have felt trapped and not free to withhold their consent to participate. For instance, the interviewees and I normally agreed on convenient day/time for interview sessions. Yet, the day/time of the group interview session which was conducted at the end of the study overlapped with one of the participants’ appointment with his dentist and he could not cancel it. Eventually and to my surprise, he could attend the planned group interview and in response to my thanks for his coming, he ironically said; “final mark is worth it” indirectly reflecting the power of the essay mark final exam on his participation. Moreover, my presence in class and recording the interactions of the participants could change the nature of the class and the behaviours of the participants making them avoid saying things they would ordinarily say. For example, even though sometimes the participants expressed their discomfort and
criticised the adopted feedback strategy (Appendix 17; express frustration), I noticed some instances when they were not comfortable to be audio recorded. In such cases, one of the participants signalled and reminded his/her partner indirectly to stop complaining or criticising as their voices were being recorded. Likewise, they might have refused to express their feelings freely during the interviews even though I had emphasised the exploratory nature of the research and had encouraged them to feel free to be honest with me and contribute their ideas and share their experiences without fear of losing mark. For example, while peers sometimes struggled understanding my comments and working with codes (revealed by analysing audio-recorded data), they mildly questioned their use during interview sessions (Section 8.6). In fact, their participation in a study in which the researcher was their instructor and the unequal power relationship between the participants and I could make them feel vulnerable to raise the pedagogical issues as they wished. Further, the students could have felt that sharing some of their attitudes with me (either during individual interviews or during pair and group interview and in the presence of their peers) could harm their relationships with one another. Hence, they could be reluctant to express their honest feelings about the role of their partners in performing collaborative tasks. Finally, knowing that they were studied could tempt them to work harder and take the tasks and activities more seriously than they would otherwise do.

4.13 Trustworthiness

As Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain, trustworthiness is established when the research is carried out fairly and the findings present the meanings described by the participants as closely as possible. Trustworthiness is not something that naturally occurs, but instead “is the result of rigorous scholarship that includes the use of defined procedures” (Padgett, 1998, cited in Lietz, et al., 2006, p. 444). In response to serious concerns regarding the trustworthiness of the qualitative research, Guba (1981) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) were the first to propose a set of criteria for ensuring rigour in non-quantitative studies done under new-paradigm models (Shenton, 2004). These criteria include: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability which replaced the conventional (positivist) constructs of internal validity, external validity, reliability (replicability), and objectivity (Lincoln, 2004). In addressing credibility, researchers strive to demonstrate that a plausible picture of the phenomenon under study is presented. To allow transferability, they provide sufficient detail of the context for a
reader to be able to decide whether the current environment is similar to another situation with which he or she is familiar and whether the findings can be applied to the other situations. Dependability refers to the stability, trackability, and logic of the research process employed. Finally, confirmability certifies that the reported findings can be pursued all the way back to original data sources and researchers take steps to ensure that findings emerge from the data rather than from their own characteristics and preferences (Lincoln, 2004; Shenton, 2004). Considering the above points, in what follows, I will highlight the ways in which I endeavoured to ensure the issue of trustworthiness in the research process.

Overall, I spent 6 months (one semester) in the field, teaching L2 students English academic essay writing as well as researching, observing, audio-recording, and interviewing a group of them. My previous familiarity with the educational setting as well as the present opportunity enabled me to interact with the students, engage in the class activities, gain adequate understanding of the context, and establish trustful relationship with the participants as a teacher/researcher over an extended length of time.

To ensure that the data was genuine, the participants were selected from only those students who were willing to take part in the research. From the outset of the study, I established a rapport emphasising the exploratory nature of the research and encouraging the participants to be frank and contribute their ideas and share their experiences without fear of losing mark. Some of the accounts regarding peer review, collaborative revision, multiple drafting, and feedback incorporation, which are presented in Chapter 8, clearly indicate that the participants expressed their attitudes freely. I also made clear to the participants that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without being required to disclose any explanations. Hence, even though it was very irritating, I accepted the attrition of the only male dyad at the end of Writing Cycle one.

Data triangulation and making use of multiple data sets also helped shed light on the issue of implementing collaborative tasks from different perspectives. I believed that the data coming from a variety of sources could add weight to my arguments. As it is already stated in Section 4.6 and several other places, while classroom observations served as a means to examine how the students engaged in collaborative tasks, audio-recorded data involved scrutinising the nature of dyadic interactions and the extent the participants scaffolded each other. The interview data, on the other hand, elicited the participants’ attitudes about the approaches and activities they performed. Finally,
students’ texts aimed to explore the degree of peer/instructor feedback incorporation as well as their writing performance. Indeed, this particular combination of data could help “both to confirm and improve the clarity or precision of research findings” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 275).

I tried my best to provide detailed descriptions of the context (Chapter 2 and Chapter 4, Section 4.7), the participants (Section 4.8), the instruments (Section 4.6), as well as data gathering (Section 4.10) and analysis (Section 4.11) procedures of the study. To improve the clarity of the information, tables, diagrams, and appendices were also used to further illustrate the procedures wherever required. In fact, documentation of the research process can give the readers an opportunity to trace the course of the investigation step-by-step. Hence, a thorough understanding of the processes within the study enables them to assess the credibility of the interpretations and the results and to determine whether the conclusions can be applied to similar settings. Besides, as in qualitative research it is the researcher who is the major instrument of data collection and analysis (Shenton, 2004), information on my past experiences and orientations as well as my role in the study (Sections 4.3, 4.9 and 10.5) could be invaluable for the readers. Indeed, it allowed them to understand my position and any biases or assumptions that influenced the inquiry and the conclusions.

Data analysis was a systematic and iterative process and involved moving between the raw data and the emergent findings until pieces of the puzzle clearly fit. Moreover, data interpretation and research report were well supported by evidence (Chapters 5-8). To widen my vision, decrease the probability of flaws, and develop ideas and interpretations, I constantly met with my supervisors, discussed data analysis procedures, and used their experiences and expertise. I also examined the reports of the previous studies which addressed comparable issues or had similar focus, attended several conferences, and prepared three papers and submitted them to peer reviewed journals of the field. The comments and perspectives of the peers and academics enabled me to refine my assumptions and methods, develop a greater explanation of the research design, and strengthen my arguments.

I believe the strategies outlined above are important steps by which I have established the trustworthiness of my approach to data collection and analysis and the credibility of my interpretation. I believe that this is further supported by efforts to be transparent and honest in my accounts of the various stages of data generation, analysis and interpretation, discussed in depth in sections 4.6 - 4.11 above.
CHAPTER 5
PARTICIPANTS’ INTERACTIONS

5.1 Introduction
This chapter builds upon the audio-recorded data collected to address the first three research questions and serves two purposes. First, it aims to explore whether performing revision tasks collaboratively can provide opportunities for meaningful communication and mutual scaffolding between peers with similar English writing proficiency. Its second objective is to investigate the interactional dynamics of the L2 participants engaged in dyadic discussions during peer review and collaborative revision activities in an authentic essay writing class. In other words, this chapter reports the nature and characteristics of student interactions and provides information on their behaviours considering Sociocultural Learning Theory and the concepts of scaffolding and ZPD.

Audio-recorded data were collected during Phase 3 and 4 of both Writing Cycles on four different occasions when focused dyads were engaged in peer discussions (Chapter 4, Section 4.10). As it was detailed in 4.11.2 (Table 4.4), 835.23 minutes of dyadic conversations during peer review and collaborative revision sessions constituted the data for analysis. The first stage of data analysis involved listening and segmenting the recorded data into negotiation episodes. The second and third stages, on the other hand, comprised of developing interactional strategies, and clustering the emerged interactional strategies into three broad interactive categories: evaluative, social, and procedural negotiations. This was followed by the fourth stage during which interactive categories were divided into sub-categories based on their features. For instance, evaluative negotiations were labelled as scaffolding or non-scaffolding dialogues, and social interactions as on-task or off-task discussions. Finally, the last stage of data analysis focused on transcribing and translating representative negotiation episodes which encompassed examples of interactional strategies.

What follows, then, is the result of a five-stage audio-recorded data analysis procedure. The chapter begins by examining the length and the focus of the participants’ interactions. This is followed by comparing and interpreting the type and frequency of interactional strategies peers employed during peer review and collaborative revision sessions in process and argumentation genres. Then, it moves on to the main part of the chapter which is devoted to analysing and discussing the interactive categories.
(evaluative, social, and procedural) that were formed by clustering the interactional strategies reflecting their distinctive features. Along with each of these interactive categories and their sub-categories, the most frequent and significant interactional strategies will be discussed and illustrative extracts from dyadic conversations will be used for clarification. The concluding section highlights the major findings and ends with a reflection on emerging themes.

5.2 Dyadic Interactions Length and Focus

Broadly speaking, participants spent considerably less time during peer review sessions discussing each other’s texts compared to collaborative revision sessions. Table 5.1 presents the time spent by each pair reviewing and discussing their written texts during both genres in detail. As this table depicts, the average time allocated by each pair reviewing and commenting on papers was 24.10 minutes in process and 26.17 minutes in argumentation. This time, on the other hand, was actually around two times more in collaborative revision sessions; 51.11 and 65.27 minutes in process and argumentation respectively. Hence, it can be argued that as the students had fewer issues to discuss, they spent less time evaluating each other’s texts. More precisely, the participants’ low level of English language proficiency negatively affected their ability to identify errors, limited their evaluation skill, and reduced the quantity of suggestions they offered during peer review sessions. On the other hand, as in collaborative revision sessions the instructor was the source of feedback, error diagnosis obstacle was resolved and an increased number of feedback/comments in the learners’ papers generated more discussions. This argument is supported by the analysis of the students’ texts which demonstrated that fewer errors were marked during peer review sessions compared to collaborative revision sessions (Chapter 6, Sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2). Interview data also yielded very similar outcome where the majority of cases (7 people) believed that due to their low level of English language proficiency, they had problem detecting errors and evaluating the papers they reviewed (Chapter 8, Section 8.2.1). Hence, it can be inferred that in terms of the learners’ level of engagement in the tasks collaborative revision was more efficient.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Process</th>
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<td>36.57</td>
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<td>69.44</td>
<td>16.49</td>
<td>84.40</td>
<td>184.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>51.11</td>
<td>26.17</td>
<td>65.27</td>
<td>167.05</td>
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<td>120.53</td>
<td>255.54</td>
<td>131.23</td>
<td>327.13</td>
<td>835.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1. Time allocated by dyads reviewing and commenting on each other’s papers

As stated earlier in 4.11.2, the analysis of conversations between dyads resulted in 540 and 727 negotiation episodes in process and argumentative essays respectively. By definition, negotiation episodes were conversation segments which focused on a particular trouble-source. An analysis of pairs’ interaction focus revealed that students were overly concerned with micro level errors rather than macro level problems (Table 5.2). As it is illustrated in Table 5.2, surface level corrections and addressing grammatical, vocabulary, and language and mechanics flaws predominated the majority of feedback practices in both activities across both genres. However, textual level comments such as content, organisation, cohesion, coherence, and paragraph unity just covered a minor part of all responses. More precisely, of 540 negotiation episodes identified during process essay dyadic discussions, 77.77% focused on micro level issues while 22.23% of them dealt with macro level issues. Similar results were obtained examining the pair talks discussing their argumentative essays. 79.23% of 727 negotiation episodes during second writing cycle addressed linguistic issues while only 20.77% of them considered textual concerns. However, the figures and ratios of the performance of two pairs (3 and 5) show an opposite trend indicating that these learners spent more time discussing global issues during peer review activities in both genres. Nevertheless, it was not the case. Further examination of the recorded data demonstrated that even though these pairs apparently paid more attention to macro level issues, their discussions were limited to providing some general and formulaic comments such as “assessment, repetition, and justifying” (See Appendix 13) rather than precisely responding to textual level concerns of each other’s papers.

Over emphasis on surface level errors during peer discussions in both activities and across both genres can imply either the priority of accuracy over fluency which preoccupied both the students and the instructor, or more frequent instances of linguistic
errors which impeded and hindered understanding the meaning of the texts. This alone required more editions and tidying up in the texts in order to make them more comprehensible for the reviewers. It can also suggest that since macro structural problems are more complex, addressing such points was beyond the learners’ capacity and ZPD. In fact, issues such as coherence, clarity, and support were beyond the potential developmental level of the participants and they either avoided or ignored discussing them. Examining the audio-recorded data also confirmed that in most cases the dyads first addressed the local issues before turning to global aspects of their texts. Hence, discussing the frequent surface level flaws took most of their time and energy and when they turned to global level issues they were bored and frustrated on the one hand, and had no time to negotiate textual concerns on the other. Therefore, they skipped them. This issue was especially noticed during collaborative revision sessions when the students spent plenty of the allocated time dealing with codes and linguistic feedback the instructor had offered and ignored the ‘end’ comments provided by him normally on content and organisation. Therefore, it is safe to claim that interaction, feedback, scaffolding activities, and knowledge co-construction mainly happened at surface level and occasionally moved beyond that level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Pair 1</th>
<th>Pair 2</th>
<th>Pair 3</th>
<th>Pair 4</th>
<th>Pair 5</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>170</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>727</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2. Student dyads’ revision focus during both tasks across both genres
5.3 Interactional Strategies

In almost all negotiation episodes the peers employed a variety of interactional strategies (for descriptions of each interactional strategy see Appendix 13). A total of 60 interactional strategies were identified examining 835.53 minutes of talk between the participants in the five dyads (Appendix 14). To develop categories, a preliminary taxonomy of interactional strategies was drawn according to one sample dyadic student negotiation. The initial categories were then added, deleted, or modified. The distribution of interactional strategies across the five groups presented in Appendix 14 reveals that there are some variations across the tasks in terms of the number of interactional strategies performed. For example, participants produced 45 and 46 interactional strategies during peer review sessions in process and argumentation respectively; whereas, 53 and 50 interactional strategies were detected during collaborative revision activities in the same two genres suggesting that dyads utilised more interactional strategies during collaborative revision activities across both genres and possibly more actively participated in joint revision of their texts. Further, students utilised the highest number of interactional strategies during collaborative revision session in process (53 interactional strategies). The lowest number of interactional strategies, on the other hand, was used in the same genre but during peer review activity (45 interactional strategies).

Besides, comparing the interactional strategies adopted during the two activities reveals further details (Table 5.3). For instance, while interactional strategies like “critiquing idea, responding to criticism, refusing to provide advice, knowledge checking, and pointing” occurred entirely in peer review sessions, few interactional strategies including “flashback, decoding, expressing frustration, appropriation, asking for instruction, composing, and rejecting the blame” were exclusively used in collaborative revision sessions. Students’ use of the first group of interactional strategies during peer review sessions can be attributed to several factors including the type of relationships between peers which allowed them to criticise each other’s ideas (critiquing and responding to criticism), error type (pointing), and the participants’ familiarity/unfamiliarity with their responsibilities (refusing to provide advice). On the contrary, issues such as feedback source; that is, the instructor (expressing frustration); task type (flashback, decoding, appropriation, and rejecting the blame) could justify the exclusive use of the second group of interactional strategies during collaborative revision sessions.
Further, while most of the interactional strategies used were common in both genres, there were some cases which were exclusively employed in one of them. For example, as Table 5.4 displays, interactional strategies such as “knowledge checking, discussing task procedures, asking for instruction, refusing to provide advice, and composing” were noticed just in process; however, interactional strategies like “critiquing idea and responding to criticism” were merely observed in argumentative essay. As practicing process genre preceded argumentation, it does not seem rational to assert that the first group of interactional strategies are merely relevant to process mode of writing. Rather, it seems quite clear that most of these interactional strategies were used due to the students’ unfamiliarity with the task and its requirements (discussing task procedures, refusing to provide advice). On the other hand, as in argumentative pieces peers evaluated not only the linguistic aspects of the texts, but also the content of the papers written, it seems sensible to claim that “critiquing idea or responding to criticism” interactional strategies were indispensable parts of this type of writing while in process essays such interactional strategies were less likely to happen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactional Strategy</th>
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<th>Collaborative revision</th>
<th>Argumentation Peer review</th>
<th>Collaborative revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express frustration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critiquing idea</td>
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<td>Response to criticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge check</td>
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<td>Reject the blame</td>
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<td>Ask for instruction</td>
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<td>Refuse to provide advice</td>
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<td>Composing</td>
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Table 5.3. Interactional strategies exclusive to each activity

Table 5.4. Interactional strategies exclusive to each genre
Moreover, as Table 5.5 demonstrates, students employed 6265 interactional strategies during four series of negotiations; 2737 interactional strategies in process - 921 during peer review and 1816 during collaborative revision – and 3528 interactional strategies in argumentation – 875 during peer review and 2653 during collaborative revision. Indeed, while they used the highest number of interactional strategies during joint revision of their texts in argumentation (2653), the lowest number of interactional strategies was used in the same genre but during peer reviewing activity (875). A further study of the table also reveals that the number of adopted strategies during collaborative revision sessions outnumbered those of peer reviewing (4469:1796) and the same was true regarding argumentation compared to process essay (3528: 2737). This is also another evidence of students’ more involvement during joint revision activities. It could also be argued that the more active participation was due to the nature of the tasks, their order, or the genre of writing. That is, the nature of the tasks, their order, or the writing modes may have had some effects on the type and frequency of the interactional strategies used (for a comprehensive list of specific interactional strategies utilized by each pair see Appendix 15).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PAIR</th>
<th>CYCLE 1</th>
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<td>Peer review</td>
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<td>401</td>
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<td>1007</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>921</strong></td>
<td><strong>1816</strong></td>
<td><strong>875</strong></td>
<td><strong>2653</strong></td>
<td><strong>1796</strong></td>
<td><strong>4469</strong></td>
<td><strong>6265</strong></td>
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Table 5.5. Number of interactional strategies utilised by pairs during writing cycles 1 and 2

Of a total of 6265 interactional strategies used during the two writing cycles, “advising, reading, writing reminder or correction, asking question, admitting advice, responding to question, clarifying, decoding, repetition and guessing” constituted the top ten activities (4428: %70.68). A significant number (970) of activities was “advising”. “Reading” was the second major interactional strategy which was detected (839). “Writing reminder or correction” was also frequent especially during collaborative revision, taking place 567 times. “Asking question” was a very common activity as well and happened 406 times. Students welcomed their peers’ advice 303 times and it was the 5th main interactional strategy identified during the pairs’ discussions. “Response to
question” was the next major interactional strategy occurring in 285 instances. “Clarifying” was observed 266 times and was quite common. Although “decoding” was just noticed during collaborative revision sessions, it occurred in 227 instances. Finally, “repetition” (204 times) and “guessing” (161 times) were the last two top ten interactional strategies identified during the tasks. On the other hand, interactional strategies such as “refusing to provide advice, asking for instruction, rejecting the blame, composing, discussing task procedures, pronunciation correction, lack of respect for comment, appropriation, pointing, and choice is yours” were the least interactional strategies employed by the participants (%0.31).

To sum up, the participants engaged in the tasks employing a wide range of interactional strategies. However, the order of the tasks, their nature, and their requirements shaped some variations concerning the type of interactional strategies used. In addition, the level of involvement was greater during collaborative revision sessions compared to peer evaluations in terms of both number of interactional strategies adopted and the amount of time allocated discussing the problematic issues. More precisely, the larger quantity of feedback offered by the instructor enabled the students to improve their communication length during which they discussed and co-revised their papers.

The interactional strategies students used were further categorised as evaluative, social, and procedural negotiations. In what follows each type of negotiation category, its subcategories, and major interactional strategies along with excerpts from conversation transcripts illustrating each of them will be highlighted and discussed (for examples of other interactional strategies see Appendix 17). It should be pointed out that participants will be referred to by the pseudonyms provided in Table 4.1. Further, in the majority of student negotiations (4 out of 5) Persian was used as a medium of interaction; however, to facilitate reading an English version of conversations are presented here. The following notation system was also used to transform the oral data to the written form:

() 
“quotation marks” reading from the text
bold terms/phrases in English
Capital & bold suggestions
[] explanations added by the researcher
… interruption in the participants’ speech
5.4 Evaluative Negotiations

Evaluative negotiations refer to student discussions intended to judge peers’ papers (Diagram 5.1). In such occasions peer conversations were directly focused on evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the drafts, delivering feedback and comments, and discussing the validity/accuracy of the suggestions. Evaluative negotiations might either lead to agreement and change or conflict and ignorance. Hence, all interactional strategies which were classified as evaluative were related to the purpose of the activities and addressed the tasks requirements. More than two third of interactional strategies peers utilised (41 out of 60) fell under this category indicating that the participants took both peer evaluation and joint revision activities seriously and stayed on task for most of the recorded interactions. Evaluative negotiations were further classified as scaffolding and non-scaffolding dialogues.

Diagram 5.1. Evaluative negotiations

5.4.1 Scaffolding negotiations

Not all evaluative negotiations were categorised as scaffolded feedback. Scaffolding negotiations, by definition, were the verbal support provided to L2 writers by their peers irrespective of their writing and linguistic abilities to broaden/extend their cognitive and linguistic development. An evaluative negotiation which is dialogic in nature involving both students, should meet three conditions in order to be considered as scaffolding; it should draw peers’ attention to the trouble-source(s), offer solution(s)/alternative(s), and extend the scope of the immediate task so that the students could improve their writing quality (ability). Based on this operational definition, from among 41 evaluative negotiations 14 could be labelled as scaffolding (See Appendix 16). These are listed in
Figure 5.1 and the most significant ones will be illustrated and analysed in the following sections to illuminate the characteristics of this type of interactional strategies (Appendix 17 demonstrates examples of other scaffolding dialogues).

**Scaffolding**
- Advising
- Change Advice
- Instructing
- Providing Options
- Guessing
- Referencing
- Pointing
- Defining
- Decoding
- Flashback
- Information Request
- Confirmation Request
- Response to Confirmation Request
- Response to Question

Figure 5.1. Scaffolded feedback

Before presenting and discussing the representative examples of scaffolding strategies, it is worth evaluating this type of activities in more details. First, more than one-third (36%) of the interactional strategies the participants adopted had scaffolding characteristics (Appendix 15). For instance, “advising” as the most expressive form of scaffolding was frequently employed in the negotiation episodes by both partners regardless of their proficiency level. This indicates that the collaborative tasks provided the students an opportunity to offer suggestions, which they believed, could improve the quality of their partners’ drafts. The activities also helped the participants to take an active role in the writing class by interacting with each other, co-constructing their knowledge, sharing expertise, and extending and receiving help to advance their writing skill. Further, the supportive behaviour was contingent and depended on the complexity and nature of the errors as well as the peers’ needs. For example, the assistance sometimes moved beyond providing suggestions as the participants involved in delivering mini lessons or responding to the questions, which their peers asked. In such instances, by adopting interactional strategies such as “instructing” or “response to
question”, the participants explained particular grammatical or punctuation rules, vocabulary, or other aspects of writing, which they thought could build their partners’ knowledge base and improve their writing ability. On the other hand, in cases when the specific problems either had already been discussed or were so trivial that the reviewers did not feel they were made as a result of the writers’ poor knowledge of the target language but their carelessness, they avoided unnecessary discussions. Instead, by employing “referencing” or “pointing” strategies they implicitly drew their partners’ attention to the errors, which were noticed in their papers.

Second, the learners sometimes guessed the correct forms and changed their initial advice which indicate their inconsistency in providing feedback and support. Inconsistent reactions to peer draft can be attributed to the participants’ low level of English writing skill. Indeed, as this group of learners were still in the process of learning English as their second language, their linguistic systems were in a state of development and they were not confident enough about the correct forms. Besides, as novice writers, they possessed limited knowledge of criteria for good writing and had problem providing consistent quality feedback. Inconsistency and change of advice could negatively affect the trust between students. Since their partners’ change of opinion could develop doubt in the validity of the comments they offered.

Finally, most of the interactional strategies dyads employed addressed micro level errors than macro level concerns. More precisely, collaboration, knowledge co-construction, and scaffolding were mainly focused on revising and editing linguistic problems of the texts. The only interactional strategy which entirely discussed meaning level issues was “information request” by which the student reviewers helped their partners to become aware of the information gap or ambiguities in their drafts and provided them some support to improve that aspect of their writings. Paying less attention to content and organisation implicitly indicates that addressing such issues was beyond the potential developmental level of this cohort of students and they found it hard to comment on both surface and complex level aspects of the compositions they reviewed.

5.4.1.1 Advising

Advising was the first major scaffolding behaviour which was detected during the tasks. This interactional strategy involved offering choices to revise the written text in terms of form or meaning either by the reviewer or by the writer. However, suggestions were most often provided by the reviewers as they outlined changes that they thought the
writers had better make and most of them focused on form (Table 5.5). In the following excerpts peers use this interactional strategy:

**Extract 1 (Pair 1)**

1. Nasrin: Here you say: “especially about essay writing”, and you put a **dot** here. But it’s not Ok! Because its referred [it refers] to the previous one.
2. Mina: Ok!
3. Nasrin: And here we only need a **COMMA**.
4. Mina: **Comma**. Yes! that’s right. You are right.

In this extract, Nasrin used “advising” strategy to scaffold her partner on a punctuation error she noticed in her partner’s paper. Her short explanations could convince Mina; since the clause beginning with “especially” was part of a bigger construction and it completed its meaning, “period” was not needed and using a “comma” instead was more appropriate (turns 1 and 3). Mina admitted her partner’s advice.

**Extract 2 (Pair 2)**

5. Maryam: What does **NE** stand for?
6. Mani: “There are different **OPINIONS**”.
7. Maryam: That’s right.
8. Mani: The sentence is **plural**. The word **opinion** should be in plural form.

In the above example, the instructor had used the code “**NE**” to show a noun ending error. Maryam did not understand the reason (turn 5). In other words, she could not address the error on her own. So, she sought her partner’s scaffold. Mani got the idea and not only proposed the correct form, but also explained why it was incorrect (turns 7 and 8). Interaction provided an opportunity for partners to share their strengths and grammatical knowledge.

**Extract 3 (Pair 4)**

9. Afrouz: Here: “don’t let things make his/her absence-mind”. It should be **HIM/HER** not **his/her**. You need an object pronoun here.
10. Roya: Ok! I made a mistake here.

As it is shown in turn 9, scaffolding not only involved providing the right form but also included a brief explanation of what was needed. In this sense, the reviewer helped her partner to recall what she had learnt in English grammar courses but had failed to apply it in her writing. Afrouz’s tailored feedback/scaffold was enough for Roya to understand and admit her mistake.
Extract 4 (Pair 2)

(11) Mani: Here, the word *couse* is misspelled. You have written it with o. You should have used A.

(12) Maryam: But I’ve used a.

(13) Mani: No, that’s o.

(14) Maryam: Oh! yes, you are right. That’s o.

In the above example, Mani noticed a spelling error in Maryam’s paper (turn 11) and proposed his alternative. At first, Maryam denied it (turn 12), but right away she accepted her mistake (turn 14). As it is noticed in the above examples, advising strategy normally involved fixing the errors and was sometimes supported by brief explanations or resorting to external sources depending on the type of errors and the needs of the peers.

5.4.1.2 Instructing

This refers to those interactional strategies in which whether the reviewer or the writer explicitly offered his/her partner mini lessons on issues of grammar, vocabulary, mechanics or higher aspects of writing such as content and organisation. The following examples show sample instructions where the participants provided their partners some mini lessons:

Extract 5 (Pair 3)

(15) Tina: And here, when we use relative pronouns, we do not normally use pronouns too. I think the pronoun *it* is redundant here. I don’t know.

(16) Mahdi: Right!

When the students felt their partners needed a mini lesson on a point, they did not hesitate to offer it. In such cases, they offered not only advice but also some instructions which could help their partners not to make those mistakes in their future writings. In the above example, Tina was explaining to her partner that when WH forms - relative pronouns - are used in the middle of an English construction, using a pronoun was unnecessary. The tactful language used by Tina -“I think” and “I don’t know”- indicates her intention to create a collaborative atmosphere as well as not to hurt her partner.

Extract 6 (Pair 2)

(17) Mani: Here you should **CAPITALISE** the word.

(18) Maryam: Why?

(19) Mani: Because you are staring a new sentence.
Maryam: No. When we start an essay, we should just **capitalise** the first word of the essay.

Mani: No! When you finish a sentence with full stop and start a new sentence, you need **CAPITALISATION**.

Maryam: No.

Mani: Look at here, or this one: [probably showing some examples from the book or model essays]. After period a new sentence has started and the first word is in **capital**.

Maryam: That’s right!

Sometimes, the peers needed to deliver instructions to support their suggestions and convince their partners. So, they used their knowledge and shared it with their classmates. In the above example, Mani’s explanations did not persuade Maryam to correct the mistake demonstrating her doubt in Mani’s comment (turns 18, 20, and 22). Only when Mani used some external tools (turn 23) - probably from their textbooks or some model essays - she was convinced and admitted Mani’s advice and instruction (turn 30).

Extract 7 (Pair 4)

Afrouz: Here you want to say that they learn their lessons better. Am I right? Study better? For describing a verb we need an adverb. **WELL** is correct and **better** is incorrect. It is an adjective.

Roya: **To study well**?

Afrouz: Yes, **STUDY WELL THEIR LESSONS**.

Roya: “be active in class can effectiveness for students to study well their lesson”

Afrouz: Yes.

Roya: Adjective doesn’t suit **their lesson**!

Afrouz: You can say **STUDY THEIR LESSON WELL**.

Roya: **well**! You mean this way is wrong? I have used it as an adjective, that’s why I haven’t used an adverb.

Afrouz: No, you always use an adverb to describe a verb.

This extract is also another instance of providing instruction. Afrouz noticed an error in Roya’s paper and after making sure that she understood what her partner intended to express, she patiently offered the accurate alternative and explained why. Indeed, she felt providing just the correct form was not enough and her partner needed further
support. Hence, she communicated her grammatical knowledge with her partner and offered a mini lesson to Roya by explaining the difference in the usage of adjective and adverb in English sentences (turns 25 and 33). Roya, however, seemed sceptical about her proposed choice and felt that the sentence looked odd this way (turns 30 and 32). Also, as this excerpt shows (turn 25), one of the advantages of peer interaction is that it prevents misunderstanding and miscommunication between reviewers and writers since it provides opportunities for negotiation and discussion.

5.4.1.3 Providing options

By this interactional strategy the reviewers offered the authors more than one choice in order to facilitate making any decisions by their partners. The following examples demonstrate such an activity:

Extract 8 (Pair 4)

(34) Afrouz: Here the verb after like should be either in -ING form or infinitive.
(35) Roya: We can also use bare infinitive.
(36) Afrouz: Either in -ING form or infinitive
(37) Roya: “some don’t like work out”...
(38) Afrouz: …don’t like WORKING

Students were enthusiastic to share their knowledge. In fact, they took the tasks seriously and treated them as an opportunity to offer and receive assistance. As this example shows, Afrouz did not restrict her scaffold to suggesting just one correct form, but provided both possible accurate options which could follow the verb ‘like’ (turns 34 and 36).

Extract 9 (Pair 2)

(39) Maryam: What is it here? Should I add –ed to the verb; entered? I think the verb has got a tense error.
(40) Mani: What is the sentence? “However, women need the amusement and” ENTERING, I think. Or...
(41) Maryam: entering is not a right choice.
(42) Mani: I think after and you need a subject; otherwise, you should change the parts of speech of the verb enter. … “need amusement and” for example “THEY enter to the society”. When you use and either the two parts of the
construction should be parallel, or you should use a synonym for amusement:

AND THEY WANT TO ENTER TO THE SOCIETY. Something like that.

(43) Maryam: In fact, I need a subject here.

(44) Mani: Yes, you need to start a new sentence.

In this extract, peers worked together to address the issue marked by the instructor. In other words, they first helped each other to understand why the word had been marked (turns 39 and 40). Then, they tried to address the mistake collaboratively. Although they were revising Maryam’s paper, both were actively engaged in the activity and discussed different options. In this friendly atmosphere, Mani not only offered advice and options, but also used Maryam’s views and together they reached an agreement and co-constructed the accurate structure (turns 40-44).

Extract 10 (Pair 3)

(45) Mahdi: “First of all, increasing their knowledge”. The problem in this case is that the construction is a sentence fragment. I noticed this mistake last week and indicated it.

(46) Tina: But you mentioned something else and it wasn’t clear to me what your feedback was.

(47) Mahdi: This is a sentence fragment. That’s why the instructor has marked it.

(48) Tina: What is your suggestion?

(49) Mahdi: You can write for instance; FIRST OF ALL INCREASING THEIR KNOWLEDGE IS ONE OF THE MOST ADVANTAGES. I mean you should change it to a sentence.

(50) Tina: You mean it is marked because it’s a phrase and not a sentence. Don’t you?

(51) Mahdi: Yes! Or you can say; ONE OF THE FIRST ADVANTAGES, or IS THE MOST IMPORTANT, as you have adopted an emphatic order.

(52) Tina: one of the advantages of...

(53) Mahdi: As you see the instructor has marked all of the first sentences of your paragraphs since all are fragments.

(54) Tina: Yes! You are right.

This example also shows mutual effort by dyads to solve the problem marked by the instructor. Although Mahdi understood why the instructor had marked the structure and proposed some alternatives to support his partner, his suggestions were still ungrammatical. Indeed, the students had been recommended to avoid using sentence
fragments. They had also been instructed how to address them. Yet, it appears that the instructions had been inadequate for this dyad and probably beyond their current developmental level as they failed to avoid and/or fix them.

**Extract 11 (Pair 4)**

(55) Afrouz: “When a woman gets married, her responsibilities were double”.

(56) Roya: Ok! It is correct.

(57) Afrouz: her responsibilities...

(58) Roya: her responsibilities were double, it is not singular.

(59) Afrouz: Why have you used were here? Isn’t your sentence in present tense?

(60) Roya: How should I change it?

(61) Afrouz: **GET DOUBLE** or **BECOME DOUBLE** or **ARE DOUBLE**

(62) Roya: Do you mean the verb should be in present form?

(63) Afrouz: Yes!

In the above extract, if it was on Roya’s own, she probably would fail to fix the error since she did not get why it had been marked (turns 56 and 58). Hence, she eventually asked for help and Afrouz used her expertise, offered some choices, and shared the solutions with Roya and together they could address the error (turn 61).

### 5.4.1.4 Response to question

Responding to question was also quite common. In such instances the reviewer or the writer tried to respond to a linguistic question raised by his/her partner. Indeed, the peers acted as a live and immediate reference and answered the questions raised during collaborative tasks. In the following extracts, the students responded to their peers’ questions:

**Extract 12 (Pair 2)**

(64) Maryam: Why haven’t you used **homework** in plural form?

(65) Mani: I think I shouldn’t do that. **Homework** is an uncountable noun.

The interesting point in this extract is that Maryam was reviewing Mani’s draft and she thought ‘homework’ should be used in plural form. So, she asked Mani the reason he had not written it in plural form - adding plural “s” to its end. Mani, on the other hand, reminded her that ‘homework’ is a non-countable noun and it should not be used in plural form. This is an instance of knowledge sharing in which Mani taught a grammatical point to his partner and as she already knew the countable and non-countable noun categories from her grammar courses, she did not need to use other
references like dictionaries or textbooks to understand it. Mani’s brief response served the purpose.

**Extract 13 (Pair 1)**

(66) Nasrin: But why you used this **punctuation** here [colon]?
(67) Mina: Because I wanted to mention two things. Go on.
(68) Nasrin: It’s my idea it was… It wasn’t necessary.
(69) Mina: May be it is not correct.
(70) Nasrin: Yes!

Nasrin questioned the use of colon as a punctuation mark in this instance (turn 66). Mina responded to her partner’s question by expressing her intention which was listing two things (turn 67). However, Nasrin was not happy with Mina’s response and believed this punctuation mark was not correctly used. Mina’s reaction was interesting as she did not care that much about her partner’s comments and asked her to look at the next trouble-source (turn 69). Sometimes, the quick responses provided by the peers could not convince the partners to overcome their doubts about the right choices. For example, as there are no hard and fast rules about punctuation marks and the rules governing them are complicated, L2 learners get confused and feel insecure in their usage.

**5.4.1.5 Referencing**

Referencing occurred when a particular error kept repeating in the written text. In such occasions, the reviewer referred the writer to the previous suggestion given and asked him/her to follow the same advice. In the following extracts the reviewers referred the writers to the previously spotted errors in their texts and without offering further suggestions, asked them to fix them according to their earlier discussions:

**Extract 14 (Pair 2)**

(71) Mani: Here again this should be **INCREASING**.
(72) Maryam: **increasing**

As the mistake kept repeating in Maryam’s essay - unparallel construction - Mani used the term “again” and referred his partner to his earlier suggestion which was adding “-ing” to the end of the verb ‘increase’ to make it parallel with similar elements in the construction. Maryam’s reaction shows that she got the purpose of the signal. As it is noticed in this example, the scaffoldings were contingent and when the participants felt
there was no need for further discussions and their partners understood their feedback, they did not elaborate it in detail.

Extract 15 (Pair 2)

(73) Mani: In this case, you should again **capitalise** the word [there].

(74) Maryam: Ok, I should **capitalise** all these cases.

The term “again” indicates referencing and it shows the error - here; capitalisation of the first word of the sentence - had already been noticed in Maryam’s essay and they had discussed and addressed it together and there was no need for further discussion. They both just mentioned it and moved to the next point. Tailoring the scaffold to the needs of the partners was one of the features of peer discussions. At times the students felt not only providing the correct form, but also delivering mini lessons was necessary. On occasions, they just suggested the right form without engaging in any further details or discussions.

5.4.1.6 Pointing

Pointing is an interactional strategy in which the reviewers just pointed to the mistakes without taking any further actions including offering any solutions. In such cases the errors were so obvious that the reviewers thought the authors could fix them by themselves and did not need wasting time discussing them. This interactional strategy mainly occurred when the pairs noticed spelling errors in each other’s texts which they both believed were caused due to inattention rather than lack of knowledge. Such errors prompted minimal level of negotiation and scaffolding which were limited to sending a single signal like ‘HERE’ and showing the error and leaving it to the writer to fix them.

5.4.1.7 Change advice

This interactional strategy was also observed during the negotiations and is referred to those instances in which whether the reviewer or the writer provided an advice earlier in their discussion and amended it later as they became aware of its inaccuracy or faced with their peers’ negative reaction. Such behaviour reflects instability in students’ views which is a sign of learning the target language (English) by itself. As it is illustrated in Extracts below, the reviewers first gave a suggestion but later changed their minds by offering another suggestion:

Extract 16 (Pair 2)

(75) Roya: You have placed **however** between two **commas**.
Afrouz: Yes!
Roya: I think a comma is just needed after it.
Afrouz: After it?
Roya: Yes!
Afrouz: Look, I have written here: “is more important than getting mark”. Ok? Here I have a pause.
Roya: however
Afrouz: I think I had better use a SEMICOLON here.
Roya: You had better use a SEMICOLON here. Then, when you put a sentence between two commas, if you remember it means that the sentence is not important [adjunct], it means it can be deleted.
Afrouz: Because the sentence is long. I didn’t know how to write it.
Roya: I know. However, if you place a comma before it, I mistakenly said you need a comma after it, then you don’t have to put it between two commas.
Afrouz: You mean this is unnecessary here.
Roya: Yes! It is not necessary. Why? Because when you place it between two commas, it means that the sentence is unimportant.
Afrouz: It’s adjunct.
Roya: It means you can delete it.
Afrouz: I got it.

In this example, since Afrouz had placed the transition ‘however’ between two commas, Roya first suggested deleting one of them - the comma before ‘however’ (turns 77 and 79). But when Afrouz read the sentence, she herself realised her mistake, and rightly suggested using semicolon before the transition (turn 82) – as instructed during the course. Upon noticing her partner’s scepticism, Roya changed her suggestion (turns 83 and 85). This change of suggestion shows Roya’s confusion and her uncertainty about punctuation marks rules. As the students were novice writers and were still in the beginning stages of developing their writing skills, such instabilities could happen and was part of the learning process. However, such behaviours could create distrust feeling in their partners and they reacted reluctantly to the feedback they received from their classmates.
Extract 17 (Pair 4)

(91) Roya: “flattery gets you nowhere”. I think again you have put a sentence between two commas.

(92) Afrouz: No! I can use comma before so.

(93) Roya: Yes, you can use it before so, but can’t use it here.

Here again Roya commented on Afrouz’s use of punctuation marks (turn 91); however, when she faced Afrouz’s rejection, she changed her suggestion (93). This example clearly shows Roya’s low knowledge of English language mechanics and her instability in providing suggestions on such cases. As stated earlier, inconsistency together with partiality could negatively affect the peer feedback incorporation ratio and was one of the issues which threatened the efficiency of peer evaluation activity.

5.4.1.8 Guessing

Sometimes, the pairs were not sure about the accuracy of the alternatives they proposed. In such cases, they speculated about what could be a proper choice. The following extracts contain guessing:

Extract 18 (Pair 4)

(94) Afrouz: “The next principle, taking part in class that it has two aspects”. [They read this bit together]. “The next principle,”, we need a pause here.

(95) Roya: That’s right! It’s got something with structure; incorrect structure, wrong word order, sentence fragment, run-on.

(96) Afrouz: I guess here… We should review our grammar books again. “The next principle,”

(97) Roya: What’s wrong with the structure? Probably you should change it to TAKE PART.

(98) Afrouz: I think I need a subject here, right?

(99) Roya: The students take part?

(100) Afrouz: Yes

(101) Roya: in class. The problem is the same as mine. Students take part in class.

(102) Afrouz: Where is my second [paragraph]?

Guessing is one of the interactional strategies which reveals the participants’ inability to decide on the correct alternative. Even though the dyads tried to fix the errors and shared their knowledge, in some cases they failed to address the feedback. It could be
said that in such cases the errors were beyond ZPD or potential developmental level of the learners and they were unable to move beyond that level. In this example, the sentence was grammatically incorrect and was a fragment. Both partners actively participated in joint revision; however, they were unable to fix the error and just guessed what the correct form might be (turns 96-98). Although sentence fragment had been discussed during the course, apparently the instruction had not been enough since pair 3 also faced a similar problem (Extract 10).

**Extract 19 (Pair 5)**

(103) Azam: “You can study your teacher’s brochures”, I meant your teacher’s leaflets.

(104) Fariba: That’s a **wrong word**. Why? I guess you have misspelled it. It has got a spelling error. Is that right? Let me check it.

(105) Azam: No! I have checked it myself. [She turns to the instructor and clarifies her intention in using the term brochure]. Here I mean the hand-outs [in Persian]. Isn’t this the right English equivalent?

(106) Instructor: **Brochure** is not a right choice. You can use **hand-outs** instead.

In this example, Azam had used an inappropriate word: ‘brochure’. Fariba guessed it might be marked due to spelling error and offered checking it from the dictionary (turn 104), but Azam rejected it and said she had checked it already. Finally, she asked it from the instructor and the instructor explained that the term ‘brochure’ could not be a right choice here and ‘hand-outs’ better expressed her intention. Sometimes, when the pairs could not fix the errors using their knowledge, they sought help from other sources such as reference books, other classmates, or the instructor.

**Extract 20 (Pair 4)**

(107) Afrouz: “is the formost [foremost]”. I guess I have got a spelling error here.

(108) Roya: Believe me! I told you.

In the above example, Afrouz noticed the mistake had been marked by the instructor and she speculated that the source of problem might be misspelling of the term ‘foremost’. Indeed, even though the instructor had used the code “PU” which indicated spelling error, she was still unsure about the type of error. On the other hand, by saying ‘believe me! I told you.’ Roya used “Flashback” strategy which was normally used by the participants when they noticed their feedback on previous drafts had not been incorporated by their partners due to their doubt and had been marked by their instructor
in the following draft. Flashback normally represented dissatisfaction on feedback ignorance.

**Extract 21 (Pair 5)**

(109) Azam: “If you just study during the day before your”, what’s wrong with it?
(110) Fariba: It seems correct. “during the day”.
(111) Azam: What is wrong with before? “If you just study during the day before your exam day”.
(112) Fariba: It’s accurate.
(113) Azam: I should probably write; **If you just study during the one day AGO**…
(114) Fariba: Mark it with asterisks.

In the above example both partners believed that the word ‘before’ was correct. However, it was not the case and it had spelling error but strangely, they did not notice it. Azam eventually speculated that she had used a wrong word and decided to replace the term with ‘ago’ which was still an improper choice (turn 113). Sometimes, inability to fix the errors was not the result of lack of knowledge but inattention or unfamiliarity with the codes the tutor had used. In this instance, the instructor had used “PU” code which indicated punctuation, capitalisation, or spelling error. However, Azam guessed that the problem could be word choice which was normally shown by using a different code “WW”. Hence, they failed to fix this clear spelling mistake and marked it to either return to it later or resort to external sources.

**5.4.1.9 Information request**

Information request was also common, taking place several times in the recorded sessions. This interactional strategy was mainly used by the reviewer when he/she read the writer’s text and felt some information was missing and further detail or support was required. In such cases, the reviewer asked the writer to provide new or additional information, examples, reasons, or facts about what was written in the text. Extracts 22 and 23 include examples of this activity:

**Extract 22 (Pair 1)**

(115) Mina: The second paragraph I think should be explained and developed in some more sentences. For example, your first paragraph has enough examples
like **read newspapers, articles, and magazines.** You have explained it by some examples.

(116) Nasrin: I think that one needed. That one needed.
(117) Mina: But the second one; just **practice** whatever the teacher told in the class.
(118) Nasrin: Ok! There wasn’t any explanation or example.
(119) Mina: I mean what can you do?
(120) Nasrin: Ok!
(121) Mina: All the things your teacher give you or all the things about you have in your book? I need this; more explanation...
(122) Nasrin: I will explain about that.

In contrast to the other interactional strategies which mainly focused on form, by using this interactional strategy, the reviewers directly scaffolded the writers to pay more attention to the content of their texts. On such occasions, as active audience and through interaction the reviewers made the writers aware of the readers’ expectations and provided them some comments to ensure that their intended messages were clearly and thoroughly expressed. As it is illustrated, in the above example Mina believed that the main idea of the second (body) paragraph needed more details (turns 115, 117, 119, and 121). At first her partner, Nasrin, asserted that the paragraph was straight forward and no further explanation was needed. However, she was later convinced to elaborate more on the main idea she had introduced in this paragraph (turn 122).

**Extract 23 (Pair 1)**

(123) Nasrin: If I were you, I would explain more about major idea[s] in every paragraph. You said something, but you didn’t explain enough.
(124) Mina: Ok!
(125) Nasrin: And your introduction was ok. And in some paragraphs I think you tried to run up to the end of your paragraph and you didn’t explain again.
(126) Mina: Ok!

In the above example, Nasrin was assessing Mina’s paper by stating that the main ideas of the body paragraphs were not developed adequately. Even though she tried to help Mina to be more precise in expressing her ideas, her comments were general and she failed to provide constructive suggestions. Lack of focus on global level feedback and offering vague comments on this aspect of papers they reviewed could be the result of
poor content knowledge as well as unfamiliarity with mechanics of commenting on such issues by this cohort of novice L2 participants.

5.4.2 Non-scaffolding negotiations

Although this group of negotiations did not directly involve in providing scaffolded feedback, they still concentrated on response, assessment, and evaluation. From 27 interactional strategies which fell under this category, some were expressed in reaction to the scaffold and advice offered by the peers, some sought help and support from the partners, several of them either requested or provided explanations, clarifications, and information, and a number of them involved in general assessment and evaluation (Figure 5.2).

The first group of interactional strategies were used to express positive reactions to the advice or scaffold provided by the peers. For instance, by using “admit advice”, “response to referencing”, “confession”, and “express understanding” strategies, participants confirmed their partners’ opinions and welcomed the support extended through dialogic interaction by their partners. Indeed, adopting such strategies together with the strategies delineated in section 5.4.1 indicate that scaffolding mechanism existed in peer discussions and the participants actively shared their knowledge and expertise and helped each other to improve the quality of their papers and compose better essays in a collaborative atmosphere. However, as it has been stressed at several points, the discussions and collaboration did not aim to improve textual level problems, but were more concerned about surface level issues. In other words, even though the participants employed “restating”, “comprehension check”, “response to comprehension check”, “clarification request”, and “clarifying” interactional strategies for clarification and understanding the meaning of the texts they evaluated/co-revised, they used them to discuss linguistic features. Likewise, “assessment” and “response to assessment” strategies involved some general evaluation and lacked constructive comments which could be used to develop content and organisation.

In addition, sometimes the peers sought help from their partners and asked for their support to address their errors. Interactional strategies such as “requesting advice”, “ask for instruction”, and “ask question” which were used by the participants during collaborative tasks show their attempts to use peer knowledge and expertise. More precisely, such behaviours suggest that on some occasions where the learners were unable to fix the errors on their own or were unsure about the right choice, their partners were the most accessible reference they could use. On the other hand, lack of trust in the
quality of feedback provided by peers was also an issue which was detected in the conversations. Using interactional strategies such as “reject advice”, “certainty check”, “express certainty”, “knowledge check”, “justifying” or “persistence” imply participants’ distrust in the validity of advice given by peers with nearly the same level of English proficiency. Consequently, this doubt could lead to ignorance. Hence, it is safe to argue that the participants made good efforts to adopt their peers’ suggestions in their revisions. However, they were selective and critical. That is, they carefully considered the advice they received from their peers, evaluated it against their own knowledge and information, and then decided what to accept based on the validity of each comment.

Finally, due to their limited language proficiency, the participants were sometimes unable to provide concrete and useful advice to fix the errors even when they had been marked for them. Interactional strategies like “inability to provide advice”, “express lack of knowledge”, and “express uncertainty” are clear examples of incompetency and also indicate students’ struggles and challenges in the process of learning their second language. In such instances, they either referred to external resources such as reference books, classmates, instructor, or abandoned the errors. Therefore, effective peer activities take time and training to make them work, particularly at lower proficiency levels or with those students who have had little experience with collaborative tasks. Indeed, before peer work on writing can begin, teachers need to ascertain students’ writing proficiency level, feedback skills, and collaborative work experience to be able to devise appropriate training and effective peer response strategies.
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Figure 5.2. Non-scaffolded feedback

In the following sections, the major interactional strategies, which had non-scaffolding characteristics, will be discussed and elaborated. Appendix 17 also includes examples of other non-scaffolding interactions which were used by the participants during collaborative tasks.

5.4.2.1 Admit advice

Accepting suggestions given by the partner was quite frequent. It involved clearly and explicitly agreeing with the changes or solutions proposed. The following excerpts illustrate this type of interactional strategy:
Extract 24 (Pair 3)

(127) Tina: I found a **mechanical** error here. That’s something with the **noun ending** and in this case you should use a **plural form** of the noun student. Because when you talk about the students’ concerns, the noun should be in plural. I’m not sure about your intention.

(128) Mahdi: I have probably forgotten it. Because I exactly meant all of the students.

(129) Tina: I just wanted to remind you.

(130) Mahdi: That’s right!

When the peers felt that the advice and scaffold provided by their partners was accurate, they accepted it. In such cases, the support extended by peers led to knowledge sharing and co-construction of better quality texts. In the above example, Mahdi’s response to his partner’s comment - changing the word ‘student’ to plural form - was polite and he welcomed Tina’s advice by admitting his mistake (turns 128 and 130).

Extract 25 (Pair 4)

(131) Afrouz: Don’t we use **COMMA** before **but**?

(132) Roya: Yes, we do. As it was shown in previous sections, scaffolding could take different forms. Sometimes, it involved providing an explicit advice (5.4.1.1). At times, it encompassed referencing and pointing (5.4.1.5 and 5.4.1.6). In some occasions, the peers employed a different method to extend their scaffold like the above extract in which Afrouz started her feedback by asking Roya a question. In fact, by using this technique - asking question - she indirectly sent her partner a message that before “but” a punctuation mark - comma - was needed. Roya, on the other hand, reacted positively to this indirect suggestion. Indeed, extending scaffold by one of the partners and admitting it by the other, completed the scaffolding process and both partners could benefit from it.

5.4.2.2 Justifying

The writers often used this type of activity as they felt they should justify and defend their choices in response to the comments expressed by the reviewers. In fact, this interactional strategy helped the writers to explain and clarify their intention and their choices as well as to listen to their reviewers arguments and then decide whether to admit or reject the suggestions offered by them. The following extracts highlight how the writers justified their choices in their essays in response to their partners’ comments:
Extract 26 (Pair 3)

(133) Mahdi: The first problem I can mention is your use of the same terminology again and again. It lacks variety. For instance, you have used the phrase to get a good mark repeatedly.

(134) Tina: That’s right!

(135) Mahdi: You could, for example, use other terms like ATTAIN and ACHIEVE. If you had used some other words, your essay would have been a top one.

(136) Tina: I myself prefer reading texts which use simple and comprehensible language rather than those with difficult words forcing the reader to check them from the dictionary. However based on your comment, I should probably use more suitable words.

In this extract Mahdi questioned Tina’s limited use of vocabulary in her essay and believed adding variety and avoiding repetition could improve the readability of her paper (turns 133 and 135). Tina, on the other hand, asserted that she herself favoured using simple and easily understandable terminology rather than using more technical words. However, she respected her partner’s comment (turn 136). As it is clear in this example, while Tina justified her use of certain words in her draft, she admitted to add variety to the range of terms she used in order to make her essay more attractive.

Extract 27 (Pair 1)

(137) Mina: In the last step, last paragraph, I think you should explain it more, you should explain it more.

(138) Nasrin: How should I explain it more?

(139) Mina: How a person can be a teacher’s pet?

(140) Nasrin: Aha! You mean I should say some examples?

(141) Mina: Some methods. Yes, examples, some more examples.

(142) Nasrin: What did I write here? [checking her paper]

(143) Mina: Nothing special.

(144) Nasrin: What do you mean by that? Let me read it. Where is it?

(145) Mina: Here: “There is another step which is essential to do in order to complete your tring [trying]. Being a student as your instructor want is the most important point you have to show.”

(146) Nasrin: Ok. There is no explanation for that. Let me tell you something. You know that is important. Every person would know it.
(147) Mina: You know!
(148) Nasrin: Ok. Let me tell you. look at here: “Being a student as your instructor want”. I don’t know what kind of student your professor wants. You yourself should try to understand that. May be I say that he wants a person who…
(149) Mina: Ok. Right now, for instance, for example, you can have some examples, some methods for those students who want to read your essay.
(150) Nasrin: I wanted to write but I supposed that it is too long now. If I want to mention all of them, it will be more long [longer].

Justification not only encompassed explaining the choice of certain linguistic features, but also the presence or the absence of particular information in the texts. In the above example, Mina claimed that the last body paragraph needed more elaboration (turns 137, 139, 141, and 149). She stressed that as a reader she needed to know how a student could be a teacher’s pet. Hence, Nasrin should have been more specific. Nasrin, however, responded that the issue was clear and no more explanation was required as every student had his/her own unique approach for being teacher’s pet and it was a subjective issue and had no fixed advice (turn 148). As Mina insisted on her stance, Nasrin justified that due to the length of her essay, she preferred not to provide any examples in order not to make the paper longer (turn 150). This excerpt also demonstrates the importance of audience and interaction between the peers. Engaging in peer evaluation tasks and discussing their texts allows the students to realise the information gap and ambiguities in their texts and enables them to develop audience awareness.

5.4.2.3 Requesting advice

Requesting advice occurred in some cases. It was used when one of the participants explicitly asked his/her partner for assistance and sought solution. Extracts 28 and 29 demonstrate examples of this interactional strategy:

Extract 28 (Pair 2)

(151) Maryam: Don’t I need **punctuation** here?
(152) Mani: Here you need a **SEMICOLON** before “therefore” [he shows what semicolon looks like].

One of the advantages of peer interaction which is normally absent in teacher-centred classes is that peers have an opportunity to seek support and scaffold from their partners. More precisely, the equal relationship between the peers helps them ask, provide, and
receive support as well as exchange knowledge in a friendly atmosphere. In the above example, Mani had marked the term “therefore” on Maryam’s paper, but he forgot discussing it. Maryam requested him to explain the reason he had marked it and asked for suggestion (turn 151). The extract also demonstrates how keen student writers were to find out their errors and improve their essays as they sometimes initiated the conversations especially when the reviewers overlooked a point.

Extract 29 (Pair 1)

(153) Mina: “a good mark in Essay”. I think in is not correct.
(154) Nasrin: But it is in. Look at here [Nasrin shows Mina the essay prompt which is “How to get a good mark in Essay Writing final exam”].
(155) Mina: Because of this? No, no, no, no. a good mark in…
(156) Nasrin: What should I use instead of that?
(157) Mina: IN AN ESSAY, IN AN ESSAY FINAL EXAM. Because of this [the prompt], you wrote it here this way?
(158) Nasrin: I don’t know. I think that is ok!

Of course asking for advice did not necessarily lead to incorporation. In such cases, when the writer was unsure about a point, he/she asked for help and sought his/her partner’s views. However, it was him/her who ultimately decided to either accept or reject the suggestion after evaluating it. In this example, Mina believed ‘in essay’ was incorrect and it should be ‘in an essay’ (turns 153 and 155). Nasrin failed to convince Mina about the accuracy of her choice (turn 154), but asked for Mina’s suggestion (turn 156). However, based on an evidence she had (the prompt of the essay), she rejected her partner’s suggestion and stated that she believed that her original choice was right.

5.4.2.4 Ask question

Asking question was also a common activity. It took place when the reviewer or writer asked a linguistic question such as a grammatical point or checked what had been written or said was accurate from linguistic point of view. The following extracts include examples of this interactional strategy:

Extract 30 (Pair 2)

(159) Maryam: “that are given”?
(160) Mani: Given
(161) Maryam: Why have you used given here?
(162) Mani: Because it is passive, it is passive; “by the instructor”.

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The interaction between the participants helped them ask about the points they did not
know and receive their partners’ responses and avoid confusions. It also helped them
recall, review, and internalise the points that they had forgotten or were unfamiliar with.
In this example, Maryam asked Mani a grammatical question; the rationale for using
passive form of the verb “give”. In fact, she did not know the passive form of the verb
was needed in the structure. Mani explained briefly that a passive verb was required.

Extract 31 (Pair 1)

(163) Mina: Should we capitalize the word after this punctuation?
(164) Nasrin: What do you mean by that?
(165) Mina: I mean….
(166) Nasrin: It’s not a comma. It’s a … What’s that? [semicolon]. What is it?
   Circum…[semicolon]
(167) Mina: Circumstance [semicolon]
(168) Nasrin: Exactly that one.
(169) Mina: Ok! After that, can we use capital?
(170) Nasrin: Yes, yes, yes!
(171) Mina: Ok. I wasn’t certain.

Being engaged in collaborative tasks also helped peers address their uncertainties
without spending time checking other sources. More precisely, depending on the type of
the questions, partners could act as immediate references and supported each other by
providing answers to the questions they were asked. In this extract, Mina raised a
question about punctuation mark as she was unsure about its usage in that special place.
Nasrin responded to the question confidently and they moved to the next point.

5.4.2.5 Reject advice

Not all suggestions were welcomed by the peers. In some cases the students rejected the
advice proposed by their partners. In such cases, the participants defended their original
choices and discarded any modifications. Extracts below include examples of this
interactional strategy:

Extract 32 (Pair 1)

(172) Mina: And here: If I read all of the final and concluding paragraph, I can
understand what you mean. With the first sentence I can’t understand which
exam, which final exam, and what you are talking about.
(173) Nasrin: It is easy to understand. When you read the title, you can understand what I am going to talk about. That’s it.
(174) Mina: Not with these sentences. Not with these sentences. The last sentence can explain.
(175) Nasrin: Try to be more just. Try to be more just and more fair. The paragraph is clear.
(176) Mina: I am fair.
(177) Nasrin: You are not.
(178) Mina: Look at other paragraphs. They are complete.
(179) Nasrin: Ok. It’s my turn. That’s enough. Now it’s my turn.
(180) Mina: It’s your turn [laughing].
(181) Nasrin: You spoke more than 15 [minutes].

Collaborative tasks help learners engage in a community of equals who respond to each other’s work and together create an authentic social context for interaction and learning. On the negative side, as the students are not native speakers of English and have nearly the same language abilities, they are doubtful about the quality and accuracy of their peers’ comments and sometimes they feel their peers’ feedback is unfair and unreliable rather than being constructive. Hence, they reject it. In this example, Mina’s evaluation and Nasrin’s rejection resulted in a clash. Mina believed that Nasrin’s concluding paragraph was ambiguous and needed clarity (turns 172 and 174). Nasrin, on the other hand, firmly rejected her partner’s comment and emphasised that from the very beginning it was clear what she was talking about (turn 173) and asked her not to be biased (turns 175 and 177). Mina rejected being biased and subjective and at this point the conflict between the partners began and Nasrin expressed her dissatisfaction by blaming Mina to speak more than the allocated time.

Extract 33 (Pair 1)

(182) Nasrin: If I were you, instead of writing “put your hand up in response”, I would use this word: RAISE MY HAND.
(183) Mina: “put up” is correct.
(184) Nasrin: I don’t know. But that one is more common.
(185) Mina: I’ve heard it, and I’ve seen it, and I’ve read it.
(186) Nasrin: Yeah!

The tendency to reject peer feedback increased when the partners noticed inconfidence and inconsistency in their peers’ comments. More competent participants were also
more likely to disregard their peers’ feedback. In the above excerpt, Nasrin inconfidently suggested replacing the phrase ‘put your hand up’ with ‘raise your hand’ (turns 182 and 184). However, Mina confidently rejected her partner’s advice by emphasising that she was sure that the expression was correct and needed no revision (turns 183 and 185). Nasrin, on the other hand, still thought her advice was the right alternative but was unable to convince Mina to admit her suggestion. Apparently, they were unable to convince each other and left the phrase as it was.

5.4.2.6 Persistence

This interactional strategy was often used by both reviewers and writers. In such occasions, the reviewer insisted on repairing a mistake, while the writer kept rejecting his/her peer’s comment. Indeed, the feature was employed when the partners disagreed with and/or distrusted each other. The use of persistence is evident in the following excerpts, where both the reviewers and the writers self-confidently try to convince each other about the accuracy of their options:

Extract 34 (Pair 5)

(187) Fariba: I think the introduction of your essay lacks blueprints.
(188) Azam: The introduction?
(189) Fariba: For example, the main ideas which for getting a good mark in the essay writing final exam are needed, are missing in your introduction.
(190) Azam: Ok!
(191) Fariba: I mean, for example, the main ideas which are needed for getting a good mark in the essay writing final exam.
(192) Azam: The prompt is: “How can we get a good mark in our essay writing exam?” First, I have started by asking a question: “Do you know how to get a good mark?” Then, I have continued: “Although getting a good mark is a sweet experience, it is not easy”. Ok?
(193) Fariba: Ok!
(194) Azam: Then, I have presented some guidelines briefly. Later, I have added that we should try for such a purpose and pay attention to some important points. I have prepared [the readers].
(195) Fariba: You should clearly have mentioned those important points in the introductory paragraph.
(196) Azam: No. I have prepared [the readers].
(197) Fariba: No, no, no. I think you should have mentioned them.
Azam: But I asked about it from a friend of mine. He/she said it is not necessary.

Fariba: No, but the instructor stressed that the blueprints or main ideas should be written briefly in the introduction and later be explained step by step in the body paragraphs.

Azam: I don’t know, because when I checked a couple of model essays discussing an issue, I didn’t come across with this. They had just explained the issues in the body paragraphs.

Fariba: No! No! You had better introduce the main ideas in the introduction and then explain them in the body paragraphs. That’s what the instructor has recommended.

Persistence happened when both partners insisted on their stance and were reluctant to accept each other’s opinions. Hence, it implicitly showed the participants’ doubt about credibility and accuracy of peer comments. In the above example, Fariba believed that Azam’s introductory paragraph lacked blueprint (turn 187) and persistently expressed her claim by referring to their instructions (turns 195, 197, 199, and 201). Azam, on the other hand, rejected its need adding that she did not think it was necessary. She also insisted that as she herself was uncertain, she not only had asked it from her friend, but also had checked some of the model essays (turns 198 and 200). Indeed, distrust in the expertise of her fellow student prompted Azam to be inattentive to the feedback she received from Fariba.

Extract 35 (Pair 1)

Mina: And “You also need to practice whatever is taught in class”.

Nasrin: “whatever is taught”.

Mina: Ok! I think the tense here has problem. is or has?

Nasrin: is taught. I mean passive form. When…

Mina: Ok!

Nasrin: Ok! For example…

Mina: HAS BEEN TAUGHT. HAS BEEN TAUGHT

Nasrin: A person…

Mina: HAS BEEN TAUGHT, ok!

Nasrin: has been taught! Why should we write has been taught? It has a regular. No?

Mina: It is regular from the past until now.
(213) Nasrin: No! I didn’t mean that. For example, your teacher teaches something to you, teaches!
(214) Mina: Ok!
(215) Nasrin: I mean the simple present. Yes. Because it happens during…
(216) Mina: No! Because you wanna speak about this semester we have, right now, writing essay, it is correct. But, in a whole general way it is not correct.
(217) Nasrin: I think it is correct.
(218) Mina: In the general way it is not correct.
(219) Nasrin: What should we do? What should we say actually?
(220) Mina: Ok! He teaches now to you something, something about essay. Ok?
(221) Nasrin: Do you know, do you know, what is passive and [she has forgotten the word active in English and struggles saying it and says its Persian equivalent].
(222) Mina: Ok. I don’t! What, what is it? HAS BEEN TAUGHT.
(223) Nasrin: Look, its active form has been simple present.
(224) Mina: Why was it simple present?
(225) Nasrin: Because it happens regularly every session. The teacher…
(226) Mina: This semester you have class with this teacher and he teaches you…
(227) Nasrin: I didn’t mean this semester. Every semester, every time.
(228) Mina: Ok! Sorry.
(229) Nasrin: Every teacher who teaches you something. I think you are wrong.
(230) Mina: You couldn’t get what I mean.
(231) Nasrin: Ok!

Lack of effective response strategies or inability to express clearly feedback rationale, as well as failure to justify the comments could also lead to persistence and consequently ignorance. For example, in the above extract, although both partners agreed that the passive form of the verb should be used, they failed to agree on the right choice. Indeed, the participants could not communicate properly, misunderstood each other and both insisted on their choice throughout the negotiation episode without being able to convince each other. Therefore, disagreement left this point unsorted.

5.4.2.7 Express uncertainty

Expressing uncertainty was also noticed in a number of cases. This interactional strategy was used when either the reviewer or the writer first offered a suggestion and later expressed doubt about what they had proposed. It also occurred when the
interlocutors struggled to fix a problem which was marked and detected by the instructor. This interactional strategy is illustrated in Extracts 36 and 37:

**Extract 36 (Pair 3)**

(232) Tina: And here; when we want to change will into negative form, we say **won’t**. We don’t use **will not**. This is one of the errors I noticed.

(233) Mahdi: Of course, as I have read different texts, I don’t know. I wanted to make it more formal. That’s why I used **will not**. I have seen it this way in texts. Now you say something different. I don’t know.

(234) Tina: That’s what I have learnt. I may be wrong. Anyway, all of these will be checked [by the instructor].

(235) Mahdi: That’s right.

Collaborative tasks are important learning tools in a writing course as they help students to interact, exchange expertise, and do what they may not be able to do for themselves; that is, detecting and resolving the errors in their essays. However, as inexperienced writers, L2 learners lack the prerequisite linguistic resources for revision and sometimes struggle to suggest appropriate revisions or are uncertain about the right choice. In the above extract, Tina relied on her own knowledge and asserted that the negative form of ‘will’ is ‘won’t’ (turn 232). Mahdi, on the other hand, claimed that ‘will not’ is more appropriate in formal writing (turn 233). Both partners’ comments included some degrees of uncertainties and inconfidence revealing their status as English language learners. Their hope for their tutor’s evaluation and comment on this issue shows their dependence on his judgemental role (turns 234 and 235).

**Extract 37 (Pair 2)**

(236) Mani: The term **exactly** doesn’t look suitable here. “and we should study very exactly”, **VERY WELL**. It is better to use **WELL**.

(237) Maryam: [I mean] We should study very well, very exactly.

(238) Mani: But it doesn’t look nice. Look: “We should study very exactly.”

(239) Maryam: But when I say we should study very well, it doesn’t express the intended message. We should study very exactly in order to internalize all the points. I don’t know. Your suggestion could probably be right. I’ll check it later.

In doing peer evaluation activities, some students might feel uncertain about the validity of their classmates’ responses. They are also unsure about their own choice. Hence, they are prompted to search for confirmation by checking instruction manuals and reference
books, or asking their teachers. In the above example, Mani believed that ‘exactly’ did not fit the above sentence and suggested using a better term; ‘well’. Maryam, on the other hand, translated the sentence into Persian and expressed her intended message claiming ‘very well’ was not a suitable choice. However, as she was neither sure about her own choice, nor about her peer’s alternative, she was inclined to double-check it.

5.4.2.8 Inability to provide advice

Due to their low level of English ability, sometimes the peers were unable to provide suggestions and had to abandon the problem, leave it for the authors to correct it, or ask their instructor or classmates for help. Inability to provide advice is demonstrated in the excerpts below:

Extract 38 (Pair 3)

(240) Tina: Here the instructor has written incorrect structure. “Otherwise,...” I have used the instructor’s sentence. That’s the same as the title of the essay.

(241) Mahdi: Probably he has marked it because of this [not clear what he is talking about]. But the construction is accurate. That’s exactly what the instructor has said. Or you can say PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT.... Of course the term discuss is more suitable because it is in simple present form. Ask the instructor himself since the original sentence is from him. I am not sure. I can’t find any mistake in it.

As in collaborative tasks students work together and share their knowledge, they can notice additional errors and produce better papers. However, it is not always the case. Sometimes, due to their lack of knowledge, pairs fail to provide the expected support even when they intend to. In the above piece the instructor had marked an ungrammatical sentence. That is, an inaccurate relative pronoun had made the sentence inaccurate and unclear. Despite their attempts, the partners were unable to resolve the problem and abandoned it. It could be said that as such issues are probably beyond the ZPD of the partners, they cannot move beyond their potential developmental level and address them indicating that their previous grammatical instructions/practices have not been adequate.

Extract 39 (Pair 1)

(242) Nasrin: By...

(243) Mina: Knowledge

(244) Nasrin: However I think by knowledge is not correct here.
The above extract is an example of vague comment where the reviewer (Nasrin) thought ‘By knowledge’ did not sound correct in one of the sentences written by the writer (Mina). Yet, she herself could not propose an alternative due to her poor writing skill. Limited English proficiency and lack of skills needed for peer review could also induce errors. That is, sometimes an option which was accurate in the original draft, turned into an inaccurate form in the revised draft due to incorporating the poor and invalid peer feedback.

### 5.4.2.9 Comprehension check

This interactional strategy was employed when the reviewers asked the writers to confirm that they had properly understood the authors’ message. It was also used by the writers when they double-checked their understanding of the comments delivered by the reviewers. The following excerpts contain comprehension check:

**Extract 40 (Pair 2)**

(247) Maryam: This sentence is awkward. You say: “…exactly the time that you get home”. When should we take note? Then, What does “you get home mean”?

(248) Mani: It means as soon as you arrive home.

(249) Maryam: Do you mean taking note after class?

(250) Mani: No. It says: “Moreover” when you arrive home...

(251) Maryam: “exactly the time”! Is the sentence accurate? “exactly at that time”?

(252) Mani: No! As soon as you get home, when you arrive home.

(253) Maryam: After class?

(254) Mani: After class when you get home, “you should read the points again and again in order to learn them completely”.

Even though the participants usually used a number of interactional strategies to discuss ideas and meaning, most of the time their purpose of using such strategies was improving the form rather than the content. More precisely, they tried to understand the global aspects of their partners’ writing to be able to address the local issues. In the above example, Maryam first tried to make sure that she understood what Mani meant. Then, she indirectly questioned the accuracy of the construction written by Mani. Indeed, she vaguely wanted to express that the elements of the sentence were not in the right order (turn 251). Mani, on the other hand, tried to clarify what he had written.
Extract 41 (Pair 5)

(255) Azam: “Working out of house can be one of modern woman necessities.”
(256) Fariba: “Working out ……..”. You mean finding job is vital for modern women. Is that right?
(257) Azam: Yes, modern woman! “modern woman…”
(258) Fariba: MODERN WOMAN’S NECESSITIES
(259) Azam: Yes! That’s it. If we add an apostrophe to it, it gets right. “modern woman’s necessities”.

In this extract, the reviewer (Fariba) also checked her right understanding of the sentence (turn 256), then proposed a solution to fix the linguistic error (turn 258). Both partners agreed on the edition and moved to the next point. Again, understanding the intention of the writer in composing this sentence helped the reviewer to propose an advice which addressed surface level concern.

5.4.2.10 Assessment

Assessment or evaluation was used when the reviewer made a general evaluative judgment on the quality, absence, or presence of textual elements or aspects of the written text. Assessment did not necessarily involve advising or offering any suggestions and was different from referencing and pointing and was quite common. The use of assessment can be observed in the following extracts, where the reviewers evaluate their partners’ texts:

Extract 42 (Pair 5)

(260) Azam: I was reluctant criticising your paper, but you had some errors. The sentences and constructions you used were grammatically incorrect. I myself, for example, when read your paper, didn’t get their meaning. The sentences were not expressed well. Although I could understand your message, they were ambiguous. Sometimes your sentence didn’t have a subject [dangling], or its components were not in the right order. It was the first point I noticed.
(261) Fariba: They were not fluent.

In this extract, even though Azam stressed that Fariba’s sentences were grammatically wrong and she had trouble understanding what Fariba tried to express, she failed to provide constructive feedback and merely gave vague, non-text specific and negative evaluation. Responses of this sort could not help inexperienced writers deal with the problems of their texts. Further, as the interview data revealed, unhelpful, cryptic, and
abstract comments created some negative reactions towards peer review activity (Chapter 8, Section 8.5.5). To address this problem students need to be coached to give more specific suggestions and comments to help their peers refine their texts. For instance, they can be trained to replace vague commentary and references to abstract rules and principles with text-specific strategies, directions, guidelines, and recommendations.

**Extract 43 (Pair 3)**

(262) Tina: As I said, the concluding paragraph was great. However, the major problem it has got is that you haven’t repeated the main ideas of your essay in the conclusion. I mean, it re-states the importance of the issue, but a summary of the main ideas is missing. In general, the paper was well written. The only deficiency I can mention is lack of support of the main ideas in the body paragraphs, and not summarizing them in the concluding paragraph. If you could address these two issues, your essay would be great. That’s my idea.

In her comment, Tina both admired Mahdi’s paper including its concluding paragraph by using some encouraging terms like “great”, “well-written”, and at the same time criticized it tactfully pointing to two of its main deficiencies: lack of support of the main ideas in the body paragraphs, and absence of summary of main ideas in the concluding paragraph. This extract also demonstrates an example of general evaluation as Tina did not try to suggest any viable solutions to the problems she had noticed. L2 students can be presented with appropriate techniques, vocabulary and expressions for making clear, specific, constructive and tactful comments, which can be used during collaborative tasks.

**5.5 Social Negotiations**

This type of interactions did not directly concern with evaluation or feedback provision and were mainly used to express peer’s feelings, emotions, and opinions, as well as to maintain the conversation between the interlocutors. 15 interactional strategies which were employed by the participants during peer collaborative tasks had these features. Social negotiations were either on-task or off-task (Diagram 5.2).
5.5.1 On-task negotiations

Although not primarily concerned with comment and feedback delivery, these interactional strategies were still on task and discussions were within the task completion scope (Figure 5.3 depicts the list of such conversations). Broadly speaking, even though students favoured using indirect method to mark the errors and called them user friendly and easy to interpret, they sometimes struggled understanding some of the codes applied by the instructor especially those, which addressed several error categories such as “PU”, and “SS” (See also Chapter 8, Sections 8.6.3 and 8.6.4). Besides, some of the rhetorical or the linguistic jargons which were used in the instructor’s comments were difficult to process by the students. Therefore, they got confused and even frustrated criticising the feedback provision approach. Indeed, peer collaborative tasks not only facilitated meaningful interaction between classmates, but also helped the participants actively engage in discussions, express their ideas freely, admit or reject each other’s feedback, and even criticise the feedback strategy adopted in the course. An issue which is normally missing in traditional product-based writing pedagogy that is dominated by teachers’ written feedback. Finally, the learners sometimes made trivial mistakes in their papers and when those errors were marked either by their peers or by their instructors, they did barely believe those errors and expressed surprise. Making such errors in writing showed either the students’ inattention to the instructions they had previously received, or their inability to apply their acquired but passive knowledge into practice. Adopting “expressing surprise” interactional strategy could be interpreted as the participants’ feelings of embarrassment or humiliation and their attempts to save their faces. In the following sections, two of the most significant interactional strategies will be analysed and discussed to further
illustrate features of on-task negotiation category (Appendix 17 demonstrates examples of other strategies of this type):

**On-task**

- Repetition
- Reading
- Composing
- Express Surprise
- Express Confusion
- Express Frustration
- Critiquing Idea
- Response to Criticism
- Writing Reminder or Correction

---

**Figure 5.3. On-task social negotiations**

**5.5.1.1 Express surprise**

At times the students did not believe the mistakes they had made and got amazed noticing they had made such rudimentary errors. In fact, they did not believe their faults. The following examples contain this reaction:

**Extract 44 (Pair 4)**

(263) Roya: What is this NE for?
(264) Afrouz: childrens
(265) Roya: Yes, childrens
(266) Afrouz: **Children** is a plural noun and doesn’t need plural –s.
(267) Roya: **Children** doesn’t need plural –s?
(268) Afrouz: No!
(269) Roya: Why did I make such a mistake?

Making such obvious mistakes could be one of the consequences of the product writing pedagogy which engaged the students in controlled composition without requiring them to redraft their papers. Hence, the students did not take revision seriously and such errors continued to recur in their compositions and they not only failed to improve the accuracy of their writings but fossilized the errors. As it is shown in the above example, Roya got surprise upon noticing her mistake.

**Extract 45 (Pair 5)**

(270) Fariba: What about this [sentence]? It is also wrong.
(271) Azam: “Woman should complet [complete] themselves in different girth till have a positive effect on their children.” [laughing]. Why have I made so many mistakes?

In this example, Azam did not indicate any particular error. Yet, many mistakes in her paper had probably made her feel embarrassed and by expressing her surprise, she tried not to lose her face before her partner.

5.5.1.2 Express confusion

This type of reaction was used when the peers failed to understand the rationale behind the codes employed by the instructor. In such cases, the participants were unable to recognise the source of the problem; and as a result, gave up fixing the marked points and either asked them from the instructor or returned to them later. Evidence of confusion expressed by the peers is shown in the following examples:

Extract 46 (Pair 1)

(272) Mina: “Here are some pieces of advice for thoes [those]”

(273) Nasrin: Punctuation?

(274) Mina: No, no, no! Pu...

(275) Nasrin: Punctuation, capitalization, or spelling errors

(276) Mina: Thoes, for thoes [those], which one is a problem? I cannot get [it].

(277) Nasrin: Punctuation

(278) Mina: No! For theos [those].

(279) Nasrin: No!

(280) Mina: Capitalization, no!

(281) Nasrin: May be punctuation, for thoes [those], no. Advice to, advice to somebody. Ok! We will check it.

(282) Mina: That one is a preposition. For thoes [those] advice, no, no. “Some pieces of advice”, “Some pieces of advice for thoes [those]”. I cannot understand the problem.

(283) Nasrin: May be here we need a kind of punctuation, comma, I mean.

(284) Mina: For thoes [those]?

(285) Nasrin: No, no! Before who.
(286) Mina: Ok, before who. “who want to get a good mark”

(287) Nasrin: Aha!

(288) Mina: “who want to get a good mark in essay writing final exam”, what do you think?

(289) Nasrin: “Here are some pieces of advice for thoes [those] who want”, I’m not sure. You should ask teacher.

(290) Mina: I’m not sure about it too.

(291) Nasrin: Ok, we will ask.

The code “PU” included three sub-categories: punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors (Appendices 7 and 8). Therefore, its use could indicate three types of errors in students’ papers, made its interpretation difficult, and confused them. So were a couple of other codes such as “SS” and “WW”. However, the case was different on other occasions and the confusion was caused due to inattention. That is, sometimes students did not notice their vivid and clear mistakes as in the above negotiation episode in which the term ‘those’ was misspelled by Mina and neither of the partners noticed it. In this example, confusion is especially obvious in turns 276, 282, 289, and 290. Eventually, they decided to ask the point from their instructor (turns 289 and 291).

Extract 47 (Pair 4)

(292) Roya: What is this pu for?

(293) Afrouz: I think you haven’t used comma here.

(294) Roya: It’s nonsense.

(295) Afrouz: We need a comma after afterward. Don’t we?

(296) Roya: No, no!

(297) Afrouz: Don’t we use it?

(298) Roya: No! [angry tone]. Does afterward need comma? It certainly needs [speaking ironically].

(299) Afrouz: “Afterward don’t pile up lessons for exam”. What does it mean? Explain it to me. Do you wanna say not to pile up [the lessons] for the night before exam?

(300) Roya: I wanted to say; afterward, then, don’t pile up lessons for exam
Afrouz: Why didn’t you use after?

Roya: I don’t know.

Afrouz: After, why?

Roya: I don’t remember [angry tone].

Afrouz: It is better to use AFTER.

Roya: Just after?

Afrouz: Yes! “and be ready to answer questions about previous session. “Afterward”. Firstly, it should be AFTERWARDS, with S. Secondly, using transition words requires some rules.

Roya: I shouldn’t have used the [transition guide] hand-out.

Afrouz: I didn’t really understand why there are so many punctuation mark errors here.

Roya: We probably need a comma after it.

As the main purpose of the course was encouraging students to engage in joint tasks, it was felt that indirect correction could be the right strategy to facilitate peer discussion, knowledge co-construction, and pooling of ideas. However, indirect feedback assumes a relatively advanced level of linguistic knowledge in the L2 learners. In other words, if the students do not possess adequate formal knowledge of L2, they may not benefit from indirect correction. Therefore, composition instructors should carefully consider their students’ level of L2 competence and their prior experience with revision strategies. They should also prepare their students by providing them with adequate examples and exercises. Otherwise, lower proficiency students may find the strategy confusing. As it was stated earlier (Chapter 4, Section 4.10), the peer review sheets which were used by the participants contained examples of codes and their usage. Besides, during peer review training sessions the students were shown how to use them. Yet, it seems that the samples and the instructions have not been adequate particularly when the codes addressed either more complicated or covered several errors. In the above extract Afrouz tried to help Roya to revise her paper jointly. Roya was evidently frustrated and furious (turns 294, 298, and 308) which was the consequence of inability to understand and fix some of the errors. Afrouz, on the other hand, actively tried to support her partner and finally proposed the right alternative (turn 307).
5.5.2 Off-task negotiations

This group of discussions were unrelated to the scope of the task and in such instances the students were not engaged in revising but were talking about irrelevant issues (Figure 5.4). Obviously, the use of off-topic interactional strategies such as “laughing”, “distraction”, and “blaming each other for their mistakes” revealed the authentic nature of peer interaction process which encompassed the qualities of typical conversations in a community of equal status learners. However, the interactions also possessed some other features which are worth highlighting. For instance, the structure of the dyads influenced the length and type of discussions as well as the tone and the stances of the participants. More precisely, in female/male pairs, the conversation episodes were shorter, the tones were more polite, reverent, and formal. Besides, partners tried not to interrupt each other, respected their partners turn, and avoided offending each other by monitoring themselves. Even when they did not agree with the feedback, they kept silence showing no strict disapproval. This behaviour was especially noticed in male participants. For example, in pair two, where a male and a female partner worked together (Mani and Maryam), although the male partner was more competent than her female classmate, he avoided challenging her incorrect suggestions directly during their interaction. Yet, he criticised peer selection criteria and expressed his dissatisfaction of the feedback he had received from his partner during peer review session in retrospective interviews (Chapter 8, Section 8.2.1). Of course, male student’s silence could be interpreted in another way; their boredom and reluctance to continue discussions aiming to get the task done as soon as possible. On the other hand, the interactions of the pairs which comprised of two female members seemed more natural and dynamic. These single gender dyads engaged in longer negotiation episodes discussing their errors than did the dyads comprised of mixed genders, used more informal languages, openly and more frequently challenged and blamed each other, mocked each other, interrupted each other, and even at times clashed with each other due to disagreement. Level of English language proficiency was also an important issue in pair discussion dynamics. In asymmetrical dyads composed of one more knowledgeable student working with a less competent one, the tutor tutee relationship was more likely to establish. In such pairs the reviewer considered him/herself as a trouble-shooter and played a teacher’s role trying to transmit knowledge to his/her partner and fine tune his/her text. In such dyads, as in dyad one (Nasrin and Mina), the more able partner took the lead calling her partner’s attention by pointing and marking the faults she noticed and set the agenda for the discussion. The less skilled partner, on
the other hand, was more conservative in her comments and her tone was less confident and changed her suggestions when faced with her partner’s disagreement. In addition, in some cases the more proficient student looked down at her partner by saying “that’s your idea” or even by laughing at her partner’s comments. Finally, it was observed that students not only addressed written errors, but sometimes paid attention to other issues including the pronunciation mistakes their partners made. Off-task conversations did occur to a relatively small degree. What follows demonstrates the representative off-task interactional strategies adopted by the participants. Appendix 17 also provides further examples of strategies of this type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Off-task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Blaming Others for One’s Mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Reject the Blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Lack of Respect for Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Distraction</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Pronunciation Correction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Laughing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.4. Off-task social negotiations

5.5.2.1 Blaming others/partner for one’s mistake

This interactional strategy took place when one of the participants blamed his/her partner or a third person for the misleading advice/instruction which had caused him/her to make a particular mistake. In such cases, the L2 learner admitted the mistake but made an excuse by blaming others. The following excerpts contain this feature:

Extract 48 (Pair 4)

(311) Roya: Then; “Do not mix it with flattery”. I think I have mistakenly marked it; “because it doesn’t have good reflection”. Oh! I have marked it because you have put this phrase between two commas again.

(312) Afrouz: Many of my errors correspond to comma.

(313) Roya: Yes! When you place it between two commas, it means you can delete the sentence.

(314) Afrouz: That’s Ms X’ guilt. She always criticized me for not using comma in my texts [laughing].

In teacher-centred educational settings, students are normally passive. They do not find a chance to question their teachers’ comments and unreflectively incorporate their
suggestions into their papers. However, peer collaborative tasks helped the participants actively engage in discussions, express their ideas freely, and admit or reject each other’s feedback. In some cases, they even criticised the feedback strategy adopted in the course (Appendix 17; express frustration). As it is shown in the above extract, Afrouz blamed her ex-paragraph writing instructor for frequent use of “comma” in her essay in an attempt to maintain her face against her partner.

Extract 49 (Pair 4)

(315) Afrouz: However…
(316) Roya: What does pu mean?
(317) Afrouz: There may be something wrong about the punctuation. I don’t know.
(318) Roya: Probably a comma is needed before it [however].
(319) Afrouz: “important than getting mark; however to pass a target course with flying colors”
(320) Roya: pu refers to punctuation, capitalization, and spelling error. It is not either punctuation or spelling error.
(321) Afrouz: I’ve used semicolon.
(322) Nasrin: So, there should be a punctuation error.
(323) Afrouz: If it was a wrong word, he would use ww.
(324) Roya: It needs a comma.
(325) Afrouz: Whatever the mistake, it’s your fault.
(326) Roya: Why? You had frequently used unnecessary commas [in your first draft]. You yourself changed it. My advice was something else.
(327) Afrouz: Never mind.

As it was stated earlier, the same gender dyads engaged in more natural conversations and frankly criticized and blamed each other for the misleading feedback they had received. This was a missing feature in co-gender dyads reflecting the sociocultural norms of the context of the study. Therefore, it can be concluded that in single-gender dyads peer feedback enhanced students’ communicative power by encouraging them to express and negotiate their ideas and feelings with no reservations. In the above example, while Afrouz and Nasrin were discussing a punctuation mark error, Afrouz blamed Roya for her misleading feedback on her original draft claiming that Roya had persuaded her to change a correct punctuation mark to an incorrect one (turn 352). Roya, on the other hand, rejected Afrouz’s claim and insisted on the accuracy of her suggestions (turn 326).
5.5.2.2 Lack of respect for comment

Lack of respect for the peer’s comment involved laughing at the writer’s mistakes or showing no respect for the reviewer’s comments. This behaviour was observed rarely and just in one pair’s interactions. The participants in this dyad had a friendly relationship and their conversations were informal sometimes laughing at each other, attacking each other for their comments, and showing disrespect for the suggestions offered. This was particularly noticed in the more advanced peer’s behaviour. Examples of such behaviour are evident in Extract 50 and 51:

Extract 50 (Pair 1)

(328) Nasrin: Here; “every student’s mind is how to get a good mark in final exam.”

   *How to get a good mark in final exam*, I think is informal. You should say:

   **HOW THEY CAN USE** or **HOW IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO**, something like that. How to get a good mark is informal. It’s my idea.

(329) Mina: Ok! It is your idea too. Go on! [Laughing].

In this extract, Nasrin provided an invalid advice and it made her partner, Mina, whose proficiency level was higher than hers, laugh at her and her comment (turn 329). Hence, the participants’ abilities and competency also affected the way they reacted to peer comments particularly in single-dyads where the partners had more informal relationship.

Extract 51 (Pair 1)

(330) Nasrin: You have written; “One of the most important questions which crosses every student’s mind”.

(331) Mina: One

(332) Nasrin: Ok! I said it. But I think here you should say **WHICH WOULD CROSS**. You are not sure every person thinks about this one. You should say:

**WHICH WOULD CROSS**.

(333) Mina: But it is impossible. It crosses every student’s mind.

(334) Nasrin: What do you mean by impossible? What do you mean by that?

(335) Mina: I’m sure all the students can explain, can think about the final exam.

(336) Nasrin: Ok! If you are sure about that, you can use **WILL**.

(337) Mina: All the semesters they are trying to have a good mark at the end of the term.
(338) Nasrin: Ok! I think you should have modal verb here; WHICH WOULD, or WHICH WILL.

(339) Mina: Why would? Why will? Why would? Why will?

(340) Nasrin: Why not?


(342) Nasrin: Because I think this structure is not ok; Which cross. What do you mean which cross? Which WILL CROSS. You don’t have any… I don’t know I think it’s not…

(343) Mina: It’s all the time, about all the students, in every level, in every time, can crosses their mind this question. It crosses our minds.

(344) Nasrin: But I think modal verb it will be better here.

(345) Mina: Ok! That’s your idea. Go on!

(346) Nasrin: It’s my idea. I know.

In this example, Mina’s sentence was grammatically correct and she was sure about its accuracy. However, Nasrin believed that the structure also needed a modal verb (turns 338 and 344) and persisted on her choice. After a lengthy discussion when neither of the participants were able to convince each other, Mina tried to stop the useless discussion and by saying “That’s your idea” indicated her rejection of the received advice and asked for moving to the next point. Mina’s reaction apparently irritated Nasrin (turn 346).

5.6 Procedural Negotiations

In discussing task procedures (Diagram 5.3), the students talked about the task and tried to clarify instructions and assigned responsibilities. They also discussed about what to do next and established sequence of procedures (Figure 5.5). Generally, the last group of interactional strategies was mostly detected during the first writing cycle when the students were still confused and unfamiliar with their responsibilities and task requirements. However, giving directions and making decisions about the actions which should have been taken later, were observed during both genres and were not limited to writing cycle 1. The facts that the participants were less concerned about collaborative tasks mechanisms in the second writing cycle, reveals the significance of careful preparation and practice in the success these tasks. Indeed, adequate training, modelling, and supporting the students step-by-step during the process to properly involve in collaborative activities not only improve students’ revision skills, but also alleviate most
of the practical and pedagogical issues mentioned earlier such as distrustful feelings or surface level concerns and eventually enhance the effectiveness of such tasks. To further illustrate the characteristics of procedural negotiations, two of the commonly used interactional strategies of this type will be discussed in the following sections (See also Appendix 17 for further examples):

![Diagram 5.3. Procedural negotiations](image)

**Diagram 5.3. Procedural negotiations**

**Discussing Tasks**
- Discussing Task Procedures
- Refuse to Provide Advice
- Ask for Reading
- Give Directives

**Figure 5.5. Procedural negotiations**

### 5.6.1 Discussing task procedures

Discussing task procedures did not involve revising the papers. In these negotiation episodes, participants discussed task procedures, talked about their responsibilities, clarified instructions, and made decisions about how to carry on with the task. Both reviewers and writers participated in this type of discussion. This is illustrated in Extract 52 where the reviewer and writer were discussing their responsibilities in the peer review activity:

**Extract 52 (Pair 1)**

(347) Nasrin: Let’s first talk about yours [your paper].
(348) Mina: I can’t find [my paper]. Aha! I found [it]. I had a problem here in the first sentence. What does it mean [showing the code the instructor has used]?
Nasrin: Should I repair your paper? Or you should do it yourself?
Mina: We should talk about it. Every problem I have.
Nasrin: Ok!
Mina: Both of us.

Mina initiated reading as it was her paper they were jointly revising. Nasrin was confused, not knowing what her role was (turn 349). Mina explained to her that both of them should read the papers as well as the comments and try to fix the errors together as the task was collaborative revision (turns 350 and 352). As it was stated earlier, such ambiguities occurred only in the first writing cycle and during the second writing cycle the participants were familiar with the task expectations and dynamics.

5.6.2 Refuse to provide advice

In very rare cases the partners refused to provide their peers with suggestion. This behaviour had one main reason; unfamiliarity of the partners with their responsibilities. The extract below contains an example of such behaviour:

Extract 53 (Pair 4)

Afrouz: I think here; “that just with students’ efforts …” the term just is unnecessary.
Roya: I used just with to stress the …
Afrouz: But I think your sentence is non-native like. It’s Persian.
Roya: How should I re-write it?
Afrouz: I shouldn’t provide any suggestion.
Roya: Why not?
Afrouz: Should I offer any advice?
Roya: That’s part of the task requirement.
Afrouz: For example you can write: ESSAY WRITING IS A COURSE THAT STUDENTS’ EFFORTS…
Roya: Ok!
Afrouz: students’ attempts results in [in Persian] CAN LEAD TO GOOD RESULT is better than reach to good result.

In the above excerpt, Afrouz believed that the term ‘just’ was unnecessary but at first refused to propose any suggestion thinking that it was not her responsibility to offer any solutions (turn 357). However, when Roya briefed her about the task requirement, she read the sentence again and engaged in providing options (turns 361 and 363).
5.7 Conclusion

Broadly speaking, audio-recorded data was found to be very illuminating in terms of providing an in-depth understanding of the students’ interaction dynamics. First, data analysis revealed that scaffolding was mutual with both partners being capable of providing guided support to each other through dialogic interaction regardless of their level of writing proficiency. In other words, expertise was fluid with both partners taking an expert role where necessary depending on the type of errors and their mastery of specific areas of L2 essay writing. Further, the assistance was contingent and depended on the complexity and nature of the errors as well as the peers’ needs. Sometimes the support involved providing not only an explicit solution, but also a mini lesson. In other cases the guide was implicit and the assistance was brief as in ‘referencing’ and ‘pointing’. However, as the learners were in the process of learning English, they were not competent enough in their writing skills and possessed limited knowledge of criteria for good writing. Hence, they sometimes failed to detect the errors in the papers they reviewed, showed inconsistent reactions to the errors they noticed, changed their advice, and were incapable of offering proper support and constructive feedback to fix the errors even when they had been marked for them during collaborative revision activities. Not only were these issues noticed by the analysis of the interactional strategies the participants employed during collaborative tasks, but also by comparing the amount of time they spent during peer review and collaborative revision sessions as well as the frequency of negotiation episodes across both tasks. That is to say, limited English proficiency and lack of skills needed for peer evaluation negatively affected participants’ level of engagement in the tasks. For instance, since during peer review sessions students themselves were sources of feedback, they identified a limited number of errors and consequently spent less time evaluating each other’s texts as they had fewer issues to comment on and discuss about. However, collaborative revision sessions, where peers were required to jointly revise their papers based on their instructor’s comments were more productive in terms of students’ active engagement.

Secondly, lack of trust in the accuracy of peer’s feedback was also observed during dyadic interactions. The most readily apparent evidence regarding distrust relationship between peers which sometimes created arguments occurred when the participants rejected their partner’s advice, insisted on their own options, or reacted to their peers’ response with scepticism. The students’ doubt in the expertise of their fellow students
and their reservations about the value of their peers’ responses to their texts may be attributed to the fact that they were not native speakers of English. Coming from a teacher-centred culture may have prompted the participants to feel that feedback received from classmates whose level of English proficiency ware more or less the same as theirs was a poor alternative to their teacher’s comments and their peers were not qualified enough to critique their work. Hence, they were reluctant to trust their partners.

The last issue which is worth noting is the participants’ predominant attention to local issues. The analysis of pairs’ interaction focus as well as interactional strategies the participants adopted revealed that the students were overly concerned with micro level errors rather than macro level problems. In other words, conversations, feedback, scaffolding activities, and knowledge co-construction mainly aimed at improving the linguistic problems of the texts. The tendency to pay less attention to content and organisation implicitly indicates that addressing issues such as coherence, clarity, and support was beyond the potential developmental level of this cohort of students and they found it hard to comment on the complex, substantive, and time consuming macro structure problems of the compositions they reviewed. Hence, they either avoided or ignored discussing them. It may also reveal the students’ priority in writing error free papers rather than developing well organised, and comprehensively developed papers. Their previous exposure to product approach to writing can also justify the students’ practices as they may have assumed that writing was primarily the appropriate application of linguistic knowledge and mastery of grammatical rules. Hence, they felt it was unnecessary to address the global issues of their texts. However, one of the essential conditions to enhance the efficiency of peer collaboration tasks is the presence of well-designed, detailed, and focused instructions, as well as extensive prior practice on review and revision strategies. Such training can prepare students to properly involve in collaborative tasks. More precisely, it encourages a balanced focus on surface level and text-based features, improves the evaluation skills of the students so that they can offer more relevant and specific comments, and eventually facilitates mutual trust and respect between the peers and increases the likelihood of incorporation of peer suggestions.
CHAPTER 6
FEEDBACK INCORPORATION

6.1 Introduction

To what extent do EFL students incorporate their peers’/tutor’s feedback into their revisions in a multiple-draft, process approach to L2 writing? As the fourth research question clearly expresses, first, I endeavoured to broaden my understanding of the types of revisions being made following peer review and collaborative revision sessions. My second aim was to observe whether receiving feedback from different sources such as classmates or instructor produced different patterns of revision behaviours. More precisely, I was interested to analyse the extent to which students applied their peers’ as well as their instructor’s feedback into their subsequent drafts. Exploring the potential effects of some other factors such as the participants’ linguistic abilities, their gender, and genre formed other aspects of my investigation.

The focus of analysis was the students’ written drafts. For each genre students produced three drafts over four weeks. While the first drafts were written by the students themselves at home, they were asked to develop the second revisions utilising the feedback they had received from their peers during peer review sessions. The second drafts, then, were submitted to the instructor. And eventually, the final drafts were produced after joint revision of the second drafts using the instructors’ indirect coded feedback and comments. In order to conduct the analysis, Microsoft Word 2007 software was used. All handwritten drafts were typed verbatim and by using the Review and Compare option of the software and the modified version of revision categories developed by Ferris (2006), the changes over drafts were traced, analysed, and categories were generated. The analysis of the written data yielded three types of revision patterns: incorporation, non-incorporation, and miscellaneous. The incorporated feedback included those revisions which were made following the pairs’ discussions and negotiations. It should be stated that incorporation did not necessarily mean correction. In fact, in some cases incorporation involved incorrect change, addition, deletion, substitution, change of an accurate element, or even peer-induced error (See also Table 4.8). Miscellaneous cases, on the other hand, referred to the feedback which did not require any further action by the writers of the compositions. Such feedback were those which were marked by the reviewers but were missed during
discussion; were general comments praising or criticising the whole essay or its particular aspects or parts including content or structure; or were marked in order to ask a question or request for clarification but did not require the writers to make any revisions. The representative revision patterns of the participants shed light in understanding each of these categories:

6.2 Incorporation

6.2.1 Correct change

Correct change is referred to the instances where the writer successfully fixed ungrammatical errors or problems. Indeed, correct changes were the outcome of successful knowledge co-construction process where both partners worked together, shared their knowledge, and scaffolded each other through interaction to eradicate the inaccuracies and improve the quality of their texts. Correct changes were also an indication of the fact that students with similar level of writing ability could facilitate each other’s learning and could support their peers to recognise the mismatches between their writing performance and English writing conventions so that they could move beyond their current (potential) developmental level and enhance their L2 writing skill. However, as was illustrated in Chapter 5, making a correct change sometimes involved long negotiations between dyads as sometimes the participants did not trust their classmates’ feedback. Besides, in some cases where the partners were unable to fix the errors themselves, peer discussions did not directly lead to correct change but initiated it. In such cases, the student writers consulted with some other external sources such as the reference books, friends, and the course tutor. Correct change is illustrated in the following extracts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Maryam</td>
<td>Mani</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Draft 1**

While some **mans** believe that **womans** should not work out of the house, but some of them like **womans** work out of the house.

**Draft 2**

While some **men** believe that **women** should not work out of the house, but some of them like **women** work out of the house.

In the above example, evidence of correction after peer review session is shown. Mani, the reviewer, has advised Maryam, the writer, to change the incorrect plural forms of the nouns MAN and WOMAN. Maryam has successfully applied the advice in her
subsequent draft. In fact, the scaffold provided by Mani and his sharing of knowledge about a grammatical point with Maryam, helped her edit the inaccuracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>Roya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>These kinds of stress leave psychological scar on them such as depressive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 3</td>
<td>These kinds of stress leave psychological scar on them such as depression.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Working collaboratively and decoding the instructor’s feedback during collaborative revision session, Afrouz and Roya understood that a noun fitted this structure; and therefore, fixed the mistake together. In other words, correct change was made through a process of interaction, collaboration, and communication between dyad members. The instructor has pointed the mistake, providing the peers an opportunity to discuss and pool their grammatical knowledge to amend it.

6.2.2 Incorrect change

Incorrect change occurred when the writers did not get their partners’/instructor’s feedback intention or were unable to fix the problem. As a result, their modifications were still inaccurate and ungrammatical in the subsequent drafts. Incorrect change could mainly occur due to the inadequate scaffold and explanation provided by the peer/instructor to facilitate revision. As Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) argue, the ultimate goal of scaffolding is helping learners to gradually move from other regulation to self-regulation state. Hence, the assistance should accommodate with the potential developmental level of each individual. Also, using inappropriate indirect code could confuse student writers and cause incorrect change. This pattern can be observed in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>Mahdi</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 1</td>
<td>The three offers include, listen to the teacher when she/he teaches the lesson and taking a note from his/her lesson, practice the lesson which taught last session during a week and read or give information from another sources like books and magazines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>These offers include, listen to the teacher when she/he teaches the lesson, and take a note from his/her lesson, practice the lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Despite the presence of some grammatical mistakes in the above piece, Mahdi just has noticed a verb tense error and advised his partner, Tina, to amend it. Although Tina has tried to fix the error in her subsequent draft, the structure is still ungrammatical. By listening to the negotiations between dyads and checking Tina’s first draft, it was noticed that even though Mahdi had used a correct code, he failed to provide enough assistance to Tina as he just pointed that there was a problem in verb tense but did not clearly state that passive voice was needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Azam</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Azam</td>
<td>Fariba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 2</strong></td>
<td>Observing grammatical rules is another point which <em>caused</em> that your essay get more valuable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 3</strong></td>
<td>Second, Observing grammatical rules is another point which <em>cause</em> your essay get more valuable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above extract although the partners tried to change the mistake, they failed to do so and the verb of the sentence was still inaccurate; the verb needed –s at its end. Checking Azam’s second draft revealed that the instructor had used an incorrect code to address the mistake (V instead of SV; See appendix 7). Also, as the feedback which was provided by the instructor was in written form and there was no discussion between the instructor and the pair for further explanation of the case, meaningful communication between the instructor and the pair was not established and the learners could not fix the error as they were not scaffolded enough.

**6.2.3 Change**

This pattern happened when a learner replaced a correct element with another one. In fact, the component had already been correct and it needed no further modifications. This revision category may imply that as this group of learners were still in the process of learning English as their second language, their linguistic systems were in a state of development and they were not confident enough about the correct forms. Hence, they might have been incapable of recognising that more than one form could be correct in a particular structure. Hence, they changed a correct form and replaced it with another one. Examples of change are presented below:
Although Mina’s original choice seemed correct, her partner recommended her to modify it. So, she utilised her advice in her second draft. In fact, both versions are appropriate. This revision behaviour can reveal that both partners were not sure about the correct form due to their low level of English language competency. So, the writer (Mina), incorporated her reviewer’s suggestion into her subsequent draft without resistance.

In the above example, Nasrin recommended Mina to modify an accurate option “become experienced” and use another correct alternative “get experienced”. Mina complied with her partner’s advice. Listening to the dyadic conversation revealed that although the revision was initiated by the reviewer, she herself was not sure about her advice and repeated reading the structure several times using different options to check if her suggestion was accurate.

**6.2.4 Peer induced-error**

In such cases the original choice was correct, but the invalid advice provided by the peer caused an incorrect change. As the category implies, most of the peer induced-errors occurred during peer evaluation activity which indicates that the task can sometimes be counter-productive and produce negative results specially at lower level stages of L2 writing proficiency. Peer-induced errors can also be interpreted in terms of the participants’ ZPD. More precisely, it can be argued that as certain writing features were beyond the actual developmental level of the student reviewers, they failed to provide
efficient assistance and misled their partners. On the other hand, those features were within potential developmental level of the student writers and were in the process of formation requiring assistance to become actual. So, upon receiving invalid feedback on those features, they could not decide on their credibility and changed the correct forms they had already produced. However, this should not disappoint L2 writing instructors since making mistakes is part of the learning process and compared to individual attempts, peer collaboration and sharing of knowledge is far more efficient. Further, judicious combination of peer evaluation with other techniques like collaborative revision can minimise its negative consequences. Peer-induced error is demonstrated in the following extracts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Fariba</td>
<td>Azam</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 1</td>
<td>...when some married women believe that <em>work</em> outside home is detrimental to household and is not a nice experience…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>...when some married women believe that <em>working</em> outside home <em>being</em> detrimental to household and it is not a nice experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first version, the auxiliary verb “is” was correctly used by Fariba. However, a bad advice delivered by her peer (Azam) made the second structure ungrammatical. Inability to provide valid feedback was one of the weak points noticed during peer review activity. This issue was also articulated in the participants’ reflections as one the main disadvantages of the activity (See Chapter 8, Section 8.2 and 8.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>Roya</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 1</td>
<td>The process of writing paves the way for you; <strong>how to start, how to manage your writing, and how to finish it.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>The process of writing paves the way for you. <strong>how to start? how to manage your writing? and how to finish it?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above example, Roya advised her partner to use question mark at the end of each phrase. However, her advice was invalid and made Afrouz’s revised draft look non-native.

**6.2.5 Addition**

Addition mainly occurred in response to the comments on content of the compositions which required the writers to add some more details to their main ideas in order to
support them. Even though most of the feedback focused on surface level issues, in some cases the reviewers felt the information provided by the writers were either general and needed elaboration or were statements which needed evidence. In such cases, the scaffold moved beyond local level issues and encompassed global level aspects of writing as well. Indeed, playing the role of audience, reviewers tried to assist the writers to realise which ideas were not clearly expressed and needed revision. Sometimes the writers got the point and made the necessary additions, yet in cases they failed to facilitate their readers’ understanding and could not fill the information gap. This revision pattern is displayed in the following excerpts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>Nasrin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 2</strong></td>
<td>The second subject which is important is studying regularly. Do all activities in the book and those which are given by the instructor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 3</strong></td>
<td>The second subject which is important is studying regularly. Do all the activities in the book and those which are given by the instructor. <em>Be firm for doing this step because with doing all the activities you can be sure all the points will be considered in your writing Essay.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the instructor’s written comment; “Paragraph two is also very short. What is studying regularly? How should it be done and to what extent it is useful?”, Mina and Nasrin worked together to add some more information which the instructor taught was missing. Consequently, Mina added one more general sentence at the end of one of the paragraphs in the subsequent draft of her essay, even though the pair failed to address the advice appropriately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>Roya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 2</strong></td>
<td>Furthermore, researchers analyzed data collected on employed married women. According to this data, these women felt stress from the dual responsibility of doing a job and caring for a family. They felt stress because of lack of material resources to do their job, too. These kinds of stress leave psychological scar on them such as depressive. It may be wrong to jump to any simple cause-and-effect conclusions. The numerous studies have found a higher level of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
mental health and life satisfaction, lower stress and lower depressive mood, among the employed married women. They are able to create a stronger and more stable union, between their work and marriage, or redress a balance between them.

**Draft 3** Furthermore, researchers analyzed data collected on employed married women. According to this data, these women felt stress from the dual responsibility of doing a job and caring for a family. They felt stress because of lack of material resources to do their job, too. These kinds of stress leave psychological scar on them such as depression. It may be wrong to jump to any simple cause-and-effect conclusions. The numerous studies have found a higher level of mental health and life satisfaction, lower stress and lower depressive mood among the employed married women. These women expressed that not only could they overcome mental problems but also they could strengthen their character, that’s why they are able to create a stronger and more stable union, between their work and marriage, or redress a balance between them.

In this paragraph, in response to the request made by the reviewer (instructor) asking the writer (Afrouz) to revise the unclear ideas and to provide evidence for the claims she had made regarding the wellbeing of employed married women, she has added some more claims to the subsequent revision of her paper without trying to make the text more reader-friendly.

**6.2.6 Deletion**

This pattern was performed due to several reasons such as redundancy, ambiguity, or ungrammaticality of a structure. Like addition, here again the reader played a key role helping the writer identify the illogical or inconsistent ideas and inaccurate structures and amend them in the consequent drafts. However, it should be noted that while in some cases deletion was necessary due to redundancy or irrelevance of an element or idea, in other cases the writers deleted the structure or idea to avoid errors or to guarantee the accuracy and appropriateness of their writings since they might have found it beyond their abilities to fix them. As shown in the following instances, in such cases the writer deleted the problematic component:
In the above example, by using the code ‘!’ the instructor has indicated that “for life” is unnecessary and should be removed. Therefore, Maryam has excluded it from the text in her following draft.

In his comments, Mahdi, the reviewer, noted that some of the elements in Tina’s paper were redundant and did not make sense. While Tina has tried to remove the redundant element(s) in the first section of the extract, she has not fixed the second section. Instead, she has avoided it by deleting it. Hence, draft two is a concise form of what the writer intended to express in the first draft of her composition and to make her writing look accurate, she has deleted the second sentence without trying to amend it. In fact, she has taken the easy way rather than dealing with the uncleanness or inaccuracy issue raised by her partner and has withdrawn from expressing her original idea.

6.2.7 Substitution

This revision pattern refers to those reactions in which the student replaced an inaccurate punctuation mark, term, collocation, phrase, etc. with another one. Substitution could be either correct or incorrect:

6.2.7.1 Correct substitution

As was explained in Section 6.2.1, correct substitution was also the result of the assistance provided by the reviewer which helped the writer detect the inaccurate term and replace it with an appropriate one. Indeed, through meaningful interaction and collaboration, peers could facilitate each other’s learning and supported each other to
enhance their writing performance. The following examples show instances of correct substitution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Azam</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Azam</td>
<td>Fariba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 2</strong></td>
<td>In conclusion, women who work out of house not only can develop their personality and show their <strong>captivity</strong> but also they can <strong>train</strong> self confidence and diligent of their children…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 3</strong></td>
<td>In conclusion, women who work out of house not only can develop their personality and show their <strong>capacity</strong> but also they can <strong>develop</strong> their self confidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above example, the instructor has used the code ‘WW’ indicating that the terms “captivity” and “train” were not appropriate options in this sentence and needed to be changed by Azam. With collaboration with her partner and pooling their knowledge, Azam could replace the wrong words with suitable terms in the following draft of her essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>Mahdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 2</strong></td>
<td>…but most of the students don’t <strong>have</strong> enough attention to this important part.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft 3</strong></td>
<td>…but most of the students don’t <strong>pay</strong> enough attention to this important part.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this instance “have attention” is a wrong collocation; therefore, the instructor has marked it as a wrong word. Tina and Mahdi’s joint revision in response to their instructor’s feedback resulted in fixing it and changing it to a native-like expression; pay attention.

**6.2.7.2 Incorrect substitution**

This pattern refers to those actions where an inaccurate element was replaced by another wrong alternative and the structure still contained a wrong constituent. As was discussed in Section 6.2.2, incorrect substitution could indicate inadequate scaffolding provided by the reviewers. It could also be the result of the invalid feedback offered by the peers. Hence, in such cases the learners were unable to modify the incorrect term and replace it since they did not receive the support they needed to improve the quality
of their text and their writing still looked non-native. Incorrect substitution is demonstrated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Roya</td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Draft 1** Although one session absence doesn’t seem important but follows some **problems**.

**Draft 2** Although one session absence doesn’t seem important, but **run** some **difficulties**.

In the above example, Afrouz, the reviewer, suggested Roya, the writer, to replace an incorrect word “follows” by another inappropriate term “run”. As a result, the revised sentence in the second draft looks still non-native and does not express the writer’s intention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviser</th>
<th>Co-reviser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Roya</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Roya</td>
<td>Afrouz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Draft 2** **Inspite of** student’s friend maybe explain that topic but he/she doesn’t learn as well as **his/her** friend.

**Draft 3** **However**, the student’s friend may explain that topic but he/she doesn’t learn as well as **their** friends.

In this extract the instructor used the code ‘IT’ to show that the wrong transition word had been used in this sentence. Although Roya and her partner tried to fix the problem by replacing the transition word, the new alternative still does not fit the sentence and does not express the writer’s intended meaning. It can be inferred that the indirect code employed by the instructor failed to guide the dyad to realise the source of the mistake and lack of meaningful communication between feedback provider and dyad members led to incorrect substitution.

### 6.3 Incorporation Rate and Genre/ Activity

The analysis of the participants’ papers in two genres; process and argumentation, and during two different tasks; peer review and collaborative revision, helped to shed light into the understanding of other aspects of each individual student’s revision behaviours. In what follows each section illustrates the information extracted from examining each student’s paper. Each table presents frequencies of revision patterns demonstrated by
each individual student along with his/her incorporation ratio with reference to revision focus; that is, local/ global scopes in each mode of writing after participating in peer review or collaborative revision sessions. The bottom row depicts not only the percentage of incorporation, non-incorporation, and miscellaneous categories calculated from dividing the total number of each revision category by the total number of trouble-sources, but also displays the average local and global comments utilization or ignorance.

6.3.1 Process

6.3.1.1 Peer review

According to Table 6.1, of a total of 200 trouble-sources marked and identified during peer review session, students incorporated 119 (59.5%) of them into their second drafts. Peer feedback ignorance, on the other hand, occurred in 58 (29%) cases. As it is also shown, while the average incorporation rate of surface level errors was 56.84%, this rate was 35.05% for meaning related problems. Further, Maryam used the highest percentage of her peer’s linguistic feedback in her following draft (92.68%); whereas, Azam did not apply any of her partner’s advice. Concerning global comments, it was noticed that Roya applied the highest degree of comments in the subsequent draft she developed (77.77%). Yet, Mina, Afrouz, and Fariba ignored all content and organisation suggestions they received from their classmates. It should be stated that in a couple of dyads – 3 and 5, the partners just exchanged some general and vague commentaries during their interactions which normally did not require any revision or amendments by the writers. As mentioned earlier, such comments were categorised as miscellaneous.
6.3.1.2 Collaborative revision

Table 6.2 which summarises the students’ reactions to their instructors’ feedback also reveals some valuable results. The data indicate that from among 340 trouble-sources coded or commented on by the instructor, 298 (87.67%) were addressed by the students in their final drafts. Non-incorporation, in contrast, just happened in 17 (5%) cases. Besides, while students addressed 93.03% of the linguistic feedback in their third attempt, they responded to 55.90% of non-linguistic comments. Regarding local level feedback, interestingly, Mani reacted to all (100%) instructor responses; whereas, Mina attended to 83.33% of them which ranked her as the lowest member of group. Although her performance placed her at the bottom of the list, her incorporation rate was still high. As for global issues, Tina used 85.71% of comments she received, while Afrouz ignored the only specific comment her instructor had delivered.
Table 6.2. Participants’ revision behaviours after collaborative revision session in writing cycle 1

6.4.1 Argumentation

6.4.1.1 Peer review

Comparing students’ original and second argumentative drafts yielded some similar and different patterns of revision behaviour. As is demonstrated in Table 6.3, while the number of trouble-sources detected during peer review activity were 201, less than half (49.25%) of them were acted on in the students’ subsequent attempts. The non-incorporation rate, however, was 68 (33.83%). Also, while the average incorporation rate of local feedback was 47.23%, this ratio was 30.33% for global comments. Further, Roya utilized 86.95% of her partner’s surface feedback; whereas, no instance of response to the received linguistic feedback was observed in Azam and Fariba’s second drafts. In terms of global issues, Maryam was the one who used the highest degree of comments in her middle draft (66.66%), yet four students – Mina, Mahdi, Afrouz, and Fariba – were inattentive to the text-based level suggestions they received. Again, even though the dyads were instructed to avoid delivering rubber-stamp advice, dyads 3 and 5 continued to offer that sort of comments while evaluating their partners’ argumentative papers.
Table 6.3. Participants’ revision behaviours after peer review session in writing cycle 2

6.4.1.2 Collaborative revision

As indicated in Table 6.4, students applied 467 (88.78%) of 526 trouble-sources in their third drafts after their joint revision activity while only 37 (7.04%) cases were left unattended. In fact, incorporation rate was the highest compared to all other activities. This was also the case for the average incorporation rate of local and global responses; that is, on average 93.39% of local and 62.04% of global commentaries were addressed by the participants. Concerning surface level utilization, Mani was ranked on top of the list with 100% incorporation ratio; whereas, Afrouz attended to 85.71% of the feedback she received. Although it was the lowest rate among the participants, it was still a high figure. Regarding meaning related comments, while Tina enacted all comments she had been provided (100%), Afrouz again attended to just 37.50% of the advice she had received which probably indicates her disagreement with the commentaries proposed by her instructor.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>No of trouble-sources</th>
<th>Incorporation</th>
<th>Non-incorporation</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
<th>Incorporation</th>
<th>Non-incorporation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Global</td>
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<td>Global</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mani</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maryam</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>57</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>62</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Roya</td>
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<td>Azam</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
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<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>526</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4. Participants’ revision behaviours after collaborative revision session in writing cycle 2

A closer examination of these four tables also helped to uncover some other aspects of the participants’ revision behaviours in the two writing cycles. First, average incorporation rate of surface level feedback was higher than meaning and organisation comments in all four tasks indicating the higher importance of local issues for this group of participants. It may also be induced that as responding to global comments required more efforts and engagement in the writers’ part than the mechanical ones which most of the time involved tidying up or editing, the writers did not bother tackling deeper level concerns of their papers. Moreover, in all four tasks the reviewers’ feedback focus was more on linguistic features than non-linguistic ones except for Tina, Azam, and Fariba in peer reviewing during writing cycle 1 and Mani, Tina, Azam, and Fariba in peer review session during the second writing cycle. This over emphasis on surface level accuracy could be interpreted as follows; the reviewers’ more concern for accuracy over fluency, the reviewers’ inability to address deeper level issues, or the nature of the problems themselves; that is, while mechanical errors can occur at smaller levels such as punctuation mark, word, phrase, etc., context and organisation problems involve bigger chunks of change such as sentence, paragraph or even the whole essay. Therefore, the likelihood of providing surface level feedback by reviewers automatically increases than textual ones. As discussed earlier, the underlying reason that Tina, Azam, and Fariba received more comments on global than local issues was the fact that their partners tended to offer general, vague comments and evaluated the
drafts holistically. The only case which actually received more responses on global comments than local feedback was Mani on his first argumentative draft. As mentioned earlier, this dyad was composed of a male and a female student and since the title of the essay was challenging in terms of gender, the female peer did not like the arguments of her male partner and criticized his ideas several times advising him to change them.

Secondly, the students attended to both local and global advice they received from their instructor more than that of their partners suggesting their greater trust to the quality of their instructor’s comments as a source of feedback delivery. It could also be inferred that joint revision provided the peers the opportunity of mutual scaffolding and knowledge co-construction during which student dyads addressed the erroneous choices collaboratively that otherwise could have been left unattended specifically due to their incompetency. In addition, although normally the sizes of argumentative essays were longer than process essays, the frequency of feedback provided by the students during the two peer review sessions was almost the same in both genres; 201 and 200 respectively. On the other hand, as the overall scores of argumentative essays were lower than process (see Chapter 7), it could be inferred that either students were bored with the activity, did not have enough time to address all the problems - as they voiced both issues during interview sessions – or did not take the activity seriously as they knew all the papers would be commented on by the instructor afterwards.

Finally, the incorporation ratio recorded after joint revision of argumentative essay was the highest of all in both aspects while it was the least in the same genre but after peer review session. The decrease in paying enough attention to peers’ responses and applying less than half (49.25%) of them in the participants’ subsequent drafts may demonstrate students’ increasing distrust in the validity of their peers’ evaluations as in the first cycle and after developing their second drafts, they probably had noticed many of the errors that were not addressed or were left unnoticed by their peers were later marked and commented on by their instructor. Hence, this issue might have prompted them not to take their peers’ advice seriously and consequently ignore one-third of them (33.83%) in the second writing cycle. On the other hand, the highest incorporation feedback rate (88.78%) in the final draft of argumentative essay can be attributed not only to students’ increasing confidence in their teacher’s suggestions over time, but also their maturation and experience in dealing with indirect codes and addressing comments as well as their growing familiarity with the tasks expectations and collaboration dynamics.
A further step was taken in order to analyse the revision behaviours of the participants case by case. As is evident in Table 6.5, on average, most of the students incorporated greater amount of comments into their subsequent drafts than ignoring them in both genres and following both tasks except Mani, Afrouz, and Fariba whose non-incorporation average during peer review exceeded incorporation. The higher incorporation average can imply that the participants took the activities seriously and engaged in collaborative tasks actively. On the other hand, the greater non-incorporation rate noticed in Mani and Afrouz’s revision behaviour especially after peer review session during the second writing cycle can be interpreted in terms of their level of language proficiency. Both of these students were more competent than their partners and were not happy with the feedback they received from their peers during the first writing cycle calling it misleading and invalid during interview sessions. Hence, their inattention to their partners’ feedback is justified. Fariba’s higher non-incorporation rate cannot be explained in terms of writing skill as both partners were of the same level. However, it could be claimed that due to the low number of feedback received, even ignoring one of them could leave a dramatic effect on incorporation/ non-incorporation average rate. Furthermore, the data extracted from the table indicate that Maryam demonstrated fairly the same reaction in response to the feedback she received from both her peer and her instructor (83.38% in peer reviewing and 87.22% in collaborative revision) which reveals her equal trust to her partner and instructor considering the fact that her partner was more capable than her in writing. On the other hand, a big gap is evident between Fariba’s average incorporation rates after the two activities; while her average incorporation ratio was just 12.50% following peer review sessions, it increased noticeably after collaborative revision tasks (92.81%) revealing her overdependence on her tutor as a source of feedback.

Moreover, comparing the incorporation/non-incorporation ratio during the first writing cycle reveals that while Maryam applied 90.90% of the feedback she received during peer reviewing in process essay into her revised draft – maximum incorporation, Azam applied only 16.66% of the feedback in her second draft – minimum incorporation. The highest non-incorporation rate, on the other hand, was demonstrated by Fariba (62.50%), while the lowest non-incorporation was observed in Maryam’s reaction (9.10%). The case in collaborative revision was different. That is, the fluctuation between the highest and the lowest incorporation rate was less than 20%. Whereas 96.30% of the feedback was addressed by Tina, Mina responded to around 78.95% of the advice she received from her instructor. Besides, Azam showed the greatest (12.50%) and Mani and Tina
the lowest non- incorporation percentage (0%) during the same activity and the same genre. Concerning the second writing cycle, it was observed that while Roya applied 82.14% of the feedback she received during peer reviewing in argumentation essay into her second draft – maximum incorporation, Fariba utilised none of the feedback in her second draft (0%) – minimum incorporation. Afrouz (73.34%), on the other hand, demonstrated the highest non-incorporation rate, and the lowest non-incorporation was observed in Azam’s reaction (0%). As for collaborative revision, whereas Fariba addressed 95% of the feedback, Afrouz addressed around 72.42% of the comments she received from her instructor. Besides, Afrouz showed the highest (20.69%) and Fariba the lowest non-incorporation percentage (1.66%) during the same activity and in the same genre. These figures which demonstrate individual students’ revision behaviours confirms the findings of other data sources (audio recording and interview data) which show students value their tutor’s comments more than that of their peers.

Finally, it was observed that of all participants, Maryam received the highest number of feedback (157), while her partner, Mani, received the lowest quantity (90). On average, in all but two cases – Mina and Mani - the frequency of feedback and comments on original drafts was less than that of the second drafts indicating students’ either inattention to errors or inability to mark and offer constructive feedback. It also supports the participants’ perception that first and second drafts were almost identical. Besides, dyads 5 and 10 received more feedback on their second papers than others did. Indeed, these dyads were less active during peer review sessions in terms of evaluating each other’s papers and limited their comments to just providing general and vague commentaries. Hence, their second drafts experienced little change after peer review activity and needed more amendments.
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<td>Incorporation</td>
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<td>21.67%</td>
<td>10.88%</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>63.39%</td>
<td>19.94%</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>65.52%</td>
<td>25.46%</td>
<td>9.02%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.5. Individual participants’ revision behaviours across both activities and writing cycles
6.5 Conclusion

In general, examination of students written drafts showed that the average incorporation rate was higher than ignorance in all activities. However, participants attended to their instructor’s feedback more than that of their peers. In other words, they were highly teacher-dependant in their revision activities reflecting the socio-cultural norms and educational system of the context. In such an atmosphere, a special role is assigned to the teacher as the sole owner of knowledge who has the authority to evaluate students’ performance. On the other hand, as it was demonstrated in the first section of the chapter (Sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.4), not all revisions improved the participants’ writing performance. Indeed, in cases where either the scaffolding was not adequate or meaningful negotiation and sharing of knowledge were not established, changes were still inaccurate.

Besides, not only did the participants receive more surface level feedback than deep level comments, but also they applied them more into their subsequent drafts on average. First, this tendency can be explained in terms of the nature of the errors. That is to say, as dealing with linguistic problems of a written text is easier and less time consuming compared to meaning level features, L2 students tended to focus more on this aspect of their texts. Second, considering the fact that these students were trained in form-dominated writing pedagogy in which form and accuracy preceded meaning and fluency, it is not surprising to observe that this narrow perception of writing function has encouraged them to pay particular attention to usage, structure, or accurate form.

Further, despite the fact that longer argumentative essays were produced compared to process essays; the total number of feedback students provided to each other during peer review sessions remained the same. Hence, it can be inferred that either the students were bored developing several drafts of the same paper and evaluating each other’s papers especially during second writing cycle, or their poor writing proficiency level made it difficult for them to identify and mark the errors.

Finally, the highest incorporation rate was noticed after joint revision of argumentative essays in writing cycle 2 which can indicate the participants’ growing familiarity with the indirect feedback strategy, and collaborative tasks mechanisms as well as their higher level of trust in the validity of the feedback they received from their instructor. It also implicitly emphasises the role of preparation and training in the success of performing collaborative
tasks in L2 composition classes where writing is traditionally regarded as an individual activity and students predominantly depend on their instructors.
CHAPTER 7
OVERALL WRITING QUALITY

7.1 Introduction

The fifth research question, “To what extent do peer review and collaborative revision activities improve the writing quality of EFL students?” sought to explore and discover the effects peer evaluation and joint revision had on students’ subsequent revisions after their being introduced to these techniques. It should be noted that this study was not intended to discover a rigid causal link between these two tasks and participants’ writing performance as is normally the case in positivist approach. My intention, however, was to find any sign of progress though very little in the papers produced by the students over drafts in each of the genres. In fact, as the dominant methodology in this study was mainly qualitative influenced by complex contextual factors, it is difficult to claim a direct causal relationship between activities performed and the precise success or failure of follow-up revisions participants made.

To assign peer dyads, the participants’ writing ability was evaluated. Following the procedures explained in Chapter 4, Section 4.11.4, the sample texts produced by the participants at the beginning of the course were assessed against the multiple-trait scoring rubric whose descriptors were exclusively developed to address the requirements of the assigned prompt (Figure 7). As can be seen from Figure 7, the evaluation criteria consisted of three bands and ten scores. While grades 1 and 2 represented beginner, 3 and 4 meant lower intermediate, 5 intermediate, 6 and 7 upper intermediate, and 8-10 advanced level of writing proficiency. It is worth stating that the participants’ writing proficiency level were decided impressionistically bearing in mind the assessment criteria descriptors and placing equal emphasis on ideas and organisation parameters as well as language and mechanics features of the composed texts. Consequently, the following pairs were formed and remained constant throughout the study:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Case 1 (Nasrin): Female: Lower intermediate level} \\
\text{Case 2 (Mina): Female: Intermediate}
\end{align*}
\]
As discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.10, during the investigation, the students developed two 250-word writing tasks, one process and one argumentation, individually at home. These papers were later peer reviewed and received teacher feedback in two distinctive stages based on which learners were required to develop second and third drafts during two writing cycles. What follows is the analysis of participants’ writing performance over drafts and across two modes of writing. It is worth noting that as all student drafts were marked by the teacher/researcher, no inter-rater reliability estimate was established. However, to ensure that students’ texts were fairly evaluated both over drafts and across genres (intra-rater reliability), I met with an experienced colleague who was familiar with the purpose of my study and had been teaching this module in the department for about nine years. Following explaining the rating scales, I asked him to double-mark four randomly selected papers (original, second, and final drafts of two process and two argumentative essays; 20% of the texts). Due to the clarity of marking process; user friendly assessment and scoring criteria, detailed descriptors, and informative supporting information (the Guide to Marks Table), the agreement in terms of participants’ overall writing scores was high and all sample papers fell under similar writing proficiency level categories. Since there were no claims being made for statistical significance of learners’ performance over drafts or across genres, I felt this reliability check procedure was adequate and satisfactory for the purpose of my research.
Prompt: You have the opportunity to visit a foreign country for two weeks. Which country would you like to visit? Why? Give specific reasons and details to support your choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Organisation &amp; Structure</th>
<th>Language &amp; Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8-10  | • The destination country is explicitly introduced  
       • Adequate information about the country is presented  
       • Personal comments about the choice are clearly stated  
       • The information and personal comments are convincing and relevant | • The information and the personal comments are followed with ease, well organized and developed thoroughly through introduction, body, and conclusion  
       • Paragraphs are unified  
       • The transitions are used effectively and correctly  
       • Information and comments are presented in emphatic/impression order | • Good control of language  
       • Adequate vocabulary choices  
       • Varied choice of grammar and structure  
       • Correct spelling and punctuation |
| 4-7   | • The destination country is implicitly introduced  
       • Satisfactory information about the country is presented  
       • Personal comments about the choice are fairly clearly stated  
       • The information and personal comments are moderately developed and relevant | • The information and the personal comments are followed but with some difficulty, some patterns of organisation- an introduction, body, conclusion evident but poorly done  
       • Lack of focus in some paragraphs is evident  
       • Over/under use of transitions with some incorrect use  
       • Information and comments are largely presented in emphatic/impression order | • Inconsistent language control  
       • Lack of variety in choice of vocabulary and grammar  
       • A few spelling and punctuation errors |
| 1-3   | • The destination country is not/mistakenly introduced  
       • Little information about the country is presented  
       • Personal comments about the choice are inadequate/limited  
       • The information and personal comments are not developed and irrelevant | • The information and personal comments are difficult to follow, little evidence of organisation- introduction/conclusion is/are missing  
       • Improper paragraphing  
       • No or incorrect use of transitions  
       • Haphazard and incoherent sequencing | • Little language control  
       • Reader is seriously distracted by frequent grammatical mistakes, poor vocabulary, and many spelling and punctuation errors |

Language control: verb tense/form, articles, pronouns, prepositions, s-v agreement, noun endings, parallel constructions, run-ons, fragments, etc.

**Figure 7.1. Sample essay multiple trait scoring rubric**
7.2 Process Essay

The first writing cycle which focused on process essay lasted for three weeks. Following some instructions on the nature, purpose, and features of this genre, along with analysing a couple of sample models, students were assigned a 250-word essay as their homework to be revised and resubmitted two times after receiving feedback from their peers and instructor. The prompt of the essay was “How to Get a Good Mark in Essay Writing Module Final Exam?” The prompt was within the students’ experience and related to what had been discussed and practised in class. In addition, the audience had been made clear, and the length and submission date (fortnight) had been noted. By selecting this topic, the instructor sought to elicit a certain response from the participants. More precisely, students were expected to demonstrate their genre awareness, as well as their understanding of academic text organisation and structure, logical organisation and presentation of ideas and paragraphs, and accurate use of language and mechanics features. Following the aforementioned procedure, a three-band, ten-point scale multiple-trait scoring rubric was developed considering the genre, task requirement, input the students had received, and their knowledge of grammatical rules and vocabulary (Figure 7.2). While Figure 7.2 represents the score bands, it fails to interpret the marks given to student papers in terms of level of writing proficiency. Hence, the “Guide to Marks” table was developed to help interpretation and understanding of the scores. Students’ first, second, and final drafts were then typed and evaluated against this rubric. Consequently, the analysis of student revision behaviours and the scores they gained yielded the following results:
**Prompt:** How to get a good mark in Essay Writing Module final exam?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Organisation &amp; Structure</th>
<th>Language &amp; Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8-10  | - The introduction clearly states what the process is (getting a good mark ….)  
- The importance of the process is explicitly expressed in the thesis statement  
- All the essential, necessary information and details that the reader needs to get a good mark in the final exam is included  
- A summary of the main strategies/steps are presented in the conclusion and the benefits of the strategies/steps are reiterated again | - The strategies/steps are organised in a clear, simple, and logical way and the reader can understand and follow the instructions with ease  
- The essay is well organised through introduction, body, and conclusion  
- Paragraphs are unified (each paragraph contains one main strategy/step and its sub-strategies/steps)  
- The transitions are used effectively and correctly  
- The instructions are presented in chronological/emphatic order | - Good control of language  
- Adequate vocabulary choices  
- Varied choice of grammar and structure  
- Correct spelling and punctuation |
| 4-7   | - The process (getting a good mark ….) is implicitly introduced in the introduction  
- The thesis statement does not directly address the importance of the process  
- The necessary information that the reader needs to get a good mark in the final exam is moderately developed and is relevant, lacking detail  
- The conclusion includes some of the main strategies/steps and the benefits of the strategies/steps may or may not be reiterated again | - The strategies/steps can be followed but with some difficulty  
- Some patterns of organisation - introduction, body, conclusion evident but poorly done  
- Lack of focus in some paragraphs  
- Over/under use of transitions with some incorrect use  
- The instructions are largely presented in chronological/emphatic order | - Inconsistent language control  
- Lack of variety in choice of vocabulary and grammar  
- A few spelling and punctuation errors |
| 1-3   | - The process is not introduced in the introduction  
- The paper lacks thesis statement  
- The information that the reader needs to get a good mark in final exam is limited/the info is irrelevant  
- Summary of the main strategies/steps is absent in the conclusion or the benefits of the strategies/steps are missing | - The strategies/steps are chaotic and difficult to follow  
- No evidence of organisation - introduction/conclusion is/are missing (improper paragraphing)  
- No paragraph unity  
- No or incorrect use of transitions  
- Haphazard and incoherent sequencing | - Little language control  
- Reader is seriously distracted by frequent grammatical mistakes, poor vocabulary, and many spelling and punctuation errors |

Language control: verb tense/form, articles, pronouns, prepositions, s-v agreement, noun endings, parallel constructions, run-ons, fragments, etc.

**Figure 7.2. Process essay multiple trait scoring rubric**
Scoring Criteria (Maximum score in each category: 8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of error</th>
<th>Grammar mark</th>
<th>No of error</th>
<th>Vocabulary mark</th>
<th>No of error</th>
<th>Spelling &amp; Punctuation mark</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>41-50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Introduction**

- no thesis
- no ref to importance of issue

**Body Paragraphs**

- lack of detail
- ambiguous/irrelevant

**Conclusion**

- no thesis restatement
- no benefits

**Organisation & Structure**

- for each mistake/problem
- 

**Guide to Marks:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Lower Intermediate</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Upper Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>8-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 7.1 indicates, the results show an improvement in overall quality of students’ compositions. First, the comparison of the scores of student drafts revealed that while Azam made the greatest overall progress, Mina displayed the lowest improvement in the final text she generated. Secondly, while Mahdi outperformed his classmates in terms of overall score, Roya gained the lowest score among the participants. Surprisingly, even though Roya’s final score increased compared to her original draft, it regressed than that of her second draft. Besides, the positive changes final drafts went through were greater than second drafts except for Nasrin, Mahdi, and Roya who were more successful in improving the overall quality of their intermediate drafts than the final ones. In two cases – Afrouz and Azam – no change was detected between overall scores of students’ first and second attempts and in one case – Maryam – the progress between drafts one to draft two was similar to that of draft 2 to draft 3. Finally, students’ score analyses indicated that the changes in the participants’ drafts were normally small and mainly happened within upper intermediate level except for Roya and Azam whose revisions caused their final versions fall in a higher level category; that is, lower intermediate to intermediate level in Roya’s and intermediate to upper intermediate level in Azam’s case.
Table 7.1. Participants’ overall scores in process essay

Students’ drafts analysis also revealed positive changes at both local and global levels. In terms of content, it was noticed that 9 out of 10 cases made positive changes to such aspects of their texts as thesis statement, idea development, and irrelevant information in order to improve their quality over drafts (Table 7.2). However, Tina was the only student who did not improve the content of her essay and her body paragraphs lacked details over drafts. In addition, the content score of Mina, Mani, Maryam, Roya, Afrouz, Azam, and Fariba remained the same in drafts 1 and 2 and the same was true for Nasrin and Mahdi in their second and final drafts. On the other hand, the least changes were detected in the organisation and structure area. Five cases gained the same marks through their drafts. Interestingly, the overall scores of this aspect of student writing were the highest – except Mani and Roya - compared to content and language and mechanics. Concerning language and mechanics, it became clear that except Roya, feedback and revision led to an increase in surface level accuracy of other nine cases. Of course, the score raise did not always follow the same trend over drafts, as sometimes the original drafts were either similar or outperformed the students’ second attempts (Nasrin, Mahdi, Afrouz, and Azam) and in some occasions the second and final drafts were equal in terms of overall accuracy – as in Maryam’s and Fariba’s – or even the third draft got worse – as in Roya’s.
Table 7.2. Local vs. Global scores of participants in process essay

Although students were required to develop a 250-word essay, some of them did not follow the instruction and the length of their papers was less than the minimum limit (Table 7.3). For instance, this was noticed in Mina and Fariba’s first and second drafts as well as Mahdi’s original draft. Sometimes an increase in the accuracy of surface level features was concurrent with essay length shrinkage – Mani and Azam. In such cases, the lower number of mistakes was not necessarily the result of the effective or positive changes the participants made in their drafts, but due to shortening of the size of the texts. On the other hand, as redrafting and adding new information normally occurred at home when the students were alone, the change in content or structure and adding detail ended up in new error appearance. As a result, in a number of cases – Maryam, Roya, and Fariba – an increase in the length of paper paralleled with worsening of language and mechanics accuracy level. Afrouz, however, was an exception as she could elaborate her final version properly; being able not only to increase the size of her paper, but also to improve the accuracy of her final draft simultaneously. Finally, deleting the erroneous portion or even
the whole paragraph in response to the feedback was identified in some cases. This phenomenon, for instance, was evident in Azam’s revision behaviour as she took the easiest and the simplest way to deal with the feedback she had received from her instructor; that is, she omitted the first body paragraph of her paper from the final draft she produced rather than trying to address the issues raised in the comments. Appendix 18 demonstrates a comprehensive summary of participants’ performance over drafts in process essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>DRAFT</th>
<th>No of Words</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>DRAFT</th>
<th>No of Words</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.66</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>6.33</td>
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<td>331</td>
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<td>5.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>215</td>
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<td>322</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3. Process essay length vs. Participants’ scores

7.3 Argumentative Essay

Exactly the same procedure was followed for the second writing cycle. However, during this phase process mode of writing was replaced by argumentative essay. That is, at the beginning of this cycle the new genre was introduced, its features were discussed, and students were provided with a couple of model papers. Afterwards, students were assigned a 250-word essay as their homework to be revised and resubmitted two times after receiving feedback from their peers and instructor. The prompt of the essay was “By taking
a position either for or against give your opinion whether married women should work or not. Be sure to back up your opinions with specific examples.” Here again there was a direct connection between what the students were taught and the prompt they were assigned as well as the rubric based on which their papers were assessed. In fact, the prompt and the rubric were carefully created and were clear, engaging, and reflected the objectives of the course. Following the same procedure as process essay, a three-band, ten-point scale multiple-trait scoring rubric was developed which aimed to evaluate students’ genre awareness, along with their performance in terms of content & organisation and language and mechanics issues (Figure 7.3). The “scoring criteria” table also experienced some changes mainly in content and organisation aspect to accommodate the requirements of argumentative essay genre; however, the “guide to marks” table remained the same. To see whether between-draft changes had any effect on the overall quality of students’ papers, all student drafts were first typed verbatim and then examined against this rubric and the following results were obtained:
Prompt: By taking a position either for or against give your opinion whether married women should work or not. Be sure to back up your opinions with specific examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Organisation &amp; Structure</th>
<th>Language &amp; Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8-10  | ✗ The introduction contains a brief history of the issue (whether married women should work or not)  
      ✗ The thesis statement clearly states both the claim (position), and the counter claim (the opposing position) of the issue  
      ✗ Convincing evidence to support the author’s claim are provided and opposing views are acknowledged  
      ✗ The author’s claim (position) and a summary of the main ideas are restated in the concluding paragraph | ✗ The arguments are organised in a clear, simple, and logical way and the reader can follow the writer’s train of thought with ease  
      ✗ The essay is well organised through introduction, body and conclusion  
      ✗ Paragraphs are unified (separate paragraphs are devoted for each claim and its counter claim)  
      ✗ The transitions are used effectively and properly  
      ✗ The arguments are presented in emphatic order | ✗ Good control of language  
      ✗ Adequate vocabulary choices  
      ✗ Varied choice of grammar and structure  
      ✗ Correct spelling and punctuation |
| 4-7   | ✗ The issue is implicitly introduced in the introduction  
      ✗ The thesis statement does not directly state the claim or the counter claim or it discusses just one side of the argument  
      ✗ Convincing evidence to support the author’s claim is moderately developed but lacking detail, and the opposing views may or may not be acknowledged  
      ✗ The conclusion includes/ does not include the writer’s claim and a summary of the author’s main arguments may or may not be reiterated | ✗ The arguments can be followed but with some difficulty  
      ✗ Some patterns of organisation- introduction, body, conclusion evident but poorly done  
      ✗ Lack of focus in some paragraphs  
      ✗ Over/under use of transitions with some incorrect use  
      ✗ The arguments are largely presented in emphatic order | ✗ Inconsistent language control  
      ✗ Lack of variety in choice of vocabulary and grammar  
      ✗ A few spelling and punctuation errors |
| 1-3   | ✗ The background of the issue is missing  
      ✗ The paper lacks thesis statement  
      ✗ The paper lacks strong evidence to support the writer’s claim and the counter claim is not taken into account  
      ✗ The writer’s claim is not reiterated in the concluding paragraph and it does not contain a summary of the author’s main arguments | ✗ The arguments are difficult to follow  
      ✗ Little evidence of organisation- introduction/conclusion is/are missing (improper paragraphing)  
      ✗ No paragraph unity  
      ✗ No or incorrect use of transitions  
      ✗ Haphazard and incoherent sequencing | ✗ Little language control  
      ✗ Reader is seriously distracted by frequent grammatical mistakes, poor vocabulary, and many spelling and punctuation errors |

Language control: verb tense/form, articles, pronouns, prepositions, s-v agreement, noun endings, parallel constructions, run-ons, fragments, etc.

Figure 7.3. Argumentative essay multiple trait scoring rubric
**Scoring Criteria (Maximum score in each category: 8)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of error</th>
<th>Grammar mark</th>
<th>Vocabulary mark</th>
<th>Spelling &amp; Punctuation mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Body Paragraphs</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>Organisation &amp; Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no thesis</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(claim/counter claim) brief history</td>
<td>lack of detail ambiguous/ irrelevant</td>
<td>no claim restatement no sum of main ideas</td>
<td>for each mistake/problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Guide to Marks:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Lower Intermediate</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Upper Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>8-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the figures in Table 7.4 illustrate, revision made difference in the overall writing quality of student papers. First of all, the comparison of the scores of student drafts revealed that whereas Mahdi demonstrated the greatest progress in terms of quality in his final draft, Fariba displayed the lowest improvement in the final text she generated. Secondly, while Afrouz outperformed her classmates in terms of overall score, Mani gained the lowest score among the participants. Besides, the positive changes made by the students after receiving feedback from their instructor were greater than those made after receiving feedback from their peers except for Afrouz whose second draft underwent greater positive changes than her final one. In three cases – Tina, Mahdi, and Azam – the overall scores of second drafts regressed compared to their original drafts and in two cases – Mina and Fariba - the overall scores of first and second drafts were the same. Finally, students’ score analyses indicated that the revisions the students made during peer reviewing and collaborative revision sessions did upgrade the quality of their papers and caused their final versions fall in a higher level category; Nasrin, Mina, Maryam, Tina, Roya, and Azam. While these participants’ original papers were classified as intermediate, the revisions they made from first to third drafts resulted in upgrading their papers and producing final drafts which were categorised as upper intermediate in quality. This trend was also traced in Mani’s revision behaviour whose lower intermediate draft turned out as intermediate in his final attempt, or
more noticeably in Mahdi, who made the greatest positive change over drafts and could improve the quality of his text from lower intermediate to upper intermediate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRAFT</th>
<th>Nasrin</th>
<th>Mina</th>
<th>Mani</th>
<th>Maryam</th>
<th>Tina</th>
<th>Mahdi</th>
<th>Roya</th>
<th>Afrouz</th>
<th>Azam</th>
<th>Fariba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONE</td>
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<td>5.66</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>5.88</td>
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<td>5.88</td>
<td>5.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5.33</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.44</td>
<td>5.77</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>THREE</td>
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<td>6.44</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>6.55</td>
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<td>6.11</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>6.77</td>
<td>5.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4. Participants’ overall scores in argumentative essay

Students’ drafts analysis also revealed positive changes at both local and global levels (Table 7.5). However, some inconsistencies were identified in participants’ revision behaviours. For instance, it was noticed that only half of the cases made positive changes to content aspect of their texts. In addition, the content score of Tina, Azam, and Fariba remained the same over drafts 1 to 2 and the same was true for Afrouz from her second to final draft. On the other hand, in terms of organisation and structure features only 5 cases showed overall progress over drafts. In fact, four cases – Maryam, Tina, Azam, and Fariba - gained the same marks through their drafts and five cases – Nasrin, Mina, Mani, Roya, and Afrouz – gained the same score in their first and second drafts. Surprisingly, Afrouz’s score regressed in her final attempt compared to her draft 1 and 2. The same trend was noticed in Tina and Mahdi as their second drafts were poorer than their first ones in terms of organisation and structure. Concerning language and mechanics, it became clear that in all cases but Roya, feedback and revision led to an increase in surface level accuracy. Of course, the score raise did not always follow the same trend over drafts, as sometimes the original drafts outperformed the students’ second attempts (Mahdi and Azam) and in some occasions the first and second drafts were equal in terms of overall accuracy – as in Mina’s and Fariba’s – or even the third draft got worse compared to second draft – as in Roya’s.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
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<th>Score</th>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>DRAFT</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<td>6 6.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.5. Local vs. Global scores of participants in argumentative essay

As for essay length, all students wrote essays longer than the minimum limit. However, analysis of argumentative papers showed a similar trend to process texts (Table 7.6). That is to say, error reduction in some cases occurred owing to shortening of drafts but it did not mean better quality writing – Mani, Mahdi, and Azam. In such cases the lower number of mistakes was not necessarily the result of the effective or positive changes the participants made in their drafts, but it was due to shortening of the size of the texts. Further, deleting the erroneous portion or even the whole paragraph in response to the feedback was identified in some cases. This tendency, for instance, was observed in Azam’s revision behaviour as she deleted one of the body paragraphs in response to the comment delivered by her instructor. Indeed, she avoided the problem instead of dealing with it. Finally, it could easily be induced that a couple of participants were inattentive to the feedback and comments they received and carelessly developed their drafts probably because of their laziness – Mani and Mahdi. This issue was confirmed in one of the interview sessions during which Mani confessed that he did not spend enough time for redrafting and fixing the problems which were marked and commented on either by his peer or instructor and his
papers had been written hastily at the university before the class was started rather than at home. For a full illustration of participants’ performance over argumentative drafts they produced, see Appendix 19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>DRAFT</th>
<th>No of Words</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>DRAFT</th>
<th>No of Words</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.6. Argumentative essay length vs. Participants’ scores

7.4 Process vs. Argumentation

In general, changes tended to improve the students’ papers; however, the differences noticed from first to third drafts in argumentation essay were greater than process essay in the majority of cases - 7 out of 10 - indicating that feedback and revision were more helpful in improving the quality of the students’ final texts in argumentation. On the other hand, the overall scores participants gained in process outperformed those of argumentation in all but two cases - Roya and Afrouz - possibly suggesting students’ more competence in developing process essay. Yet, this should be expressed with caution considering the size of essays students produced in both modes of writing (Table 7.7). Comparing the essay lengths across the two genres revealed that students normally tended to produce longer
argumentative texts except Roya whose process paper was longer. So, better overall results could also be attributed not just to revisions made but also to the essay lengths written. Hence, it was decided to examine the scores in terms of their scope. In terms of content, the great majority of students – 9 cases – showed better performance in process than in argumentation. It could be argued that as in process the author describes a procedure or provides instruction on performing a particular task, the students were more competent in developing such a composition than argumentation which is more analytic in nature requiring the writers to present an argument for or against a debated issue. The situation was the same for organisation and structure. 9 out of 10 participants gained better marks in process than argumentation. Considering the fact that content and organisation are very closely intertwined and both are categorised as global aspect of writing, it does not seem unexpected to reach similar results in these two features. Here again, it could be deduced that students were more familiar with organisation and structure of process essays than argumentation. That is, they found it easier to describe a definite process through a series of steps and stages in chronological order than to present the supporting and opposing ideas of a controversial issue in an emphatic order allowing the reader to either agree or disagree with their positions. As for language and mechanics, the findings were mixed. While six cases performed better in process, 3 cases produced more accurate argumentative essays. Considering essay length, it was observed that whereas all members of the first group produced shorter process essays compared to argumentation, two of the members of the second group not only developed longer argumentative essays but also increased the number of linguistically correct structures in their compositions – Maryam and Fariba. Nevertheless, a raise in score was equal to shorter paper for Roya and producing longer argumentative essay by Afrouz resulted in the same score as in process. Hence, although it could be concluded that students were able to develop better quality process papers in terms of global aspects, the findings do not demonstrate any conclusive trend in terms of language and mechanics as the lengths of essays produced vary across the genres and the students’ revision behaviours are mixed. Looking at the data from a different angle; that is the ratio of language and mechanics errors to essay length, revealed that except for Nasrin and Roya whose surface errors rates were consistent across the two writing genres regardless of their essay lengths, the majority of cases – 7 students – produced more erroneous argumentative papers compared to process. Fariba, on the other hand, was the
only student who composed a more accurate argumentative than process paper (Table 7.7). Hence, while assigning negative scores to every language and mechanics errors could not depict an accurate picture of the overall scores of this feature across both genres, the ratio of number of mistakes to number of words produced in each mode could provide a more convincing evidence based on which it can be claimed that students were generally more successful in composing error-free process texts than argumentative papers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Argumentation</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of Words</td>
<td>No of Errors</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasrin</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mani</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryam</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahdi</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roya</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrouz</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azam</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fariba</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.7. Language and mechanics errors and essay length ratio across both genres

7.5 Conclusion

Although students’ texts improved over drafts in both genres, participants were more successful writing process compositions. It could be inferred that they were more capable of describing a procedure rather than arguing for or against an issue. In other words, developing an argumentative essay was more demanding as it required high level of reasoning reflected in text organisation. The essay size could have also played a determining role in the results obtained particularly in terms of surface level errors. That is,
the longer an essay, the more likely the appearance and recurrence of errors. However, calculating the ratio of number of mistakes to number of words written in each type of essay did not support this assumption. Further, the greater positive changes over argumentative drafts may imply not only the higher quality of feedback delivered by the reviewers, but also participants’ more familiarity with and experience in performing the tasks and in dealing with indirect coded feedback method of feedback delivery. In other words, over time and through active engagement and practice students internalised the expectations and mechanisms of the tasks and realised the potential merits of joint activities. Besides, the greater positive changes in the majority of students’ final drafts compared to the second drafts in both genres can be attributed to the students’ trust to their instructor’s comments which could increase the incorporation rate and also the higher quality of feedback the instructor provided. In other words, it could be presumed that collaborative revision activity contributed to producing better quality essays compared to peer reviewing. Finally, the fact that most of the positive changes were small and mainly happened at surface level should not be discouraging as writing is a complex skill influenced by myriad of individual, pedagogical and contextual factors. Hence, acquiring writing competence requires lots of practice and experience and it is not wise to expect swift change in students’ written products just by writing three drafts of two essays of different genres.
CHAPTER 8

PARTICIPANTS’ PERCEPTIONS

8.1 Introduction

Interview data attempts to address the last research question: what are EFL students’ perceptions regarding peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple-drafting activities? In fact, it investigates what language learners have to say about their experiences of peer review and collaborative revision tasks they performed during the essay writing course. The report presented here arose from three stage interviews – individual, pair, and group – with 10 EFL cases during the L2 essay writing course in which peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple draft writing activities were practiced. It is important to state that since student characteristics, experiences, and motivations may vary dramatically from one setting to another, it can be unhelpful to over generalise the responses of the participants of this case study research to a markedly different setting. In what follows headings convey the main themes (overall idea) of the questions. Each table represents the original question(s) asked during the interview sessions as well as the codes and sub-codes which emerged from the interviews that were grouped and put into categories. The tables are also comprised of four main columns; the first shows the general code or sub-code, the second depicts the number of participants whose responses fall into that special code or sub-code, the third indicates interview stage in which that code or sub-code emerged, and the final column represents the frequency of each comment. While each table illustrates all response categories, only the most frequent codes/sub-codes will be discussed and analysed in detail in the light of the research theoretical framework, peer collaboration, and process-based writing pedagogy. It is worth noting that in response to some questions some interviewees provided multiple reasons/views at different stages. Hence, while the total number of participants remains constant (N=10), these may not necessarily appear so when the number of responses for each category are added up. Finally, the student voices are quoted selectively but in order not to lose the significant information nor strip it from the context, I have tried to show a range of opinions expressed by more than one student.
8.2 Peer Review

Participants were asked to express their feelings about peer review activity. The most common responses heard were general descriptions such as “helpful”, “useful”, “perfect”, and “excellent” or a combination of all four, although they did express some reservations about the activity. The participants’ wide range of reflections has been illustrated in Table 8.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to provide valid feedback</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve essay writing quality</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Internalize the lessons better</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express and share ideas</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-monitoring</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time constraint</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generate new ideas</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple perspectives</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrieve knowledge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weigh/evaluate the feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.1. Students’ reflections on peer reviewing

8.2.1 Inability to provide valid feedback

As Table 8.1 indicates, a large number of students (7 people) stressed that their limited English Language proficiency and lack of skills needed for peer reviewing made the activity less productive. Tina for example confessed openly about how she felt about the issue:

My low level of proficiency didn’t let me provide my partner with valuable feedback. Therefore, I didn’t notice many of the errors and problematic areas [of his paper].

The same attitude was voiced by Mahdi as he thought:

Second drafts were almost a copy of first drafts because partners were incapable of detecting errors and providing valid feedback; hence, it made students get bored.
He further emphasized that:

Peer review wasn’t effective and peers’ feedback just covered some very rudimentary points.

Mani was even more critical. He questioned the peer selection criteria and expressed his dissatisfaction working with a lower level peer in this way:

My partner and I were not of the same level of English language proficiency and she didn’t understand the structures I used. So, her feedback didn’t look helpful.

The participants’ limited language proficiency and their inability to identify and offer valid alternatives was one of the major challenges in peer review activity. As it was discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2, this problem negatively affected the amount of time pairs spent evaluating and discussing each other’s papers during peer review session. Consequently, they were less active during peer evaluation compared to collaborative revision session. Having said that, it can be argued that low proficiency was not the only restraining factor. In fact, part of this feeling can be attributed to the mental state of the participants. This cohort of students were heavily teacher dependent as their papers which used to be developed in solitude, were normally evaluated by their tutors. Hence, being required to do peer evaluation for the first time, made most of them feel psychologically unprepared especially bearing in mind that the peer training they received has possibly been inadequate. However, despite these limitations, as it was noticed in Chapter 7, Sections 7.2 and 7.3, they were still able to assist each other to develop better quality drafts particularly during Writing Cycle 2 (argumentative essay) as they were more familiar with the task and its expectations.

8.2.2 Improve essay writing quality and internalise the lessons better

Of 10 cases, five acknowledged that the activity helped them improve the overall quality of their writing. They believed that the task helped them enhance their limited knowledge base and improve their lexis and grammar. The following interview extract which is articulated by Fariba gives a hint of such view:

It [peer reviewing] helped us detect most of our problems and improve our writing skill.
Or as Roya stressed:

*The activity was useful because another thought helped me improve the quality of my paper and writing performance.*

One of the cases expressed an interesting comment about the efficiency of the activity. According to her, as in peer reviewing students discuss their ideas and exchange knowledge, points are internalised in their minds and they hardly forget them. In her response, Maryam noted that:

*As the points are learnt through discussion, I think I will never forget them.*

As has been stressed by these respondents, peer review provided the participants an opportunity to build on their knowledge and co-construct higher quality texts through negotiations. It also facilitated learning since during discussions the partners made use of each other’s strengths to address their uncertainties and ambiguities.

### 8.2.3 Express and share ideas

Four of the participants considered it as a method through which they had an opportunity not only to share, but also to express their ideas about their peers’ drafts in a friendly atmosphere. Mahdi articulated that:

*One advantage of this activity is that students learn how to articulate their opinions about a paper they read.*

A similar idea was expressed by Roya:

*The fact that your peer could express her views on your essay was positive.*

In teacher-centred, product-based writing pedagogy the teachers normally provide their comments in written form and the students find no chance to interact with them and express their ideas. Even if there is any interaction, it is most of the time unidirectional. That is, the teachers mostly speak and provide recommendations while the students just listen passively and are reluctant to challenge their tutors since they regard their teachers as figures of authority who possess the knowledge and expertise to evaluate and critique their writing performance. However, as it is pointed out by these interviewees, during peer review activity, students do not have those reservations and can freely express their ideas, criticise and defend their opinions in an equal and stress-free atmosphere. More precisely, natural
negotiations between peers help eradicate misunderstandings and avoid appropriation which is common in teacher-student relationships.

8.2.4 Self-monitoring

Four students cited that reading their peers’ papers was very useful because it allowed them to compare their writing with that of their peers and avoid making the same errors as their peers did. As Fariba put it:

*Reviewing my peer’s paper helped me concentrate more on my own paper and get familiar with the potential mistakes I may make and try to avoid them in my own essay.*

This view is highlighted by Maryam as she said:

*It had several positive points such as when you reviewed your partner’s paper, you noticed his/her mistakes. Later, when you tried to develop your own paper, you were careful not to repeat them in your own essay.*

One of the main purposes of incorporating student-centred activities into L2 composition classes is to develop student autonomy. Indeed, student independence particularly in classes with large number of learners where the chances of one-to-one interactions between the teachers and individual students are limited is an issue which requires special consideration. As stated by this group of respondents, peer review can facilitate self-monitoring which is a step towards independence. More precisely, by reviewing peer texts students raise self-awareness and critically evaluate their own texts and make appropriate revisions which ultimately improve their writing ability. In that sense, both peer interactions and peer texts can be considered as the tools which improve learners’ L2 writing skill.

8.2.5 Generate new ideas

Of those reflections expressed by the students, four focused on effectiveness of peer review activity in generating new ideas. As Nasrin said:

*This activity was very useful and illuminating. My peer helped me develop new ideas.*

Similar sentiments were stressed by some other cases. Mina for example called this activity:
Perfect and inspiring: it not only gave me more insight into how to develop my ideas, but also how to improve my grammatical knowledge.

The other value of peer review is its potential to help students form, develop, and support their ideas. One of the partners may sometimes possess useful content knowledge about a particular subject which can share it with his/her partner during their negotiations. In such cases, peers support each other and co-construct an essay which is rich and logical in terms of content and its ideas are supported with adequate details.

8.2.6 Multiple perspectives

In their responses three cases indicated that the fact that they received feedback from a person other than their instructor was a nice experience. As noted by Mahdi:

*We normally get feedback from our instructor. It was an opportunity to receive our peer’s comments and also express our opinion about his/her writing.*

Roya also reiterated this attitude by saying that:

*It was useful since my paper was reviewed from a different perspective.*

In traditional, teacher written feedback, the content of student compositions normally receives little attention. Further, as the comments are in written form, they sometimes cause misunderstanding or appropriation. As during peer review, students with similar proficiency level and most of the times similar age group negotiate with each other, mutual understanding is more likely to establish and learners can collaboratively work to improve text quality by focusing on the areas which need further attention. In other words, student writers may understand peer comments more easily than expert comments because peers share problems. Hence, peer reviewers may be more effective in detecting the problems from their own perspectives, generating solutions to the problems, and assisting peer writers to examine their texts more critically and from a different perspective with the purpose of improving them.

8.3 Collaborative Revision

Students were also invited to comment on their experience of collaborative revision. Specifically, they were asked if they felt the activity was of any use. Overall, all cases
reported that they found collaborative revision activity very beneficial. Table 8.2 presents a summary of the respondents’ attitudes about the activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooling of ideas and knowledge</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supportive</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited knowledge base</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lengthy process</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complement to peer reviewing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the content</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double opportunity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate reference</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.2. Students’ reflections on collaborative revision

8.3.1 Pooling of ideas, knowledge, and supportive

Interestingly, all of the participating students reported that mutual sharing of ideas and knowledge contributed in producing a more accurate and richer text. The comments below give a flavour of how these students reacted to the activity. Maryam for example said:

> It was an appropriate method since all our problematic areas were first spotted and then with the help of our partners we could easily fix them. Two heads worked collaboratively and two people shared their knowledge to understand and fix the errors.

This point was also stressed in Roya’s saying:

> I think sharing the ideas and trying to solve the problems collaboratively and removing them from our papers is better than working alone.

Also, the majority of the students found this activity helpful and efficient as it facilitated creating a supportive environment for improving their papers. As Azam put it:

> Sometimes I myself didn’t get the instructor’s feedback and the reason behind them, but with the help and support I received from my peer I could understand what the source of problem was and how I could improve it.

Mani even expressed more positive remarks and said:
Much better than the first activity [peer review]: two thoughts and minds concentrated on one paper regardless of whose it was and supported each other to fix the mistakes

Therefore, it looks quite reasonable to claim that such pooling of knowledge provided opportunities for pairs to learn from each other. The fact that all of the participants favoured collaborative revision activity reveals that by involving in this task, students could share their linguistic and textual resources to compose better quality texts they probably could not do on their own. More precisely, dialogue and interaction between peers and the comments provided by the instructors helped the learners to improve their writing skill. Student draft analysis (Chapter 7, Sections 7.2 and 7.3) also supported their perceptions where collaborative tasks particularly collaborative revision improved learners’ writing performance.

8.3.2 Limited knowledge base

More than half of students (6 people) also claimed that due to their lack of necessary knowledge and skills to provide useful suggestions, they felt great difficulty improving the quality of their texts and hence did not consider collaborative revision as effective. This view is echoed by Tina as she noted:

Sometimes neither my partner nor I was able to fix the error. Our low level of language proficiency didn’t allow us improve some of the problematic areas in our papers.

As a result, they had to either paraphrase/delete the feature to comply with the instructor’s feedback as expressed by Mahdi:

In such cases we deleted the construction. I think this happened because of our lack of English structure knowledge. Our English language competency wasn’t advanced enough to be able to address all the feedback we received from our instructor.

Or ask their instructor to tell them what should be done with the paper under discussion as is reflected in Afrouz’s response:
In those cases when due to our low level of L2 writing proficiency we did not get why an element was marked, we had to ask the instructor or delete the structure completely.

As was discussed in the previous section, lack of language ability in revising and finding appropriate alternatives also concerned some of the participants during collaborative revision activity. In fact, even though the errors were marked by the tutor, in some cases the peers failed to support and scaffold each other to revise their papers. While limited English proficiency can form such a feeling, pairs’ failure to co-revise their papers might also have been the result of their lack of experience in performing collaborative revision task, lack of confidence in their revision abilities, and/or unfamiliarity with the codes which were employed by the instructor.

8.3.3 Lengthy Process

Three students believed that they did not have enough time to engage in the task properly. Hence, they could not use their partners’ expertise to improve their essays and felt they were rushed doing the task. As noted by Fariba:

*The time allocated for this activity was short and we couldn’t cover everything. Some of the raised issues needed paraphrasing, developing content, and changing the structure. However, due to time constraint we were unable to fulfil the task thoroughly.*

Azam also commented that:

*Due to time shortage, the partner’s role in collaborative revision was not that much effective.*

Given the level of language proficiency of the students, it is not surprising to hear such voices from some of the participants who have not yet developed satisfactory level of writing skill. Indeed, these students were learning to write, evaluate, and revise English essay simultaneously. Focusing on several issues at the same time and meeting the task expectations could be very time consuming for them and might eventually lead to their cognitive overload and frustration. Besides, as these students stressed, macro structural problems of the texts are complex and involve bigger chunks of change such as sentence, paragraph or even the whole essay, their treatment requires more effort and time.
8.4 Multiple vs. Single Drafting

Whether students preferred developing several drafts of the same paper (process oriented approach to writing) or liked the traditional single drafting method (product-based writing pedagogy), was the main theme of this question. In fact, the interviewer’s primary goal was to elicit the participants’ attitudes about applying this approach in the essay writing course.

Although all of the students favoured generating multiple draft essays in the first interview conducted right after completing the first writing cycle, a number of them voiced some contradictory views in our last interview at the end of the course. Table 8.3 below summarises the students’ responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your viewpoint about multiple draft writing? In other words, do you like it or not? Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In multiple-drafting quality privileged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Details covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-drafting: boring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes unnoticed in single drafting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single drafting does not guarantee correction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single drafting improves fluency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.3. Students’ reflections on multiple draft writing

8.4.1 In multiple drafting quality privileged and details covered

A large number of students (8 people) believed that compared to single drafting, multiple drafting could help them improve the overall quality of their essays by eliminating the errors from their papers after each feedback they received from their reviewers. Hence, they would be able to write error free pieces in the future. The accounts below give a flavour of students’ attitudes:

> Although in multiple drafting we might develop just three essays in a term, we learn a lot about writing conventions and are sure that after 3 times drafting, our paper is error free because each time our paper is commented on, we try to improve its quality. (Afrouz)

Or as Mahdi put it:
Although the number of essays written during the course is limited, it is better than writing several single draft essays in which errors recur again and again.

Mina also expressed that:

As revision is an indispensable part of multiple drafting, it motivates me to improve the quality of my paper over drafts.

Besides, six students maintained that multiple drafting whose main concern is the process and not the product of writing can help them cover all the details of their essays and pay closer attention to all elements of their papers. As Mina said:

In multiple drafting attention is given to all details. Nothing is left unnoticed.

Mani also endorsed this as he stated:

Because attention is given to every detail, three times correction is definitely advantageous. Even the overlooked mistakes in one draft may be spotted and fixed in the following draft.

As the respondents indicate, developing multiple drafts and receiving feedback at several points during writing process makes students aware of the importance of revision and meaningful expression of ideas during writing process. It also implies the cyclical nature of composition. Hence, the method helps learners understand how well their texts meet their audience’s needs and allows them to utilise the feedback in subsequent revisions of their pieces and refine their ideas to eliminate the ambiguities and meet their readers’ expectations.

8.4.2 Multiple-drafting: boring?

At the earlier stages of the study and in the individual interviews - end of writing cycle one - the participants did not think developing several drafts of an essay was tiresome; however, when asked again in the group interview, some of them expressed that the method was boring and did not consider it as exciting. They especially stressed that the second draft which was developed based on their peers’ feedback was almost the same as the original and it could be skipped from the process arguing that instead of wasting time developing 3 drafts of one type of essay, they preferred being introduced to more essay genres. These two opposite views were clearly echoed by Mina, Tina, Mahdi, Azam, and Fariba. In the first interview Azam, for example, asserted that:
Multiple drafting is not boring.

But after a few weeks she responded differently as she said:

*I feel multiple drafting of the second essay was boring. Writing six drafts of two essay types during six consecutive weeks for those who haven’t written any papers so far is very demanding and therefore exhausting.*

Yet, there were some cases (half of the students) who constantly believed that although multiple drafting might seem boring, it was worth it. The predominant reason cited by this group of students was that it provided them the opportunity to improve their writing skill which was their priority. Maryam is an example of those who enthusiastically favoured this method by saying:

*Multiple drafting is not boring. What matters is that this method facilitates students’ learning.*

Mani also expressed a similar idea although he implicitly admitted lack of excitement in multiple drafting:

*Multiple drafting may seem boring, but it is worth it as the errors are analysed thoroughly.*

As this cohort of L2 learners were used to product composition pedagogy (See Chapter 4, Section 4.8), I briefly explained the advantages of incorporating process oriented approach and collaborative tasks into composition classes at the outset of the study. However, it seems that the participants were not either ready or convinced enough to undergo several changes during a short period. So, some of them were overwhelmed as it might take learners varying lengths of time to understand the teacher’s instruction philosophy. It could be suggested that in such cases where the perceptions and beliefs of the students and teachers do not match or a new approach is introduced, teachers should thoroughly explain their philosophy of teaching writing and communicate the reasons behind adopting new composition methodology and feedback techniques to their student writers. This helps them get logically convinced and mentally prepared to get involved in their new experience.
8.4.3 Mistakes unnoticed in single drafting

On the other hand, one of the disadvantages of single drafting expressed by half of the respondents is that when a paper is reviewed just once, it is very likely that some of the mistakes or problematic areas are left unnoticed. As noted by Mani:

In single drafting even the instructor may fail to notice some of the errors and incorrect structures.

Or, as Afrouz responded:

In single drafting we don’t have the chance to understand our weaknesses and strengths.

Of course neglecting errors of student papers is not necessarily the by-product of single drafting. However, in classes where the teachers face heavy work load and have to respond to a large number of texts written by students, this phenomenon may happen and can negatively affect the quality of teachers’ comments. Hence, composing multiple drafts and receiving comments several times during writing process, can potentially reduce the probability of this problem.

8.4.4 Single drafting does not guarantee correction

Five respondents also admitted that single drafting of an essay does not necessarily lead to the improvement of their papers. As in the method the writers are not required to correct their writings and submit them again, they may or may not apply the feedback they receive. In addition, the instructors normally do not check whether the students have incorporated their suggestions into their writings. As Nasrin and Mahdi said:

There is normally no follow up correction in single draft writing. The students generally don’t take the feedback seriously as the corrections are not checked by the tutors.

Tina had also a similar idea as they responded:

In single draft writing the teacher has no control over the revision activity of the students and doesn’t know if they have the ability to fix their errors (Tina).

As these students indirectly express, in product, single draft composition pedagogy writing is a linear process in which learners’ texts are treated as finished products. Therefore, students receive no support during their composing process at all. Further, teachers’ form
focused feedback is normally summative justifying their grades rather than requiring students to act and take a further step to reformulate their papers. Consequently, such methodology is normally inefficient as it fails to improve L2 learners’ writing performance.

8.5 Peer Feedback Incorporation

Participants’ reactions to the feedback they received from their peers (incorporation/non-incorporation) during peer review activity were another important issue the interviewer probed. Overall, this question generated very similar patterns of views among the cases. Table 8.4 below condenses the information extracted from the interviews:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical and selective</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global feedback incorporation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local feedback incorporation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalid and misleading advice</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vague and general comments</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disproportionate benefit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface and textual level changes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective and biased</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience awareness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4. Students’ reflections on peer feedback

8.5.1 Critical and selective

Although most of the students claimed they made good efforts to adopt their peers’ suggestions in their revisions, they acknowledged they did not take up peer advice without careful thinking. Indeed, they expressed several reasons for their non-incorporation behaviour including doubt about their peers’ ability to judge their texts, double-checking the received suggestions against other sources such as textbooks, instructors, classmates, etc., and being sure about the accuracy of their own choice. The accounts below give a flavour of students’ attitudes:
I was not convinced about the quality and the validity of the feedback she [her partner] gave me, so I didn’t incorporate them in my drafts unless I double-checked them with a dictionary or other reference books. I didn’t trust her comments. (Afrouz)

Mina voiced a similar view as she said:

I always checked the points before writing them. When my partner gave a feedback which I found it inconsistent with what I already knew, I couldn’t trust it. Thus, I double checked it against other resources like dictionary. If I wasn’t convinced about the validity of her advice, I didn’t incorporate it into my writing.

Likewise, Nasrin noted that:

As I had checked everything before I used them, I was confident about the accuracy of what I had written, so I was reluctant to make any changes in my writing.

Student accounts support their actual behaviour during peer review sessions. For instance, interactional activities such as “persistence”, “certainty check”, and “reject advice”, also indicate the participants’ doubt and scepticism in the validity of advice given by their peers. Consequently, as it was noticed in Chapter 6, Sections, 6.3.1.1, and 6.4.1.1, the students disregarded almost one-third of their classmates’ suggestions in their subsequent drafts (29% in process and 33.83% in argumentative essay). Ultimately, it could be argued that since student writers were not sure about the accuracy of the feedback they received from their peers whom they thought were similar in terms of English language proficiency level, they selectively adopted them into their papers.

8.5.2 Global feedback incorporation

Half of the students (5 people) maintained that they mainly made use of their peers’ comments which focused on global issues. They believed such feedback helped them improve the content of their texts from one draft to the next. As noted by Mina:

I accepted her [partner] comments on content since I thought an outsider’s views were very effective in improving the quality of my text.

Azam also noted that:
I had no sense of audience in my writing but my partner helped me understand that I as a writer and she as a reviewer do not necessarily share the same background information. Hence, I used her ideas on content to present all the necessary details in my paper.

While such claims were made by half of the participants, the general tendency and their actual revision behaviours were opposite. As the analysis of audio-recorded data and students’ texts revealed, the focus of the discussions were mainly on local issues (See Chapter 5, Section 5.2). Further, the participants incorporated surface level feedback more than meaning level one in both activities and across both genres (See Chapter 6, Sections 6.3.1, and 6.4.1). So, as other data sets demonstrate, the participants’ perceptions did not match with their actions and they unconsciously paid more attention to the feedback they received on linguistic aspects of their papers than content and organisation.

8.5.3 Local feedback incorporation

Still, another group of participants (3 people) argued that they merely used their peers’ feedback to fix their local errors and ignored their partners’ advice which addressed global issues. Fariba, for example, asserted that:

_My partner’s comments helped me improve the quality of the grammar, and sentence structure of my paper._

Nasrin and Afrouz also used the surface level feedback they received from their peers and maintained that:

_I made use of my peer’s language and mechanics feedback (Nasrin)._

_I incorporated the feedback my partner offered on punctuations (Afrouz)_

As it was discussed in earlier sections, peers tended to concentrate more on surface revisions rather than on changes that affected meaning even though only three of them admitted it. This tendency can indicate the primacy of accuracy over fluency for this cohort of learners. It can also show their inability and reluctance to deal with more complex and time consuming macro structure problems of their texts and instead shifting their attention to surface level mistakes which were easier to address.
8.5.4 Invalid and misleading advice

A number of cases (3 people) maintained that their peers’ suggestions were invalid and at times misleading, thus up taking the invalid advice in their texts changed the accurate structures they had used into inaccurate ones. As noted by Afrouz:

*My peer’s feedback sometimes misled me. In some cases what I had written in my first draft was correct but when I changed it in my consequent draft according to my partner’s suggestion, it was inaccurate.*

Similarly, Mani argued that:

*My partner’s comments were not that much useful comments. Her feedback on grammar and structure was not accurate.*

Providing invalid and misleading feedback sometimes can happen particularly at the earlier stages of incorporating peer collaboration practice and when the learners are at lower levels of English language proficiency. Despite this problem, as was demonstrated by other data sets - audio recordings and student papers - peers were still capable of scaffolding each other and building on each other’s knowledge to produce higher quality texts. Examining the issue from sociocultural perspective it can be claimed that as some errors are beyond the potential developmental level of the participants, in such cases they are incapable of providing valuable advice. Having said that, this problem should not disappoint writing instructors as over time and by training they can overcome it. For example, at earlier stages the students can simply be reminded to avoid providing advice on areas which they are not confident about.

8.5.5 Vague and general comments

Of respondents, three complained about the ambiguity, sketchiness and lack of explicitness in the feedback provided by their partners. They stressed that in case they had understood the feedback, they would not have disregarded it. This issue was voiced by Fariba as she said:

*My peer’s comments were general and vague. She didn’t give specific comments thus I couldn’t make use of them especially those which addressed content and organisation of my essay.*

Roya shared a similar idea as she stressed:
My partner’s comments were useful and I tried to incorporate most of them into my writing; however, I failed to do it in cases when I couldn’t understand them.

Nasrin also argued that:

I didn’t incorporate many of my peer’s comments in the first essay. They seemed ambiguous and I couldn’t understand them. Yet, I used them in my second essay when I realised her advice was much clearer and meaningful.

As this group of learners argue, vague feedback was the main reason they disregarded their peer comments, even if they did not intend to do so. Providing general and vague comments implies lack of training. Hence, to resolve this problem students need to be coached to give more specific suggestions and comments to help their peers refine their texts. For instance, they can be trained to replace vague commentary and references to abstract rules and principles with text-specific strategies, directions, guidelines, and recommendations. They can also be presented with appropriate vocabulary and expressions for making clear, specific, constructive and tactful comments, which can be used during peer evaluations.

8.6 Instructor’s Comments & Coded Feedback

The quality of instructor’s feedback and his comments was also discussed in the interviews. Although the majority of the interviewees acknowledged the clarity, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of his advice both on local and global issues, yet a few expressed different ideas. Also, as both the instructor and the students used indirect coded feedback and underlining to address language and mechanics errors, the interviewer was interested to discern whether the students felt comfortable using this method. In general, while the majority of the respondents reported the simplicity and the clarity of the codes, they could not disregard the problems they had using or interpreting some of them. Table 8.5 shows a synopsis of students’ reflections:
Did you find your instructor’s feedback useful? Why or why not? What problems, if any, did you see in understanding/applying them? Elaborate on your answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear and easy to follow</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive, relevant, and accurate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusing and inattentive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.5. Students’ reflections on their instructor’s comments and coded feedback

8.6.1 Clear and easy to follow comments

During the first stage of the interview - individual interview - all of the students were happy with the instructor’s feedback stating that they found it simple and straightforward. Azam for instance noted that:

*The comments were clear and without any ambiguity.*

Mani also stressed that:

*The comments were clear and easy to follow. I had no particular problem in understanding them.*

All other students endorsed these views after the first writing cycle. However, as it is shown in the above table, during the second interview which was conducted at the end of the second writing cycle, two of the participants believed that towards the end the course the instructor’s comments sometimes tended to be cryptic and were difficult to interpret which could be the result of the instructor’s heavy workload. On the other hand, it is safe to say that clear and text-specific comments, which engaged the students and gave them
concrete indication of how to refine their texts could increase the likelihood of feedback incorporation during collaborative revision sessions and ultimately writing performance of these participants.

8.6.2 Comprehensive, relevant, and accurate comments

A significant majority of the students (8 people) felt that in addition to their clarity and simplicity, the comments were also comprehensive, relevant, and precise. Indeed, they maintained that the papers were carefully reviewed and commented on, nothing was left unnoticed, and the advice covered all the details of the students’ papers. As Fariba put it:

*The papers were carefully reviewed and comments and feedback were precise. I knew some parts of my essay needed revision even though my partner hadn’t noticed them in her review. But when I received my instructor’s feedback, I noticed that the problematic area had been spotted by him and was commented on precisely.*

Mina also pointed out that:

*The instructor’s feedback on content and organisation was thorough and complete.*

As these responses imply, focused, helpful, and content-specific comments delivered by the instructors, demonstrate their involvement with the individual student’s papers and earns their trust. Indeed, careful, elaborate feedback, which attempts to engage with the students and builds an interpersonal relationship with them together with peers who share their knowledge and provide support, can motivate the student writers to act upon the commentaries and revise their writings with more interest.

8.6.3 Clear and user friendly codes

As stated by almost all of the cases (9 people), the codes were user friendly. The students could easily use them to address their peers’ papers and also could comprehend them during their revision activities. The accounts below give a flavour of students’ attitudes:

*In general, they [the codes] were clear. Yet, I couldn’t understand some of them unless I checked them against the keys. In one case I had problem understanding the reason why you used PU [one category with three
subcategories] to address my text. Even my partner didn’t get it unless we asked it from you [the researcher/instructor]. (Azam)

Or as Tina put it:

*I would have found it difficult to decode them by myself. However, as my partner was always there to support, I didn’t face any particular problem.*

Mina endorsed this view, saying that:

*I had problem in some cases. In such occasions I usually referred to code keys, asked my partner, or at times asked you [the instructor] for clarification.*

As these students cited, making use of the keys and the examples provided for each of the codes, working in pairs, and approaching the instructor for assistance were the most frequent options they had to decode the codes. In fact, one key advantage of using codes to address language and mechanics errors instead of providing the accurate forms and requiring students to recopy them in their subsequent drafts was that it encouraged students to take an active role by thinking, negotiating, and assisting each other as well as deciding on the accurate structures. This strategy pleasantly fits with Sociocultural Theory of Learning which advocates social and dialogic nature of cognition and knowledge.

**8.6.4 Confusing sub-categories**

Some of the symbols like PU covered several sub-categories such as punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling errors (See appendices 7 and 9). Seven students indicated that they were sometimes confused both deciding which code to use in response to their peers’ mistakes and in interpreting the signals their reviewers had utilised. Mahdi, for example, noted that:

*Few categories were confusing as they covered several subcategories. Sometimes it was difficult to interpret which one of the sub-categories the codes addressed.*

Or as Afrouz argued:

*When providing feedback, I sometimes didn’t know which code I should use to best suit a particular error.*
These students reported some challenges using certain codes during the activities. The codes mainly included: WW (wrong word/wrong word form), SS (incorrect structures, wrong word order, sentence fragments, run-ons), and PU (punctuation, capitalization, spelling errors). As it was the first time that indirect codes were employed by this group of learners to address sentence level errors and since this type of feedback strategy assumes a relatively advanced level of linguistic knowledge, it is not surprising to hear such voices from the students who have not yet developed satisfactory level of writing skill. However, it is believed that over time and through practice, they get familiar with its mechanisms and will be able to use it more competently.

8.7 Feedback Preference vs. Feedback Focus

Students were also invited to comment on their feedback preferences. Specifically, they were asked if they liked to receive feedback on content and organisation of their texts, language and mechanics, or both. Data suggest that while the majority of the participants welcomed advice on both language and mechanics & content and organisation, a number of them favoured feedback on content and organisation and a few liked to receive feedback merely on language and mechanics. Besides, the interviewees were asked about the focus of their partners’ feedback. The representative responses are categorised in Table 8.6:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What type of feedback do you prefer? Use specific examples (content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both language and mechanics &amp; content and organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content and organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the focus of your peer’s feedback?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content and organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and mechanics &amp; Content and organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.6. Students’ feedback preferences vs. their feedback focus
8.7.1 Both language and mechanics & content and organisation

The majority of the students (7 people) valued feedback on both global and local issues. They believed a good quality essay should not only be meaningful but also error free; hence, they wanted their feedback to have a dual content/language focus. Tina for instance maintained that:

*I prefer feedback both on language & mechanics and content & organisation. I think both of them are necessary and complementary for a good piece of writing.*

Others, like Nasrin shared a similar view:

*I prefer focus more on language and mechanics; however, I am also aware of the importance of content and organisation issues. Since the reviewer/reader should also comprehend what I am trying to express [my message].*

However, only a couple of students (Maryam and Tina) claimed that their partners’ advice covered both local and global issues. Indeed, they believed their peers’ feedback was comprehensive as it addressed all problematic areas wherever needed. Maryam highlighted this point as she said:

*If necessary, my peer addressed both language and mechanics & content and organisation problems of my essay.*

These students’ preference to receive comprehensive feedback shows that they expected to know the weaknesses in all areas of their writings. On the other hand, just two of them admitted that their expectations were met during peer evaluation sessions. That is, despite peer evaluation training, the student reviewers did not pay equal attention to surface level and text-based level issues of the papers they read. This trend may show the participants’ habitual tendency to focus on form as they had been trained so throughout much of their previous writing instruction.

8.7.2 Content and organisation

The first priority of 4 cases was receiving comments on content and organisation of their texts. They either claimed they were competent enough in grammar and did not feel they needed surface level feedback or reported that they themselves could consult with grammar text books to solve their structural problems. As noted by Roya:
I prefer feedback on content and organisation. Language and mechanics errors can be improved by referring to the relevant sources such as grammar textbooks and dictionaries; however, spotting the content and organisation problems of a text is rather difficult and you cannot improve them unless someone else [a reviewer] comments on them.

Mahdi also argued that:

When I read a text, I try to grasp the gist of that text and structure is less important to me. I think the same is true about other people. Once they read an essay they concentrate more on its content than its structure. So, I more appreciate feedback on content.

On the other hand, three participants admitted that the feedback they received from their peers mainly dealt with global issues. As noted by Mahdi:

My partner’s feedback generally targeted content and organisation issues of my paper especially on the support my ideas needed.

Mani and Azam also expressed similar opinions. As these learners implicitly argue, surface level problems can be improved by referring to the relevant textbooks. However, the case is different in terms of meaning level issues. Peer evaluators can not only help student writers realise the potential ambiguities their papers may have caused in their audience, but also make them aware of the questions their pieces may have raised in their minds. Hence, they enable student writers to express their intended message clearly as well as to address the misunderstandings and information gaps.

8.7.3 Language and mechanics

Finally, a few cases (3 people) admitted their need for advice which focused more on language and mechanics than content and organisation. This group of students maintained that they were able to express their intended message but a paper with too many errors could impede their meaning. This opinion is reflected in Fariba’s response as she said:

I prefer feedback on grammar [language & mechanics]. When your paper contains many grammatical mistakes, it means you have failed to express what you intended to.

Azam also claimed that:
I think I can express my intended meaning and have no problem in this area. Grammatical accuracy is my main concern.

Yet, half of the students claimed that their classmates’ feedback heavily concentrated on local issues. For example, Fariba stressed that:

My partner’s feedback mainly focused on language and mechanics and especially on grammatical points.

Nasrin, Mina, Roya, and Afrouz gave very similar responses as they claimed the feedback they received were largely at sentence level. As it has been already discussed at several points (for example, Chapter 5, Section 5.2, and Chapter 6, Sections 6.3.1 and 6.4.1), dyadic discussions and feedback practices mainly focused on form rather than content. Showing less interest in content and organisation of the texts can indicate that writing a composition is treated as demonstration of linguistic knowledge rather than an opportunity for the discovery and expression of ideas. Hence, appropriate use of grammatical rules, vocabulary, and mechanics are believed would improve writing skill. This narrow and limited perception of writing function is derived from product-oriented approach to writing which has been dominant in English composition courses in the context where these L2 learners come from.

8.8 Feedback Providing Experience & Genre

Exploring whether the participants believed performing peer review activity helped them feel more confident evaluating similar papers in future was the aim of the next interview prompt. The responses were mixed ranging from those who felt they were on the early stages of undergoing such a new activity requiring more time and exercise and those who believed they learnt a lot from the activities and were confident they had improved their reviewing and evaluation skills noticeably. The students were also invited to express their views regarding the impact of genre on the quality of their feedback practices. Considering the two types of genres which were discussed, practiced, and evaluated during the course, the majority of the participants believed genre affected their feedback behaviour. However, a tiny minority felt genre did not have any significant role in their peer reviewing activity. Table 8.7 sums up how the cases felt:
**Did you benefit from reviewing your partner’s paper? In other words, do you feel your evaluation skill has improved?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More experienced over time</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General comments</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre recognition does matter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time and practice needed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In what ways does writing genre affect peer oral feedback and collaborative revision?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre does matter</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre has nothing to do with feedback</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.7. Students’ reflections on their evaluation experience and effect of genre

**8.8.1 More experienced over time**

The majority of students (7 people) commented that before attending this course they were confused and did not know what to look for and how to deliver their comments. However, the training they received and the practice they performed helped them realise the requirements of the activity and now they feel comfortable evaluating these two types of papers. As Nasrin claimed:

*Now I can provide more objective and valid feedback. I try not to include my personal likes and dislikes in my comments.*

A similar sentiment was expressed by Maryam:

*I was confused at the beginning and was unsure what I was expected to do. Now it is much easier for me to provide feedback. I know what to look for and what to concentrate on.*

As the participants argue, training and practice play a key role in peer evaluation activities. Hence, if L2 learners are expected to evaluate their peers’ papers, they need to receive extensive preliminary feedback instruction and get prepared to involve efficiently in peer evaluation tasks. Further, a friendly and stress-free atmosphere among peer review members should be established so that students respect and trust each other and welcome their peer’s ideas.
8.8.2 General comments

Three other cases pointed out that as they still felt uncertain about some of the writing features especially the grammatical points, they were unsure about the quality of feedback they delivered. They confessed that their comments were more generic than being text-specific. As noted by Tina:

> In the first writing cycle I was confused not being able to understand what I was required to do. Now I feel much better and can provide feedback for both types of genres except for some minor grammatical points.

Likewise, Azam contended that

> Now I know the structure of both essays, I know the criteria which should be met in each of them. I am able to give some general comments but not very specific ones.

It seems clear that we should not expect EFL students to become competent L2 writers/evaluators within a short period. In fact, one semester English essay writing course for those students who did not even have any formal exposure to writing in their native language is not enough and peer evaluation certainly requires longer instruction and practice and takes patience from both students and tutors.

8.8.3 Genre does matter

A significant number of students (8 people) believed that as in argumentative essay ideas were discussed, providing feedback in this type of essay was not that much easy. Indeed, they stated that special expertise was required to check whether the criteria for writing a good quality essay of this type were met. This view is reflected in Fariba’s response as she said:

> Giving feedback in process essay is easier since this genre of writing is more straightforward and its format is clear; however, providing feedback in argumentation needs more proficiency. In this type of essay you should judge about different elements all at once; whether pro and con ideas are presented, whether they are supported by evidence, fact or statistics, and several other features.

The other seven students shared her views including Afrouz as she cited:
Providing feedback in process essay is easier since this genre of writing is straightforward and the framework and the format is very familiar; however, giving feedback in argumentation is very demanding. You should consider not only the claims and counter-claims, but the appropriate use of transitions, the polite tone of the essay, etc.

As it is evident, the majority of the participants found developing and evaluating argumentative genre more difficult than process (See also Chapter 7, Section 7.4). Hence, it can be speculated that argumentation task is more complex and cognitively demanding than process as it requires higher level of abstraction, analysis, and planning. Process mode of writing, on the other hand, is more concrete as it describes a definite process through a series of steps or explains a procedure and depends more on chronological order.

8.9 Sufficiency of Training & Writing Cycles Integrity

Researchers and teachers have consistently emphasised the key role training plays regarding the value and effectiveness of peer response. Therefore, in order to maximise the benefit of peer review activity, I coached the students the principles of effective peer interaction and response in addition to the normal training they received on each type of essays. At the end of the course, I was keen to understand the extent to which the pre-training was efficient in guiding the students to do the collaborative tasks. Further, the other interview prompt focused on the relevance between the input students received and the output they were expected to produce. In other words, I intended to know whether the general training, model essays, and peer review instruction were adequate to prepare the students for the tasks they were required to do. Table 8.8 reveals students’ reflections on these issues:

| To what extent was peer review training prior to actual peer feedback activities useful? Did you benefit from the training? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Category | No of Students | Interview stage | Frequency |
| | | I | II | III |
| Adequate and comprehensive training | 10 | ✓ | ✓ | 27 |
| Confusing supplementary materials | 4 | ✓ | ✓ | 6 |
| Argumentation required further practice | 2 | ✓ | | 2 |
| Fast teaching pace | 1 | ✓ | ✓ | 2 |
To what extent did the input match the output? In other words, was there any relevance between the training you received and the activities you were required to do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coherent cycles</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.8. Students’ responses to pre-training and writing cycles integrity

8.9.1 Adequate and comprehensive training

All of the students admitted the effectiveness of the in-class training. They maintained that the instruction was not only clear and simple but also comprehensive. Indeed, they argued that every detail they needed for writing a good essay or providing feedback on a paper was discussed and elaborated with adequate models. Particularly, as some of the concepts such as thesis statement, development of ideas, and different types of organisations were abstract, they found the model essays and their analysis quite useful for both developing their own papers and commenting on their peers’ drafts. As Fariba noted:

*I believe all the details and points were discussed thoroughly and this improved my essay writing skill a lot. The sample essays were also very useful. I always tried to re-produce their features in my own papers. They practically gave me an idea how to write and how to provide feedback.*

A similar sentiment was expressed by Mina:

*I [the training] was useful for both me and my partner. Firstly, if you hadn’t trained us how to provide feedback, our feedback would have been subjective and based on our personal biases. However, the training gave us a framework. Secondly, it helped me myself to develop my own paper as well. I could compare my text with actual models and see if it had met the standards.*

Even though the students reacted very positively to the instruction they received, I still believe they needed further preparation to actively and efficiently involve in peer collaboration activities. Other data sources such as audio-recordings, observations, and students’ papers also confirm this opinion as the dyads sometimes struggled understanding their roles, the task requirements and expectations, as well as the codes they needed to use. Besides, despite the preliminary instructions, they paid little attention to macro structural issues of their papers, confused revision with edition, and sometimes offered vague and
non-specific commentaries. Hence, particular consideration and instruction is needed to shift L2 learners’ focus from form to content and from providing vague and general feedback to clear, constructive, and text-specific comments.

8.9.2 Coherent cycles

Noticeably, all of the students reported that the training and the activities supplemented each other very well and the procedures were clearly explained in class lectures. Indeed, they believed that the training was very helpful in guiding them to write and review a paper, as well as to respond to the feedback they received. As Mahdi put it:

_The package was unified and integrated. You could clearly notice that all the elements were interrelated. The training was exactly what we needed to write a paper and to provide our partner valid feedback. All the steps served one single purpose._

Roya also expressed a similar idea:

_All the elements were interrelated like the rings of a chain. The training, peer review instruction, and feedback criteria all matched and helped us do the activities efficiently._

Setting up well-planned and purposeful peer evaluation activities in composition courses is significant. In fact, writing tutors should consider a range of procedural issues such as the group size, number of drafts to be written, evaluation mechanism, mode of feedback delivery (oral/written or both), organisation of peer review sessions, and peer evaluation structure and focus before incorporating this technique into their writing classes.

8.9.3 Confusing supplementary materials

A number of students (4 people) claimed that although the training was clear, they could not make that much use of the hand outs and the model essays. As Mani explained:

_The hand outs were ok as they gave us an overview on how to check our partner’s papers, but I didn’t use them. They were difficult. I just used my notes which were taken in class._

Tina highlighted it in another way:
The training was helpful but I think the model essays had better be in our level of competency.

Reflecting on course materials, I should admit that in some cases the model essays I provided in class were higher than students’ level of English proficiency as they contained some complex structures and advanced vocabulary, which made them hard for students to understand. More comprehensible and reader friendly texts could better help the learners analyse the characteristics of each genre and they would not be distracted by complex grammatical structures or unfamiliar terminologies.

8.10 Pleased with Writing Performance & Reviewing Partner’s Paper

How well did the students cope with the new methods at the end of the course? Were they pleased with their progress thanks to peer reviewing and collaborative revision activities? Exploring students’ perceptions on this issue was also one of my main concerns. I also aimed to explore the respondents’ perceptions of reviewing their classmates’ papers. Students were specifically asked if they felt reviewing their partners’ papers had any advantage. As can be seen from the Table 8.9, all of the students felt their writing skills improved.

| Are you satisfied with your writing progress? What went well? What needs further practice? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Category | No of Students | Interview stage | Frequency |
| |  | I | II | III |
| More competent | 10 | ✓ | ✓ | 22 |
| Need further practice | 6 | ✓ | ✓ | 8 |
| Self-confidence | 3 | ✓ | ✓ | 4 |
| Writing process familiarity | 2 | ✓ | ✓ | 3 |

| Did you benefit from reading your peer’s paper and giving him/her feedback? If so, what were the benefits? If not, why not? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Category | No of Students | Interview stage | Frequency |
| |  | I | II | III |
| Improve language and mechanics | 8 | ✓ | ✓ | 17 |
| Not any particular lesson | 5 | ✓ | ✓ | 9 |
| Improve content | 1 | ✓ | | 2 |

Table 8.9. Students’ views on their L2 writing progress and reviewing peers’ papers
8.10.1 Competent

All of the students felt their writing skill had improved noticeably compared to the beginning of the course. At the end of the course, they knew essay format, were familiar with concepts such as cohesion, coherence, paragraph unity and organisation, and had learnt how to develop their ideas logically. Mina, for example, said:

*Now I have a clear idea about the organisation and format of these two writing genres. I know what to write, how to write, and how to support my ideas with examples.*

A similar comment was expressed by Mani as he noted:

*It [the course] has to a great extent affected my writing. In the past I just struggled to write. I had no sense of organisation and paragraphing and didn’t know the parts of an essay and wasn’t familiar with the functions each of the paragraphs like introduction, body, or conclusion served.*

Such accounts reveal the significance of instruction, practice, and collaboration in improving the writing skill of the L2 learners. During this short period students not only got familiar with writing process and English essay structure, but also were exposed to process writing pedagogy, peer collaboration activities, and two essay genres. Besides, peer collaboration tasks provided them an opportunity to review and discuss what they had already been presented. Therefore, they could build upon each other’s knowledge and strengths to internalise the concepts easier and apply them into their texts. The participants’ positive feelings about their progress would certainly have increased, had the course been longer and class size smaller.

8.10.2 Need further practice

Yet, there were some participants (6 people) who felt it was a bit early to judge about their writing performance. In fact, although they admitted some progress in either language & mechanics or content & organisation of their papers, they still believed they were vulnerable in some areas. They confessed that they needed more time and practice to internalise the abstract notions they were introduced to during the course. For instance, Tina emphasised that:
It takes time and I need to do lots of practice to become competent in my essay writing skill.

Mahdi also had a similar view as he said:

I thinks I need a lot more practice in each of these two genres.

Considering the fact that these L2 writers were novices, it would be optimistic to expect them to write error-free, well-structured, logical papers after attending a fifteen-week composition course. However, it could be argued that the new pedagogy and techniques motivated the students to actively engage in the tasks, offer and receive feedback, express their opinions about the papers they reviewed, and pool their information rather than sitting passively in a boring composition class and listening to their teacher’s monologues and/or day dreaming. In this sense, this course can be treated as an initial step towards more participatory forms of learning in which the students work together and help each other to become more competent and independent writers.

8.10.3 Self-confidence

A number of students (3 people) acknowledged that the activities boosted their self-confidence as competent writers. These participants stated that in the past they were scared of writing and were not sure if they could write even few paragraphs in their native language – Persian. However, at the end of the course they felt that peer reviewing and collaborative revision had fostered their confidence. This point was raised in Fariba’s response as she stressed:

I didn’t have much confidence in my English writing skill. However, the novel methods applied during this semester assisted me to build up confidence.

Azam also stated that:

I was scared of writing. This course not only motivated me, but also helped me develop my self-confidence.

L2 essay writing classes are normally stressful as the learners come to these classrooms with an anxiety about their writing skill and limited writing experience. Collaborative tasks can help L2 learners overcome their apprehension as they work in a non-threatening atmosphere and build on one another’s strengths to compensate their weaknesses. Besides, as reviewing other students’ papers helps them notice that other students experience the
same difficulties in writing that they do, they begin to relax and concentrate better on their compositions.

8.10.4 Improve language and mechanics

A significant number of respondents (8 people) felt that reading and analysing their partners’ texts exposed them to different writing styles and grammatical constructions. They further added that the activity helped them notice the grammatical errors their partners had made in their papers and thus be more careful to avoid repeating the same errors in their own texts. The following comments give a sense of these students’ reactions:

*I like the structures my partner uses in her writing. Besides, the way she uses idioms and expressions in her writing attracts me.* (Roya)

A similar sentiment was expressed by Tina as she said:

*I normally use simple language in my writing. My partner, however, uses compound and complex constructions in his papers. I like this style of writing and would like to learn to use such nice and error free structures in my own texts.*

However, she later changed her view as she noticed many errors had been detected by the instructor in the constructions her partner had used:

*At first I appreciated my partner’s style of writing, that is; using complex and compound sentences, but when I noticed many errors in his second draft, I thought I had better use simple, clear but error-free constructions rather than using compound but erroneous ones.*

While most of the time allocated to peer negotiation was spent discussing the surface level issues (See Chapter 5, Section 5.2) and a great majority of revision advice/practice focused on addressing local issues of student papers (See Chapter 6, Sections 6.3.1 and 6.4.1), it is not surprising to hear such accounts from the participants. Indeed, over emphasis on form and restricting negotiations and feedback to linguistic issues prompted the majority of the students feel they could improve this aspect of their writing skill.

8.10.5 Not any particular lesson

Half of the participants maintained that they learnt nothing from their classmates. A few also claimed that their level of English language proficiency was higher than their peers and
reviewing their peers’ papers was not insightful. This is reflected in Afrouze’s response as she argued:

\[
\text{I did not learn any particular lesson from my classmate. I think my English is better than hers at least in grammar.}
\]

Moreover, some believed their partners’ error recurrence impeded them from understanding the message of their papers and as a result they did not benefit from reviewing their peers’ drafts. As noted by Azam:

\[
\text{I did not find it constructive. Her essay was full of grammatical mistakes.}
\]

Even though this group of participants claimed that reviewing their partners’ essays had no advantage, the analysis of audio recorded data and written texts (Chapters 5 and 7) revealed that all participants benefited from the tasks to some degree and were able to improve the quality of their papers over drafts. Further, as it was discussed in Section 8.2.4, reviewing peer essays helped the participants to become critical readers and evaluators and improved their self-evaluation skill.

### 8.11 Comments, Criticisms, and Suggestions

At the end of each interview, the respondents were invited to freely express their perceptions about any relevant issues which were left uncovered during our discussion. The researcher assured them that their reflections would not affect their grades and are merely used to serve research objectives. Table 8.11 presents the summary of students’ comments, criticisms, and complaints articulated at the end of the interviews as a response to the routine closing prompt.
Are there anything else you’d like to add about the course in general, and peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple drafting in particular?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Interview stage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complaints</td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback on final drafts required</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not challenging argumentative essay prompt</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of competition in class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need for instructor’s intervention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Suggestions                                   |                | I   | II | III |     |
| practice more genres                          | 1              | ✓   | ✓  | ✓   | 3   |
| need for more models                          | 1              | ✓   | ✓  |     | 2   |
| need for group brainstorming                   | 1              | ✓   |    |     | 1   |
| training on grammatical structures            | 1              |       | ✓  |     | 1   |

Favourable Remarks

|                                |                | I   | II | III |     |
| Attractive and novel           | 6              | ✓   | ✓  | ✓   | 6   |
| Well organised L2 writing course | 4          | ✓   | ✓  | ✓   | 6   |

Table 8.10. Students’ comments, criticisms, and suggestions

8.11.1 Complaints (feedback on final drafts)

One of the points which was raised during the last interview concentrated on the students’ final drafts. Due to the time constraint and the procedure of the study, the instructor failed to return students’ corrected final drafts. A number of the students (4 people) expressed dissatisfaction for not receiving feedback on those drafts stressing that they expected to check the extent to which their final drafts had improved and how they were evaluated by their instructor. Mani for instance echoed this:

_It was good if you would return our final drafts and let us understand what happened to them after three times drafting and revision. We are interested to find out to what extent our papers have improved._

Similarly, Mina asked:

_Why didn’t you return our third drafts to let us check the weaknesses and strengths of our papers at final stage?_
Such comments not only show how motivated the participants were during the course to engage in the composition tasks, but also reveal their enthusiasm to know if they have been able to improve their papers at satisfactory level after three times redrafting. One of the advantages of the process oriented instruction is that it does not treat the texts as finished products and students can receive feedback during their composition process and become aware of the inaccuracies and ambiguities in their essays. Hence, they are encouraged to come up with ideas, explore ways of expressing them, and examine and refine their writing in a supportive and co-operative environment.

8.11.2 Suggestions (practice more genres & models)

One of the students expressed her interest in learning and drafting more than two types of genres during the course. She asserted openly that instead of wasting time writing three drafts for each of these two essay genres – especially the second draft which was almost a copy of the first one – she preferred she had developed some other types of essays. Mina voiced her suggestion by asking:

*Why did we write three drafts for each essay prompt? Why did we develop a third draft in response to your comments? If we had developed two drafts instead of three, we could have saved some space and would have been able to practice at least one more type of easy.*

As it was discussed in Section 8.4.2, in contexts where learners are heavily dependent on their tutors and have no prior experience of multiple drafting, the students had better be prepared and convinced about the advantages of process oriented approach and collaborative tasks before being involved in such activities.

Besides, in spite of the fact that the instructor provided the students several model essays for each of the essay genres both during the introductory sessions in which each of the essays were introduced, discussed, and analysed; and in the peer review instruction sessions in which appropriate ways of reviewing and offering comments were demonstrated, still some of the students felt they needed more sample introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs of each essay types. For example, Tina pointed out that:

*I think as a complement to the in-class training, we had better ask groups of students to write sample introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs during*
each of the writing cycles. Then, these samples could be read aloud to give the whole class an idea of how such paragraphs of these two essay genres look like.

In fact, as it was stated earlier (See for example Section 8.8.2), becoming competent in English writing skills, requires practice and patience. Hence, expressing such insecure feelings about English essay convention knowledge is normal considering the fact that these L2 novice learners were introduced to several concepts within a short period.

8.11.3 Favourable remarks (attractive, novel, and organised course)

The majority of the students (6 people) found the method novel, attractive, and believed the class atmosphere was friendly and stress-free. As Mina pointed out:

*Generally speaking, the students were very cooperative during the course and they enjoyed the class atmosphere.*

A similar sentiment was expressed by Fariba as she said:

*The course was attractive. We attended the class with great interest.*

In addition, four students believed that everything went well during the course. From the very beginning the students had the course time plan and knew clearly the focus of each session including the training they would be exposed to, the in-class activities they were expected to perform, and the assignments they were required to do as homework. A few even confessed that they did not believe the instructor would be able to perform all the steps he had claimed the class would go through at the onset of the semester. In fact, they thought the timetable provided by the instructor in the induction day was idealistic and not feasible. However, at the end of the course they realised the vital role of organisation on the success of the course despite many constraints on its way. Mani, for example, acknowledged that:

*Teaching and practicing two types of essays in spite of the limitations we faced including the number of students in class and time constraint was a success.*

Compared to mechanical and boring product based writing classrooms where writing tasks lack stimulation and the atmosphere is normally monotonous, the participants found the syllabus, activities, exercises, and writing approach adopted during this course appealing. More precisely, the interactive syllabus and the well planned course helped the learners build their trust in their instructor, play a dynamic role in class activities, engage in them
with great interest, and cooperate in performing writing and revision tasks in order to improve their English writing skill.

8.12 Conclusion

In general, the findings of three rounds of interviewing the participants indicate that they found the collaborative tasks novel and attractive, which could help them improve their writing skill. For instance, it was admitted that peer review activity was helpful as it provided the learners an opportunity to generate, express, and share ideas; to improve their self-evaluation skill; and to receive comments from sources other than their instructors. They also favoured collaborative revision as a supportive task, which complemented peer evaluation and facilitated pooling of ideas and knowledge. Hence, it could be inferred that by engaging in collaborative tasks and through interaction and collaboration the learners were able to scaffold each other and build on their knowledge and co-construct higher quality texts. In other words, peer collaboration fostered learning since during discussions the partners made use of each other’s strengths to address their uncertainties and ambiguities. Further, multiple drafting was privileged as this method stressed the recursive nature of writing, the significance of revision in writing process, and could help learners realise the problematic areas of their texts and try to refine them in their subsequent drafts.

On the other hand, some students expressed concerns about the efficiency of collaborative tasks particularly peer reviewing. They argued that due to their limited linguistic knowledge, they were unable to identify errors and provide valid feedback during peer evaluation sessions. Besides, they did not trust the feedback provided by their peers and incorporated them selectively since they thought the suggestions were sometimes general and vague or invalid and misleading. Similarly, a number of participants reported some problems addressing the comments provided by their instructor during collaborative revision sessions attributing it to their low English language proficiency. Moreover, some of the respondents were doubtful about the usefulness of multiple drafting at the end of the course which can reflect their dissatisfaction with the comments they received from their classmates during peer evaluation activities and their unfamiliarity with the advantages of process writing pedagogy.

Further, expressing positive views about the instructor’s responses and describing them as “comprehensive, relevant, and accurate” as opposed to peers’ comments, which were
referred to as “unspecific and vague”, implies the advantage of collaborative revision activity over peer review task. Such favourable remarks not only reflect L2 learners’ scepticism about the value of peer feedback, but also indicate the unpreparedness of the participants to engage in independent activities. Indeed, all of them came from a teacher-centred educational system where students are overly dependent on their teachers and had no prior experience of participating in student-fronted activities.

In addition, even though the majority of the students valued feedback that covered both local and global aspects of their texts, some of them claimed that their classmates’ feedback merely concentrated on form rather than content. Surface level features over emphasis may imply that despite the learners’ attitudes about the equal priority of both micro and macro structure issues, they paid more attention to accuracy of their texts at the expense of fluency. It can also be attributed to a number of other issues including the nature of the errors, L2 learners’ limited knowledge base, and their restricted perception of composition that treats writing and revision as application and mastery of specific grammatical rules and prescribed forms rather than opportunity for the discovery and expression of ideas.

Finally, it is safe to claim that proper planning, purposeful training, and extensive practice can alleviate most of the problems associated with implementing collaborative tasks in L2 composition classrooms. First, the instructors should communicate their instructional policy from the onset of the course and encourage their students to engage in new composition approach and feedback procedures. Second, learners need to be coached to give clear, specific suggestions and comments. Providing precise and valid feedback earns students’ trust and increases the likelihood of acting on their classmates’ comments. Third, particular consideration and instruction is needed to shift L2 learners’ focus from form to content. L2 learners should be reminded of the significance of clear and logical presentation of ideas. That is, writing classrooms should emphasise that writing is a social practice and special attention should be paid to meaningful writing for a real purpose and audience. Ultimately, a friendly and stress-free atmosphere among peer review members should be established so that students respect and trust each other and welcome their peers’ views. In short, carefully planned peer response sessions and purposeful peer evaluation activities together with adequately prepared students can facilitate learners’ active involvement in the tasks and consequently produce promising results.
9.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research findings of the study outlined in Chapters 5 to 8 will be examined in the light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 3 as well as the research questions. The discussion will be organised around five main themes which emerged as a result of qualitative and quantitative data analyses. That is, in the first part of the chapter I will reflect on issues of trust/distrust in feedback, over emphasis on local aspects of writing, mutual scaffolding and ZPD, feedback efficiency, and feedback and genre. However, before moving to the themes, some general findings regarding each of the four research questions proposed at the outset of the research and presented in earlier chapters will be outlined and briefly elaborated. On this basis, I will then highlight a number of other issues including my theoretical contribution to the current knowledge of the field as well as my methodological contributions to the research such as explaining the dilemmas and challenges I experienced performing the study, and the strengths and weaknesses I noticed applying the instruments.

As stated earlier, I conducted this qualitative case study research with four main objectives in mind. First, I aimed to explore the dyadic interaction mechanisms of EFL essay writing students engaged in peer review and collaborative revision tasks with a special focus on scaffolding behaviours of the participants. Revision behaviours of the participants and the extent to which they applied the feedback they had received into their revised drafts were the second purpose of performing this research. I also sought to investigate the efficiency of incorporating these tasks into an ESL essay writing course in terms of participants’ writing performance. Finally, I was keen to elicit participants’ reflections and feelings about the activities they performed. To serve these ends I employed four data sets; audio-recordings, observations, written drafts, and interviews and the following results were obtained.

Broadly speaking, participants showed a high level of engagement in the activities and remained on task evaluating and discussing each other’s papers during most of their allocated time in both peer review and collaborative revision sessions. However, the engagement level and the length of negotiations varied across the two tasks and the
interactional strategies used by the students were somehow different in terms of frequency and type. Besides, the collaborative relationship established by members of the dyads benefited both the writers and reviewers and led to knowledge co-construction as a joint activity; that is, peers reciprocally supported each other and not only offered but also received assistance that could help them revise their papers and develop improved quality texts. Yet, collaboration was mainly limited to microstructure features and addressing linguistic errors pre-dominated the discussions. Further, pair structure had some effects on interaction dynamics. For instance in pairs composed of mixed genders, partners showed a concern for not hurting each other’s feelings by their comments and their tones were formal and the conversations were short. In pairs of the same gender, on the other hand, the conversations were longer, peers challenged each other more frequently, the tone of the participants was informal and much friendlier, and they seemed keen to collaborate more naturally. It was also observed that in most of the dyads, students considered peer review to be a chance to play the role of teacher rather than the role of a real audience. Finally, participants’ lack of experience and poor level of writing skill raised some concerns about the efficiency of the two tasks particularly peer evaluation.

In addition, participants tended to focus more on local feedback in their revision behaviours than global ones and valued their instructor’s comments more than that of their peers. As a result, the progress they made was higher at surface level features compared to other aspects of writing and greater positive changes were observed in third drafts which were jointly developed based on the instructor’s comments than second drafts which were composed individually considering peers’ feedback. On the other hand, better overall scores gained in process essays compared to argumentative essays and greater positive changes over argumentation drafts than process drafts indicates some variations across these two distinct genres and highlights the importance of experience and training in performing peer review and collaborative revision activities.

Lastly, students expressed positive attitudes towards the activities calling them novel and interesting. More precisely, they believed that the collaborative tasks encouraged them to formulate and pool their ideas and knowledge, to make decisions in a cooperative manner, to learn from each other and extend mutual support, to improve the quality of their papers and their essay writing and revising skills by sharing the expertise of each other, to raise their awareness of writing rules and conventions and repair their ineffective writing
strategies, and to develop their critical reading and self-monitoring skills by reading other students’ drafts critically and reflecting on their own problems and seeking out solutions for themselves. They also stressed that the techniques helped them not only increase their motivation by reducing their writing anxiety, but also gain confidence although they felt they still needed further practice. On the other hand, they articulated some reservations regarding the efficiency of the activities especially peer reviewing. For instance, they found their poor writing skill a hindrance in providing valid feedback. They doubted their peers’ feedback and incorporated them selectively. They complained about lack of clarity and specificity in their peers’ comments. They also asserted that due to the novelty of the activities, they needed more time to review and discuss each other’s papers, but they felt rushed, as enough time was not allotted for performing the activities.

In general, the participants thought that they received explicit and adequate training on how to write an essay and to provide feedback on a peer written paper. However, they believed they needed further training and preparation in order to internalise an argumentative essay. Regarding using indirect coded feedback to address errors, the participants found them user friendly except for the codes that covered some sub-categories. They maintained that doing some more exercises could familiarise them more with the coding system, decrease their confusion, and as a result alleviate their feedback practices. In terms of integration of process writing pedagogy in class and requiring students to develop several drafts of the same essay, participants expressed contradictory views over time. At the earlier stage, they welcomed it and pointed to its usefulness as it could foster developing higher quality essays; however, at the end of the second writing cycle some of the participants criticised the method and contended that instead of producing three drafts of one genre, they preferred composing several one-off essays of various genres. They argued that developing several drafts of the same prompt made them bored especially when they noticed no major difference between original and second drafts. This view implicitly indicates students’ discontent about the feedback they received from their peers and shows that they were not coached enough about the philosophy and purpose of the new approach and feedback strategies.
9.2 Trust/ Distrust in Feedback

As the different data sets indicate, students doubted the quality of the feedback they received from their peers. Extensive analysis of audio-recoded data, for example, identified some interactional strategies such as “persistence, certainty check, knowledge check, lack of respect for the comment, express certainty, and reject advice” which can be referred to as signs of doubt and scepticism in partner’s advice. The lower uptake rate of feedback provided by the peers in the second drafts compared to that of the instructor’s in final drafts which was noticed by analysing the students’ written texts also supports this behaviour. To these two findings can be added the participants’ reflections where, during three interview sessions, accounts like peers’ feedback were subjective, biased, vague, general, misleading and invalid were commonly articulated by the respondents. They also stressed that they were selective and critical in adopting their partners’ suggestions.

This finding confirms the results of some of the studies which have already investigated L2 peer evaluation and revision. Mendonca and Johnson (1994), for example, found that students used peer comments only selectively and adopted about half of their peers’ advice into their subsequent drafts. This indicated that L2 writers critically considered the feedback they received from their partners and ultimately decided what to accept based on the validity of each comment. Connor and Asenavage (1994) reported even more disappointing results. Their research revealed that only a small number of students’ revisions could be directly linked to peer feedback. Zhang (1995), Nelson and Carson (1998), and Tsui and Ng (2000) also found that peers’ comments induced less substantial revisions than teachers’ comments and L2 students preferred their teachers’ feedback rather than their peers believing that teachers’ comments guaranteed quality whereas their peers might not be knowledgeable enough to provide valid feedback. However, it contradicts the results obtained by Villamil and de Guerrero (1998) as they observed the majority of the peers’ suggestions discussed during peer revision sessions were used by the student writers into their later drafts. Likewise, Kamimura’s study (2006) demonstrated that her L2 students made use of their peers’ feedback into their subsequent drafts extensively indicating the inconsistency of her findings with the claims regarding the incompatibility of peer review activity to collectivist cultures.

It should be noted that while most of the above-mentioned studies focused on ESL/international students in the United States, only two were performed in EFL context.
For instance, Mendonca and Johnson’s (1994) participants included twelve international graduate students at a U.S. university. Connor and Asenavage (1994) investigated eight international undergraduate participants at a large, urban Midwestern University in U.S. Zhang (1995) surveyed eighty-one tertiary level ESL students with various levels of English language proficiency, 86% of whom were from Asia. Nelson and Carson’s (1998) study focused on eleven advanced ESL students (including five key participants; three Chinese and two Spanish students) at a large metropolitan university in the U.S. Villamil and de Guerrero (1998) investigated fourteen Spanish speaking ESL college students at a large private university in Puerto Rico. On the other hand, Tsui and Ng’s (2000) investigation involved twenty-seven Chinese pre-university L2 writers in Hong Kong and Kamimura’s research (2006) concentrated on two groups of Japanese EFL university students with different levels of English language proficiency. L2 students’ scepticism about the accuracy and specificity of peer comments can be considered from different perspectives including socio-political and socio-cultural framework, educational and pedagogical structure, as well as students’ English proficiency level and personal characteristics.

9.2.1 Socio-political and socio-cultural framework

Peer evaluation generally originates from liberal countries wherein it is delicately practised by the students due to its compatibility with their social and cultural norms; however, its application without any amendments to centralised countries with different socio-political backgrounds is not a proper assumption and may create problems. Traditionally, in such contexts individual work is more valued and team work is unsuccessful most of the time and leads to frustration because the group members are not aware of the mechanisms of collaborative work and of their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, major achievements are most of the time the result of individual attempts rather than collaboration. In this setting, it is not surprising to observe that students have difficulty accepting their peers’ responses to their writing and even make the peer evaluation activity counter-productive. Consequently, the expected task objectives may not be met.

In terms of cultural norms and contextual framework it can be claimed that as this cohort of participants come from a cultural background that reflects a certain attitude towards group work, they may have different expectations concerning group mechanics. They even do not know how to work productively with their peers and are less likely to value their partners’
views than their instructors’ comments. Within this tradition, a particular status is ascribed to teachers and they are seen as the only sources of authority that have the expertise and the right to critique the students’ performance. Hence, students highly value and appreciate teacher’s feedback and incorporate their suggestions unreflectively and rely passively on their teachers’ comments. More precisely, they simply do what pleases their instructors instead of truly considering their own texts and asking themselves how they can express their meaning in a clear and logical way. However, the case is different in terms of peer feedback. Indeed, as peer responses are not normally considered as sensible enough to guarantee quality, students feel reluctant to trust the evaluations made, challenge them, and ultimately ignore them when revising their subsequent drafts.

There has been a great deal of discussion about the relationship between culture and peer evaluation in the literature. As several studies have explored, cultural issues may generate some concerns regarding the efficiency of peer evaluation incorporation in L2 composition classes. For instance, Allaei and Connor (1990) reported that ESL writers suspected the validity of their peer evaluators’ advice, but they attributed some of this scepticism to cultural differences. They suggested that students from diverse language backgrounds might impose differing rhetorical expectations on a classmate’s text. They also argued that the differing communication styles of students from different cultures might complicate group work considerably. Besides, reporting a case study research which involved four ESL intermediate students (from Chile, Peru, Taiwan, and Colombia) at a large metropolitan university in the United States, Nelson and Murphy (1992, 1993) stated that students from different cultures had different expectations about such elements as the roles of group members and the mechanics of the group. The results of their investigations showed that L2 students altered their drafts according to the suggestions made by their peers but the degree of incorporation greatly depended on the cooperative atmosphere established among the group members. That is, when student writers interacted in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to incorporate their peers’ comments into their revisions but when they interacted in a defensive manner, they were less likely to pay attention to their peers’ advice.

Drawing on the findings of research on two different groups of international undergraduate students with various sociocultural backgrounds in two U.S. universities, Connor and Asenavage (1994) as well as Nelson and Carson (1998) argued that students from collectivist cultures often tried to avoid tension and disagreement and to maintain group
harmony. They also refrained from providing their peers with constructive feedback in order not to jeopardise group cohesion.

9.2.2 Educational and pedagogical structure

The educational system can also explain this reluctance to trust peers’ advice. Peer review is an important part of a shift from whole-class, teacher-dominant instructional model towards more participatory forms of pedagogy in educational settings. In classrooms where the students are educated in the traditional teacher-centred environment, only the teacher is entitled to respond to student writing. Peers’ views are not much valued and the interactions are mainly made between whole class and the teacher. This teacher dominant approach does not just include writing courses but encompasses a great majority of educational settings and can be observed from the very beginning one enters the classrooms. A typical class in this context normally contains a set of chairs and desks that all face the instructor’s seat and the board. This classroom layout leaves no space for collaboration and active participation. As a result, the students are implicitly trained to interact with the teacher as a figure of authority and class interactions are merely limited to a series of questions and answers which are exchanged between students and teachers with little attention being paid to team work as there is no direct interaction within the student groups. So, is in writing courses. More precisely, in composition classes, the students develop a piece of writing individually which is later commented on by the instructor and they then revise it on their own. In such an atmosphere and based on their previous education and learning experiences, students are not familiar with collaboration. Instead, they are more accustomed to solitary revision preferring to work individually than in collaboration. As a result, they are overly dependent on their teacher as the one who possesses the knowledge and can support them during the writing process. Hence, shifting this tendency requires a lot of time and energy from the teacher’s side as the students should be logically convinced and mentally prepared to understand the beneficial aspects of peer reviewing and to trust the validity of their classmates’ comments as a useful tool that can help them improve their writing performance. In fact, training plays a very influential role in reducing the feeling of distrust among peers. Likewise, Connor and Asenavage (1994) maintained that L2 students’ reluctance to incorporate peers’ suggestions into their revisions was due to lack of experience in peer review and called for providing such students with coaching in peer evaluation. Earlier, Stanley’s investigation (1992) had revealed the value of training as her
findings indicated that extensive peer evaluation training not only helped L2 learners generate suggestions that were more specific and tactful, but also prompted more revisions. Similarly, McGroarty and Zhu (1997) concluded that systematic training improved students’ peer revision skills and created more positive reactions to peer evaluation. A finding which was later endorsed by Hu (2005) as he argued that extensive and carefully designed training accompanied by adequate teacher support not only alleviated feeling of distrust in L2 learners, but also developed positive opinions towards peer evaluation. Finally, Min (2006) reported that carefully designed peer review instruction not only improved the quality of L2 students’ suggestions but also increased peer feedback incorporation rate.

A well-designed instruction is characterised by explaining the rationale behind incorporating peer evaluation in class, illustrating its importance in academic and occupational communities, engaging students in some preparatory activities which construct a collaborative and supportive atmosphere among students, highlighting the advantages of peer reviewing which include developing student writers’ audience awareness, encouraging their autonomy and self-confidence, reinforcing their critical thinking skills, and finally briefing them about the procedures they would go through as well as the way they should engage in them. All these can replace students’ feeling of uneasiness and distrust by respect, positive feelings, and mutual trust. As a result, peer reviewing functions successfully as a productive, valuable, and pleasant experience for EFL students (Amores, 1997).

In fact, as the instructor/researcher of L2 essay writing course, I tried to prepare the participants to actively participate in peer evaluation activities; however, I believe that the feedback techniques I introduced to the students and my explanations regarding the benefits of peer review activity have been insufficient and probably not well executed mostly because of time constraint and class size as the students failed to develop a proper understanding of the peer review process and its potential benefits. On the other hand, considering the fact that this group of students were experiencing their first exposure to peer collaboration activities and lacked prior experience with these specific pedagogical techniques, it does not seem reasonable to merely blame myself for my unsuccessful attempts in establishing a cooperative and constructive atmosphere for implementing the tasks especially peer review. Indeed, trustful relationship is created over time and a writing
class of more than thirty students with just one and half contact hours per week over a 15-week semester seems really short to serve this purpose. Further, as mentioned earlier, a number of other factors also contributed to the failure in establishing a proper and fruitful relationship among participants.

9.2.3 Students’ English proficiency level and personal characteristics

According to the sample papers students produced at the beginning of the course and the students’ own accounts, the participants’ mastery of English language ranged from lower to upper intermediate level with most of them having restricted knowledge of the target language especially writing skill. In fact, all participants were non-native speakers of English and still in the process of developing language skills in their L2 and for whom the language of written and oral communication in the classroom was simultaneously the language they were trying to learn. Hence, it could be inferred that they were not confident enough of their peers’ capabilities to provide good quality comments and doubted their responses due to their lack of English language ability, writing skill and experience. In other words, they may have felt that feedback received from a classmate whose English level was more or less the same as theirs was a poor alternative to their teacher’s comments. On the other hand, they showed more confidence in their teacher’s suggestions as they probably believed him to be more experienced and qualified enough to judge or comment on their written work. Paulus (1999) proposed a similar view as she stressed that L2 students from cultures that perceive the teacher as the only source of authority may consider their fellow students not knowledgeable enough to make sensible comments and ultimately not incorporate the comments into their writing when revising. Further, Tsui and Ng’s (2000) study indicated L2 students’ more positive attitudes towards teacher advice than that of their fellow students attributing this behaviour to participants’ belief in their teacher’s capability in delivering more specific, better quality, and concrete advice. Yang and his colleagues (2006) also reported a research where students incorporated teacher comments into their revisions more frequently compared to peer comments. Indeed, the participants acknowledged that teacher suggestions were professional, valid, and trustworthy compared to peer feedback which was typically referred to as inaccurate. Likewise, Gielen, et al. (2010) argued that due to their limited knowledge of criteria for good writing, peer suggestions might be inaccurate, incomplete or even fully incorrect and confusing. As a result, peer reviewers are not commonly regarded as a “knowledge
authority” by their peers leading to unwillingness in accepting a peer’s judgement or advice. On the other hand, as Nelson and Schunn (2008) observed, a great majority of feedback delivered by students was accurate and students acted on comments if they understood them. Earlier, a similar finding was reported by Caulk (1994) who claimed that most of peer advice (89%) was valuable and students’ comments were specific and geared towards a particular problem.

In addition, this mistrust could deepen as the students notice the obvious errors their peers have made in their own papers while reviewing them. Vague, general, and irrelevant advice as well as incorporation of inappropriate peer advice into the text that is unfavourably commented on by the instructor in the subsequent drafts, can also justify this behaviour. Next, the fact that novice writers possess limited knowledge of criteria for good writing and have problems detecting errors and providing consistent quality feedback is another issue which needs attention. In fact, this can lessen the productivity of peer review activity as student writers may suspect the validity of their peer evaluators’ advice when they see some of the errors marked by their instructor were left unnoticed by their partners. Besides, due to their limited English proficiency, pairs are usually unable to justify their comments and fail to convince their partners about the accuracy of the solutions offered. Incompetence can also cause inconsistency and frequent change of advice by the reviewer which in turn spoils trust between the peers. Finally, the feeling that peer’s feedback is biased and unfair automatically reduces the efficiency of peer evaluation activity. Indeed, if the participants misunderstand the underpinning rationale for performing the activity which is supporting each other and making use of each other’s strengths and knowledge to improve the quality of their texts in a friendly atmosphere, they consider it as a competition which requires them to assess how well their peers have developed their writing assignments. Hence, they try to find more flaws in each other’s papers ignoring the main purpose of the activity. Some researchers including Nelson and Murphy (1992, 1993), Mendonca and Johnson (1994), and Tsui and Ng (2000) have also found that students have problems detecting errors and providing quality feedback, sometimes resorting to formulaic comments on each other’s writing, or they may give inappropriate, destructive, and tactless feedback (Amores 1997). Indeed, they have attributed such practical problems to L2 students’ lack of knowledge and skills needed for peer review. Nevertheless, as Rollinson (2005) stresses, setting up proper dyads/groups and establishing effective procedures including training the
students especially on how to deliver polite, non-judgemental feedback can facilitate most of these problems.

In our attempt to explain distrustful relationships among L2 learners, we should also pay attention to individual students’ personal characteristics, attitudes, learning styles, expectations, and preferences which make them either more or less receptive of the suggestions offered by their peers. Some students truly enjoy the opportunity to interact with others about their writings, whereas many learners dislike working collaboratively and find it frustrating or even stressful due to their fear of being ridiculed by their fellow students for the mistakes they have made. Nevertheless, those who appreciate collaboration often prefer constructive feedback. That is, peer collaboration is useful when partners have equal opportunity to give and receive criticism, and articulate ideas about positive and negative aspects of their writings freely. Creating such an atmosphere can not only facilitate revision, but also improve the quality of L2 writers’ compositions. On the other hand, receiving rubber-stamp, abstract comments or even worse over critical and untactful comments especially by their peers can shape an unpleasant relationship between them and negatively influences their perspectives towards peer work. As de Guerrero and Villamil (1994), Amores (1997), and Liu and Sadler (2003) have also observed, the partners may react negatively or become defensive and less receptive of their peer’s suggestions in such instances. Amores, however, proposed a number of recommendations which she assumed could make peer evaluation activity a more productive and positive experience for EFL writers. These strategies included: (a) evaluation to be made by members of other pairs/groups, (b) creation of a non-threatening and friendly environment, (c) preparation of students and explanation of the purpose of the task, (d) peer editing modelling, (e) and careful formation of pairs.

The above explanations can justify L2 students’ feeling of distrust and reservation about their partners’ expertise to comment on their writings on the one hand, and their favourable attitude towards teacher feedback as a “knowledge authority” who has the right and the ability to provide concrete and useful suggestions for revision on the other.
9.3 Over Emphasis on Local Aspects of Writing

The findings also suggest that students were overly concerned with detecting and addressing surface level errors during peer review and collaborative revision activities and showed less interest in dealing with other aspects of their papers such as content and organisation. Analyses of student interactions, for instance, demonstrate that students merely served as proof readers for each other discussing more micro level issues such as grammar and mechanics rather than addressing questions of meaning and content in their interactions during both tasks and across both genres. That is, of 1253 negotiation episodes identified during student dyads’ interactions in two writing cycles, about 80% focused on micro structure level. Besides, examination of the participants’ written texts shows that they incorporated local and global feedback in their revisions to varying degrees. Indeed, they incorporated local feedback into their subsequent drafts more than that of global ones. Subsequently, greater positive changes in form rather than meaning were noticed in students’ final drafts. However, participants’ perceptions and preferences contradicted what they actually did (Chapter 8, Section 8.7). More precisely, in the interview sessions half of the students claimed that they mainly made use of their peers’ comments which focused on global issues. Moreover, the majority of them preferred comprehensive feedback which encompassed both local and global aspects of their texts stressing that a good quality essay should not only be meaningful but also error free. A possible reason for such inconsistency between participants’ perceptions/preferences and their revision behaviour is that since macro structural problems of the texts are complex and involve bigger chunks of change, the students spent more time treating and fixing them. Hence, they simply felt they had focused more on global level feedback. A further reason appears to relate to the participants’ views about comments on meaning level issues. Some of the participants believed that their partners were more helpful to comment on the potential ambiguities of their papers. Hence, they valued the suggestions that enabled them to express their intended message clearly as well as to address the misunderstandings and information gaps. Thus, they thought they had paid more attention to the advice on this aspect of their papers.

A number of studies performed in L2 contexts have also shown that when students are asked to evaluate a paper, they often tend to focus on writing as a product rather than as a process and mainly try to edit a text. This indicates that L2 students are often preoccupied with surface level concerns of the text in their evaluations and pay more attention to errors
at sentence and word level but fail to address macro textual problems such as issues of content and organisation (Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Nelson & Murphy, 1992, 1993; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Nelson & Carson, 1998; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1998). Besides, as Liu and Sadler (2003) argue, even when they deal with non-linguistic features of a paper concerning content, organisation and idea development, they tend to provide general, vague, rubber stamp advice. However, Hedgcock and Lefkowitz’s (1992) FL study yielded a different result; L2 writers who received teacher feedback made more revisions in the areas of language and mechanics, whereas those who engaged in peer revision made more content and organisational changes. Likewise, Connor and Asenavage (1994) found that even though students incorporated very small number of their peers’ suggestions into their papers, the majority of the peer-influenced changes were macro structure changes. A finding which was corroborated by Paulus (1999) who contended that peer and teacher feedback accounted for more meaning-level revisions than those resulting from other sources and concluded that students used their classmates’ advice to make meaning-level changes to their writing. Yang and his colleagues (2006) also reported a similar finding as they discovered that peer comments contributed to more meaning level changes than that of teacher’s. Finally, more recent studies performed by Kamimura (2006) and Suzuki (2008) also revealed that peer comments mainly focused on macro features of written texts. Indeed, as a number of researchers (Rothschild & Klingenberg, 1990; Keh, 1990; McGroarty & Zhu, 1997; Berg, 1999; Min, 2005) have argued, extensive and carefully designed training could facilitate content and organisation feedback, prompt more meaning level changes, and engage the participants more actively in the peer evaluation task.

Of the six empirical studies mentioned above which reported L2 students’ over emphasis on form during peer evaluation activities, four were carried out at American universities involving international students. More precisely, Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger (1992) investigated sixty advanced ESL undergraduate composition students with different educational backgrounds from the University of Arizona. Nelson and Murphy (1992, 1993) conducted a case study research involving four ESL intermediate students at a large metropolitan university in the United States. Nelson and Carson’s (1998) research included eleven advanced ESL students (including five key participants; three Chinese and two Spanish students) at a large metropolitan university in the U.S. Liu and Sadler (2003) focused on two heterogeneous groups each consisting four ESL students at a large south-
western university in the United States. Of the two remaining investigations, Villamil and de Guerrero’s (1998) study involved researching fourteen Spanish speaking ESL college students at a large private university in Puerto Rico and Lockhart and Ng’s (1995) two-stage study focused on twenty-seven ESL dyads at City University in Hong Kong. On the other hand, the studies which reported L2 students’ more attention to meaning-level issues were carried out in diverse contexts. For example, Hedgcock and Lefkowitz’s (1992) research involved thirty basic French writing learners at Michigan University in the United States. Connor and Asenavage (1994) investigated eight ESL undergraduate students at a large, urban Midwestern University in U.S. Finally, Paulus (1999) focused on eleven undergraduate international students enrolled in a pre-freshman composition writing course at a public American university. Yet, Yang and his colleagues (2006) researched EFL composition students at a university in China. Kamimura (2006) studied two groups of Japanese EFL university students with different levels of English language proficiency and Suzuki (2008) investigated a group of twenty-four Japanese university students. The over emphasis on local issues can be attributed to the Frequency and revision requirements of error categories, the approach towards writing, and students’ limited knowledge base. Each of these issues will be discussed in the following sections.

9.3.1 Frequency and revision requirements of error categories

As Ferris (2003) argues, the fact that errors that correspond with microstructure issues of a text are always more common and can happen at word and even smaller levels, may explain the higher frequency of feedback on form by itself. Since global problems mainly occur at broader levels of the text like sentences and paragraphs or even the whole paper, this automatically decreases the likelihood of providing global feedback in a short piece of writing. Thus, simply quantifying the frequency of each category of revision made by students may not capture the complexity of revision behaviours. For instance, a student essay of less than 500 words in length may require only a few text-based macrostructure changes, while multiple surface formal changes in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics may be necessary within a text of the same length. Given this argument, it is predictable to detect more surface changes than text-based ones in students’ revisions. Hence, this difference in the quantities of revision types should not be automatically interpreted as students’ inability to address deeper concerns or failure of peer response/review training (Min, 2006).
In addition, macrostructure problems require major changes and more complex repairs in order to be addressed properly. In other words, dealing with global level issues involves adding, deleting, rearranging, and otherwise changing part or all of essay content. On the other hand, local issues just require editing, proofreading and tidying up (Montgomery & Baker, 2007; Paulus, 1999; Zhu, 2001). As Faigley and Witte (1981) and Sommers (1980) argue, given that making local surface corrections is easier than rearranging chunks or even one’s entire text, it could be argued that students tend to act on surface errors of grammar and mechanics because they find them easier to address and ignore the more substantive, complex, and sometimes more important macro textual issues especially when they face time constraint. In fact, the analysis of audio-recorded data (Chapter, Section 5.2) supported this tendency. As the participants had a limited time to address both types of concerns in their papers, they spent most of their time discussing language and mechanics issues and they did not have enough time to deal with the problems associated with broader issues of meaning. Hence, they ignored discussing and addressing text-based problems, which required spending more time, compared with treating and processing surface level errors. To address this problem, some researchers including Sommers (1982) and Zamel (1985) have proposed that providing feedback on local errors should follow comments on global aspects of compositions since premature emphasis on surface level errors may distract students from more significant features of their texts. More precisely, as Zamel (1983, 1985) asserts, delaying the focus on linguistic mistakes such as grammar, word choice, or mechanics draws L2 students’ attention to the fact that revision is beyond the limited act of editing or proofreading and issues like meaning, content and organisation are of primary value. However, since content determines form and faulty form can obscure meaning for a reader (Ferris, 2003), a balance concentration on both issues seems to be the most sensible solution (Ferris, et al., 1997).

9.3.2 Writing approach

The approach to writing can also influence L2 students’ perception of writing task function. The fact that this group of participants came from a context in which product was a dominant writing pedagogy meant that they were trained in an environment where the accuracy of surface-level features was emphasised over the development of meaningful content (Baroudy, 2008; Birjandi & Malmir, 2009). More precisely, to this cohort of L2 learners writing entailed linguistic accuracy. That is, their exposure to writing courses
inspired by this approach preoccupied them and they were constantly concerned about formal accuracy and paid particular attention to accurate application of grammatical rules, vocabulary, and mechanics in order to improve their writing skill. Consequently, as writing assignments aimed to test the mastery of specific grammatical rules and the proficiency of surface level features of writing, their revisions were limited and mostly focused on editing linguistic mistakes rather than addressing content problems. Moreover, their previous instructors’ response habits may have left a strong influence on the views of this group of students about the priority of formal accuracy over the transmission of meaning. In other words, teachers who see themselves as language teachers rather than writing teachers view writing as an exercise in formal accuracy and correctness of surface-level features of writing and provide a substantial amount of local feedback and relatively little global feedback. As a result, they unconsciously train students to focus primarily on mechanical problems implying that the product, not the process, is more important in writing (Sommers, 1982; Zamel, 1985).

As stated earlier, contrary to the common tendencies in the context, a process approach to writing was adopted in this L2 essay writing course. However, regardless of the instructors’ equal emphasis on local and global concerns as well as treating writing as a process, students simply followed their habitual tendency to focus on form, as learned throughout much of their previous language instruction. More precisely, they resisted paying equal attention to surface level and text-based level issues of their written texts. On the other hand, reflecting on my role as a teacher, I should admit that at least part of this over emphasis on microstructure features is attributed to me. In fact, I believe as a researcher I was able to think globally (i.e., viewing writing as a process rather than product and prioritizing content over form) but as a writing instructor I failed to take adequate local action (i.e., preparing students for paradigm shift). In fact, a shift in approach requires mental preparation and training which helps draw students’ attention away from a restricted notion of writing that focuses on mechanical concerns of their texts and instead reinforces concentration on more important issues such as content and organisation. Ferris (2003), Goldstein (2004), and Lee (2008) also stress the importance of discussing commentary philosophy, rationale behind feedback practices, and the way comments should be interpreted and enacted with the students.
This focus on form rather than content and the practice of searching for surface errors, identifying them, and calling attention to them can also be interpreted in terms of L2 students’ expectations and preferences and demonstrates their strong concern to follow the prescribed forms (Ferris, 2003; Leki, 1991; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992). These students might have had the perception that as EFL students at university level, they were expected to develop error free papers and tended to believe that correct form was more important than the effective communication of meaning. Therefore, they might have thought that in order to express their intended meaning to their audience and meet their readers’ needs, they first needed to address the linguistic inaccuracies of their texts. Consequently, as their ultimate goal was drafting error-free papers, they emphasized accuracy at the expense of fluency ignoring other aspects that might affect the quality of their papers.

9.3.3 Students’ limited knowledge base

Considering the fact that these L2 writers were novices performing novel and cognitively complex tasks of learning to write on the one hand and revising on the other, one could speculate that this dual agenda might have caused them “cognitive overload” (Van Steendam, et al., 2010). In fact, they face great difficulty analysing the texts written by their peers (Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996) especially when they deal with textual issues. Such students lack the necessary and sufficient knowledge of the target language to focus simultaneously on too many factors, concerns, or problems during revision. Hence, they fail to provide useful feedback on deep and more cognitively demanding issues of writing which subsequently negatively affects the frequency of comments offered on areas such as content and organisation.

Besides, peers may not be able to detect global textual problems, may not have the knowledge to propose quality feedback, or even may lack confidence to suggest major changes (see for example Chapter 8, Sections 8.2.1 and 8.3.2). Therefore, as a number of researchers (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Lockhart & Ng, 1993; Tsui & Ng, 2000) also stress, they mainly tend to provide unhelpful, general, and vague comments to address higher-order concerns of each other’s papers. Indeed, L2 students’ lack of rhetorical experience limits their feedback focus and makes them concentrate heavily on sentence level problems rather than macro textual issues (Leki, 1990, cited in Hyland, 2003a, p. 198).
They may also confuse revision with edition, which are two distinct activities with rather different goals and strategies. Therefore, they restrict revision to a cosmetic and superficial activity, which mainly involves proofreading and focus on mechanical mistakes like vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and dictation (Sommers, 1980), and neglect more prominent revision issues such as re-examination, re-evaluation, and modification of their ideas in order to meet their readers’ needs and expectations. In fact, as Van Steendam, et al. (2010) argue, less competent students are unable to divide revision process into stages and have not developed a hierarchical order of evaluative criteria. More precisely, they may not comprehend text-based responses to their texts and even when they do, they may not know how to process and utilise them into their compositions in order to improve the quality of their drafts. Finally, L2 revisers may face lack of cognitive resources during revision since they have not yet sufficiently developed all the sub-processes required for successful and efficient revision.

Moreover, as L2 novice writers are still in the process of learning English as their second language and their linguistic systems are in a state of development, they may naturally prioritise form over content and organisation. Thus, it is not surprising to notice that they primarily attend to surface-level features of their papers, read, and react to a text as a series of individual words or incoherent sentences and clauses, rather than as a whole unit of discourse. In fact, to many of these students, writing consists of a set of rules that must be applied to a text regardless of purpose, audience, and context. Hence, they are preoccupied by linguistic problems of their texts and neglect macro structure issues. Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger (1992) also reported that the majority of their participants’ comments focused on surface level errors reflecting their tendency to view feedback sessions as an opportunity to provide information about formal features of the text rather than as an opportunity to convey readers’ reactions to the writer’s ideas. However, Caulk’s (1994) research contradicts these findings as she found that responses provided by peers helped students improve the content of their papers and her research participants tended to emphasise more on meaning related issues and to be more specific in focus compared to the teacher’s general, form and clarity focused feedback behaviour.

However, it can be argued that coaching L2 learners on ways to be effective evaluators and revisers can enable them to be more engaged in the tasks and to equally focus on surface
errors and broader issues of meaning. L2 writers, indeed, need not only instruction on how to revise, but also encouragement to focus both on surface and text-based changes. Thus, it seems to be a prerequisite to give the students explicit preliminary training in offering and making more meaning-based comments/revisions than form-oriented ones in EFL writing pedagogy. Such training enables them to critically read and evaluate their peer’s text, to diagnose and detect the problems, and to suggest appropriate solutions. In other words, they need to develop the crucial ability of reviewing their writing with the eyes of another and modify their written texts to meet the needs of their audience. Without careful instruction in how to carry out effective peer reviews, which means delivering accurate, clear and specific feedback, Leki (1990) warns, L2 students will continue to focus on editing local issues and rarely comment on content and ideas (cited in Van Steendam, et al., 2010, p. 316). A number of investigations have also confirmed the significance of instruction in switching L2 students’ attention from form-focused feedback to content and organisation oriented comments. Rothschild and Klingenberg (1990), for instance, found that training facilitated content and organisation comments delivered by L2 students and increased their frequency compared to structure and mechanics feedback. Likewise, Stanley (1992) claimed that careful preparation and training the effective peer response tactics to L2 writers could improve the quality of peer interactions and enabled them to engage more in the peer review task, to communicate more effectively about their peers’ writing, and to offer clearer suggestions for revisions. Similar results were obtained by some other researchers such as McGroarty and Zhu (1997), Berg (1999), Min (2005) as they observed peer review instruction helped L2 students generate more relevant comments and make greater number of meaning-based revisions as opposed to surface-level ones. However, this procedure requires considerable investment of time and effort as responding to writing is not a skill which most L2 students have had extensive experience. Hence, if students are to be expected to skilfully participate in peer response and successfully perform evaluation of their texts, they need adequate time and practice to internalise this demanding task.

9.4 Mutual Scaffolding and ZPD

In general, it was also found that dyad members actively participated in revision activities and extended and received support during the tasks regardless of their level of writing proficiency as well as their roles as reviewer/writer. Examining the interaction data, for
example, revealed that both partners assisted each other using such interactional strategies as “advising, instructing, providing options, referencing, pointing, responding to questions, information requests, confirmation requests, and responding to questions”. The bilateral support observed during discussions is a clear indication of the fact that L2 writers at similar stages of development could build on each other’s knowledge in an attempt to improve the quality of their papers. Application of another group of interactional strategies like “clarification requests, clarifying, comprehension checks, response to comprehension checks, and restating” also shows student writers’ attempts to explain, defend, and clarify their messages and viewpoints on the one hand, and reviewers’ efforts to justify and support their comments through face-to-face discussion on the other. Ultimately, it can be claimed that L2 learners took peer review and collaborative revision sessions as opportunities to build on their knowledge and co-construct higher quality texts through negotiations. A number of L2 researchers (Ohta, 1995; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996; de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Swain, et al., 2002; Storch, 2002, 2005; Shehadeh, 2011) have also reported similar findings and have argued that scaffolding could occur during peer interaction and L2 students benefited from the collaboration and dialogue. However, as the analysis of dyadic discussions revealed (see for example Chapter 5, Sections 5.4.1.7-8 and 5.4.2.7-8), in some cases partners failed to scaffold each other probably because some errors were beyond ZPD or potential developmental level of the learners and they were unable to move beyond that level. In such cases, the partners used some interactional strategies which either implicitly (guessing, change advice) or explicitly (express uncertainty, express lack of knowledge, inability to provide advice) indicated their lack of prerequisite linguistic resources to suggest appropriate revisions or the right choice despite their attempts and even when they intended to. In such instances, they either referred to external resources such as reference books, classmates, instructor, or abandoned the errors.

The students’ texts also revealed that all participants managed to develop essays that were more accurate over drafts across both genres even though the amount of progress varied from one individual student to the other or from one specific task/genre to the next. In fact, participants were able to move through their ZPDs beyond their current levels of development to higher levels of achievement by generating better quality final drafts owning to appropriation of the solutions that were jointly consented, and incorporating them into their revisions. This point is also highlighted in de Guerrero and Villamil’s (1994)
and Villamil and de Guerrero’s (1998) investigation as they concluded that L2 students’ collaboration in a supportive atmosphere led to internalisation of the cognitive processes that were required for successful task completion and eventual self-regulation (independent problem-solving). However, as it was shown in Chapter 6 (Sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.4), the scaffold was sometimes inadequate and the explanation provided by the peer/instructor to facilitate revision did not accommodate with the potential developmental level of the students and they failed to fix the errors. Besides, the tasks could sometimes be counter-productive and produce negative results due to low level of writing/revision skills of the participants. More precisely, limited English proficiency could induce errors. It can be inferred that as certain writing features were beyond the actual developmental level of the student reviewers, they sometimes failed to provide efficient assistance and misled their partners.

In addition, as Keh (1990) has argued, the participants confirmed the reciprocal nature of assistance. During interview sessions respondents asserted that as pairs formed live and real audience, they had a valuable opportunity to learn from each other by giving and receiving immediate feedback through their conversations. They also maintained that due to their varying levels of skills and competencies, peers could provide the support they needed in order to improve their writing performance. In other words, most students felt that peer interaction helped them generate and pool their ideas and knowledge as well as share their writing expertise and ultimately enabled them to improve their writing skills and build their self-confidence. In this respect, the findings of the investigation are similar to the results reported in earlier studies (de Guerrero & Villamil, 1994; Dipardo & Freedman, 1998; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Min, 2005; Storch, 2005). For example, de Guerrero and Villamil (1994) stressed that the presence of a peer could reduce the revision cognitive load as the labour was divided by joint attempt. Finally, by asserting that reading each other’s drafts critically could enhance their writing ability and revision skills, the participants confirmed the findings of other researchers (Tsui & Ng, 2000; Min, 2005) who stressed that reviewing peers’ papers and noticing their errors could help L2 writers to monitor their own texts and avoid making the same mistakes. Nevertheless, lack of language ability in identifying, evaluating, and suggesting appropriate alternatives concerned some of the participants. In fact, they felt that in some cases they failed to support and scaffold each other and to revise their papers especially during peer review tasks (Chapter 8, Sections 8.2.1 and 8.3.2).
Further, a couple of the students complained about the disproportionate benefits of the activities and either directly or indirectly claimed that they benefited from the tasks less than their partners did. While triangulating interview data and such accounts with the audio-recorded data and the written drafts confirmed lack of scaffolding in some cases, it was also revealed that peer reviewing and collaborative revision activities were of benefit to all participants even though the amount of scaffold was different for each individual student.

Lastly, most of the time, the support provided by peers was “dialogic”, “contingent”, and “gradual” and met the three main characteristics of scaffolding proposed by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994). Indeed, L2 students in this study tailored their feedback according to their partners’ needs, types of errors, and level of development. For example, at times feedback not only included explicit advising and providing solutions, but also, if necessary, encompassed mini lessons and instructions on either micro or macro aspects of writing. On the other hand, in some cases where the reviewers either believed the specific problems had already been discussed, or the errors were so obvious that they did not think they were made as a result of the writers’ poor knowledge of the target language but their carelessness; they did not involve in unnecessary discussions. In such cases, feedback was provided implicitly either by referring the writers to the earlier comments provided or just by pointing to those particular mistakes. From this perspective, the findings corroborate Aljaafreh and Lantolf’s (1994) research findings where they suggested that there were different ZPDs for different learners and different types of errors/problems. Hence, depending on the learner’s developmental needs and error types both implicit and explicit feedback might be necessary. Yet, as it was illustrated in Chapter 6 (Section 6.2.2), at times the scaffold did not accommodate with the potential developmental level of the partners or the explanations were inadequate and failed to facilitate revision.

It should be noted that the above studies, which reported the reciprocal nature of scaffolding between peers, were conducted in different contexts and involved participants with various levels of English language proficiency. For example, the participants of Ohta’s (1994) research included six second-year university level Japanese language learners at an urban American state university. Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) studied fifty-four intermediate ESL students at Inter American University of Puerto Rico and their following investigation (de Guerrero and Villamil, 2000) involved selecting two males from the same
pool of participants. Storch (2002) investigated ten intermediate level pairs of ESL students at a large Australian university and his follow up research (Storch, 2005) was conducted in the same context but included twenty-three ESL international students from a range of language backgrounds. Finally, Shehadeh’s (2011) investigation focused on thirty-eight low-intermediate EFL female learners at a large public university in the United Arabic Emirates (UAE). Besides, L2 students’ perceptions on usefulness of peer assistance in collaborative tasks have also been elicited in different contexts. For instance, de Guerrero and Villamil’s (1994) study reported the attitudes of fifty-four intermediate ESL students at Inter American University of Puerto Rico. Tsui and Ng’s (2000) investigation focused on twenty-seven Chinese pre-university L2 writers’ viewpoints in Hong Kong. Min (2005) elicited eighteen EFL sophomore students’ opinions at a large university in Southern Taiwan. Finally, Storch’s (2005) investigation included the beliefs of twenty-three ESL international students from a range of language backgrounds at a large Australian university.

9.4.1 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

In L2 acquisition, ZPD, which has been associated with the notion of scaffolding, refers to “the difference between the L2 learner’s developmental level as determined by independent language use, and the higher level of potential development as determined by how language is used in collaboration with a more capable interlocutor” (Ohta, 1995, p. 96). However as it was stated earlier, in this research the effects of mutual peer assistance where help can go in both directions and both partners help each other move through their zone of proximal development and improve their writing quality (ability) was investigated rather than the traditional unilateral expert-novice assistance. As the data revealed, even when two novice learners interacted collaboratively they could scaffold each other’s learning and benefited from peer review and collaborative revision activities. Indeed, both partners were active during the tasks and the students took over the instructor’s role and alternated as an expert regardless of their writing abilities and learnt from each other and gained mutual support as expertise resided in their joint efforts. This finding corroborates earlier studies performed in this domain (Anton & DiCamilla, 1998, cited in Lundstorm & Baker, 2009; de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000). For example, de Guerrero and Villamil’s (2000) investigation of a pair of ESL learners’ behaviours, demonstrated that even two novice students could provide support in each other’s learning and peer revision helped both students to move within their
ZPDs as the writer became gradually more self-regulated and the reader could practice and enhance his assistance strategies and collaboration.

On the other hand, peer feedback and revisions concentrated on local issues and consequently progress in students’ drafts in surface level was higher than the contextual aspects of written texts. The over emphasis on surface level features by this group of L2 learners can be explained in terms of ZPD notion as well. More precisely, it could be inferred that as macro level issues are more cognitively demanding and addressing them requires higher level of expertise, these participants were not competent enough to address them in their discussions and revision practices. In other words, dealing with text-based concerns was beyond the current ZPD of the learners and they were less successful in handling such problems. Moreover, after either peer review sessions, where the participants evaluated each other’s papers, or collaborative revision sessions, where partners worked jointly to incorporate their instructor’s feedback into their subsequent drafts, some of the language and mechanics mistakes, or content and organisation flaws, were not yet fixed in the reproduced drafts. Failure to successfully address some of the inaccuracies and problems, especially the global ones by the writers, even though they had comprehensively been marked and commented on by the peer/instructor and had been discussed jointly, can also reflect the fact that learners can only revise to the extent of their abilities. Since such problems were beyond the participants’ immediate zone of proximal development, they were unable to produce accurate and fluent drafts no matter how much help they were given and by whom. Hence, it would be unrealistic and inappropriate to expect revised drafts to be free from errors for this group of novice writers.

9.5 Feedback Efficiency

Before discussing feedback efficiency, it seems necessary to explain what constitutes efficiency. Indeed, defining effectiveness is more difficult than it may appear at first (Nelson & Carson, 1998). However, being mindful of the scope of the current study as well as the research questions, feedback efficiency is referred to: (a) the degree of participants’ incorporation of their peers’/instructor’s advice into their subsequent drafts, (b) the progress in participants’ writing performance from first drafts to final drafts in both genres, and (c)
students’ accounts and reflections of two feedback sources (peer/teacher) and activities (peer review/collaborative revision) they involved.

9.5.1 Feedback incorporation

First, analysis of written texts revealed that students utilised their instructor’s suggestions more than that of their peers’ indicating that in terms of feedback incorporation teacher feedback was more effective than peer evaluation. In other words, students were more receptive to their teacher comments than their peer feedback. This finding corroborates with some of the earlier research. Connor and Asenavage (1994), for example, investigated eight ESL undergraduate students at a U.S. University and found that the effect of peer comments on student revisions was smaller compared to teacher comments. In their study of twelve international graduate students at another U.S. university, Mendonca and Johnson (1994) reported a more positive result stressing that participants were selective in applying their classmates’ suggestions into their revisions. Paulus (1999) also studied eleven undergraduate international students enrolled in a pre-freshman composition writing course at a public American university and asserted that although students incorporated both peer and teacher feedback into their subsequent drafts, the majority of the revisions were influenced by other sources including the students themselves. However, Villamil and de Guerrero’s (1998) research on fourteen Spanish speaking ESL college students at a large private university in Puerto Rico revealed that peer evaluation had substantial effect on the participants’ revision practices since the majority of peer advice was used by student writers in their subsequent drafts. Finally, drawing on the findings of their study which involved investigating novice ESL writers at the University of Pittsburgh in the U.S., Nelson and Schunn (2008) concluded that students acted on feedback if they had understood it.

Lower incorporation rate of peer feedback compared to teacher comment could negatively influence the efficiency of peer response activity compared to collaborative revision task. It can be attributed to several factors such as doubt in the validity of peers’ feedback, lack of experience and unfamiliarity with peer evaluation technique, limited knowledge of the target language and writing skill, and insufficient preparation and training. On the other hand, the socio-cultural and educational structure of the context, trust in the quality of the instructor’s feedback, and the specificity as well as the relevance of the instructor’s comments could contribute to the greater usefulness of collaborative revision activities. As
all these issues have already been discussed comprehensively in earlier sections of this chapter, it seems redundant to elaborate them here again.

**9.5.2 Overall writing quality**

Secondly, assessment of the papers developed by the students and comparing their quality in terms of local/global issues from the original to the final drafts demonstrated that although participants’ performance improved over drafts, the amount of progress was not similar across the two tasks and genres. In general, the results revealed that even though the overall scores of the process essays outperformed those of argumentative ones, argumentative essays experienced greater positive changes over drafts compared to process compositions. Moreover, collaborative revision activities yielded greater positive changes in written texts compared to peer evaluation activities. The higher overall scores of process drafts reflects students’ more familiarity with this genre, which focuses on describing a procedure in a chronological order than argumentation, which involves presenting both the supporting and opposing views of a debatable issue in tactful way. Alternatively, the greater positive changes over argumentative drafts indicate participants’ more familiarity with task demands and order of presentation of the genres. That is, process mode of writing was introduced and practiced during the first writing cycle and although it was simpler in terms of genre requirements and structure, students were not that much familiar with application of indirect coded feedback strategy as well as joint work and their roles and responsibilities. More precisely, they struggled to understand feedback strategy, the collaborative techniques, and tasks expectations. Hence, the positive changes texts went through were less than argumentation. Argumentation rhetoric, however, was presented and practiced during the second writing cycle. consequently, even though the participants found it difficult to write this type of paper as it required them to consider two sides of an issue and discuss for or against it, their progress was more from draft one to draft three. Hence, it could be inferred that the students’ more experience in using indirect coded feedback strategy and performing the collaborative activities, as well as their better understanding of the tasks requirements and their roles and responsibilities contributed to greater achievement over drafts.

Better performance and greater progress in the quality of students’ third drafts compared to second drafts, on the other hand, may reflect the differences between sources of feedback as well as the nature of relationships between reviewers and writers. In fact, depending on the
features of the feedback sources, feedback content might have been perceived as less useful or less credible and in turn affected revision behaviours. While peers were the sole feedback providers who commented on their partners’ first drafts, the instructor annotated all participants’ second drafts. The lower level of progress in the drafts which were developed following peer review sessions, can probably be explained in terms of students’ basic knowledge of L2 writing skill, their inability to locate and detect the mistakes, their incapability to suggest adequate comments on their peers’ papers, and ultimately their failure to provide accurate solutions and convince their partners. Moreover, during peer reviewing sessions both peers acted as reviewer/writer interchangeably. In this respect, writers had a sense of text ownership and optimistically speaking, if we do not claim they were defensive, they tried to justify their choices against their peers’ critics and comments whom they thought, if not lower, were at the same level of competency but playing the teacher’s role. Therefore, in such an atmosphere where partners distrust each other’s comments, are unsure about their roles and relationships, and may have quite different views and definitions of the task demands, it seems difficult to reach a state of inter-subjectivity from which both peers benefit. According to de Guerrero and Villamil (1994, 2000) inter-subjectivity is a state when both partners are equally committed to the negotiation, inter-changeability of roles is allowed between the participants, and both peers respect their partner’s viewpoints. During collaborative revision activities, on the other hand, both peers acted together, pooled their knowledge and shared their expertise to respond to the instructor’s feedback provided on their papers. Therefore, inter-subjectivity was more likely to emerge and maintain as both peers shared a common perspective and showed an equal degree of commitment to the task. They also could establish more productive relationship through mutual collaboration. It could be concluded that the instructor’s comments together with joint revision activity were more successful in helping L2 students develop more accurate texts and improve their writing and revision skills.

On the contrary, Hedgcock and Lefkowitz’s (1992) study of thirty basic French writing learners at Michigan University in the United States demonstrated that oral peer feedback contributed to producing better quality papers by L2 writers than written teacher feedback. Similarly, investigating intermediate and advanced ESL composition students at a large metropolitan university in Germany convinced Caulk (1994) to suggest that peer comments were as effective as teacher comments and might well complement the role that teacher
comments played in revision. Yang and his colleague’s (2006) research on EFL composition students at a university in China also revealed that although L2 students used their teachers’ written comments more than their partners’ oral advice, peers feedback led to more successful revisions than teacher’s comments. As it is clear, these findings were obtained under different conditions to the present study. More precisely, the type of the feedback provided by teachers was different from that of the peers - written vs. oral - and it could be one of the sources of controversies among all. Similarly, the results of Kamimura’s (2006) investigation indicated that training contributed to the success of peer evaluation and it improved the overall quality of participants’ texts. Besides, L2 learners incorporated most of peer comments into their subsequent drafts.

9.5.3 Participants’ perceptions

Lastly, interview data suggest that while peers’ feedback could sometimes be vague and general, invalid and misleading, and subjective and biased forcing students to express reservations about the value of peer feedback as a source of aid in revising their writings, instructor’s comments were most of the time clear, comprehensive, relevant, and specific. Such views, in fact, imply that students expressed more favourable attitudes towards teacher’s advice and preferred teacher feedback to peer suggestions. However, a couple of them believed his comments tended to be confusing at times and occasionally appropriated their intentions. They admitted that a written form of feedback could potentially be confusing and could cause miscommunication as the teacher and the students did not interact and did not have an opportunity to clarify their intentions especially considering the teacher’s heavy workload in a L2 essay writing class with more than 30 novice writers. A number of other researchers (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992; Yang, et al., 2006) have also asserted that Teacher written feedback can sometimes prompt misinterpretation and confusion due to the absence of dialogue between teachers and their students.

The above finding show that participants perceived teacher comments more favourably and believed it was more effective than those of their peers’ in facilitating revision. Several other researchers have also reported similar findings. For example, Leki (1991) surveyed 100 college-level ESL composition students at U.S. universities and reported that the participants judged their teachers as the most valuable source of feedback; whereas, fellow ESL students were reported to be the least beneficial. Zhang’s (1995) investigation of eighty-one tertiary level ESL students with various levels of English language proficiency,
86% of whom were from Asia, also showed that L2 respondents showed a very strong desire for teacher evaluations over other sources of help including peer feedback in their writing. Likewise, Hyde (1993), Nelson and Carson (1998), and Tsui and Ng (2000) separately investigated the attitudes of different cohorts of L2 learners from Europe and the Far East and maintained that L2 learners did not perceive peer feedback as effective as teacher comments and they claimed they attended to their teachers’ advice more than their peers’ suggestions. Amores (1997) also reported that her eight ESL undergraduate students at a state university in the U.S. viewed peer-editing activity counter-productive and they were defensive and reluctant of their papers being evaluated by their classmates. Finally, Yang and his colleagues (2006) reported that their Chinese EFL composition learners highly credited their teacher suggestions calling them more professional and valid compared to peer evaluation.

On the other hand, Mangelsdorf (1992) claimed that her forty heterogeneous advanced ESL composition participants studying at the University of Arizona assumed peer review technique beneficial as it could help student writers understand their audience expectations, view their texts from their perspectives, and clarify the misunderstandings if needed. Jacob and his colleagues (1998) also argued that peer and teacher feedback were not mutually exclusive as their survey of 121 ESL undergraduate university students demonstrated that L2 students from Taiwan and Hong Kong welcomed them both. Finally, Roskams’ (1999) and Saito and Fujita’s (2004) separate investigations of 217 Chinese and 61 Japanese business students which were conducted at Hong Kong and Japan respectively indicated that even though their L2 respondents were more in favour of teacher comments, they also considered their partners’ feedback useful and expressed favourable attitudes towards peer evaluation.

To sum up, it should be stressed that the success of peer response session depends not only on the language ability of L2 learners, but also on the adequacy of pre-training activities. Drawing on their research findings, a number of researchers (Rothschild & Klingenberg; 1990, Stanley, 1992; McGroarty & Zhu, 1997; Berg, 1999; Kamimura, 2006; Min, 2005, 2006) have also emphasized the significance of peer review instruction and systematic training as well as the value of establishing supportive atmosphere for performing peer collaboration tasks in L2 composition classes. As these scholars claim, mental and technical preparation of L2 learners play a key role in the success of peer evaluation activities as they
make the experience more pleasant and effective in terms of evaluating and responding to written papers, feedback implementation, and L2 students’ perceptions and attitudes.

9.6 Feedback and Genre

Analysis of dyad interactions did not reveal any particular difference across the two genres except for application of two interactional strategies which were exclusively used during argumentative essay peer review session. “Critiquing idea” and “response to criticism” were the only two interactional strategies detected during analysing one mixed-dyad negotiations where the peers hotly discussed and defended their ideas regarding the content of the essay written by the male partner. More precisely, the peers tried either to criticize the content of the essay written or to clarify meaning and consequently convince each other. Application of such interactional strategies by this male-female pair may reflect the nature of the genre, the characteristics of the assigned prompt, and the relationship between the partners. By definition, in argumentative essay the writers not only give information, but also argue for or against a debatable issue. They also express their own ideas about that specific issue either explicitly or implicitly. Further, the prompt of an argumentative paper should normally be controversial creating discussions. Hence, discussion in favour of, or against, married women’s ability/right to work in a conservative society whose more than two-third of population are less than 30 years of age and which is experiencing a transitory stage between tradition and modernism, is quite common. Disagreement over such an issue, therefore, is part of an on-going debate in the society which is also reflected in the negotiations of this male-female dyad.

In addition, the decrease in incorporation rate of peer comments in argumentative essays compared to process essays can be more attributed to the participants’ growing doubt about the quality of peer commentaries as well as their increasing reluctance and demotivation in engaging in the peer review task as a time consuming, useless, and demanding activity rather than genre variable. Nevertheless, Villamil and de Guerrero (1998) expressed an opposite view. More precisely, they acknowledged that higher number of modifications made after peer evaluation of narrative texts than persuasive papers implied task differences. Hence, they concluded that persuasion essay was more difficult than narration in terms of the higher cognitive demands it imposed on the L2 learners.
Further, creation of better quality process texts compared to argumentative ones may reflect the particular features and requirements of each genre. For example, it can be argued that argumentation task is more complex and cognitively demanding than process as it requires higher level of abstraction, analysis, and planning. Process mode of writing, on the other hand, is more concrete as it describes a definite process through a series of steps or explains a procedure and depends more on chronological order. In this respect, the findings of this study confirms Hedgcock and Lefkowitz’s (1992) report who contended that different forms of discourse may influence the performance of L2 learners during peer revision.

Similarly, the fact that students produced longer argumentative essays compared to process ones strengthens the notion that these two modes of writing are different in some respects. Indeed, it could be speculated that as the students were supposed to analyse and interpret an issue rather than describe and summarise it, they needed more words to justify their stances and discuss both sides of the issue. Therefore, argumentative mode by its nature required developing longer drafts; a finding which contradicts Villamil and de Guerrero’s (1998) finding as the L2 students in their research wrote longer narrative essays.

The participants’ reflections also indicate the effect of genre variable on students’ feedback practices. Indeed, the great majority of participants expressed that they found it easier to provide and address feedback on process essays as it was more straightforward and they were more familiar with this mode of writing and somehow knew the criteria for evaluating and revising this type of essay. They expressed, however, that commenting on argumentative essays was more complicated and needed higher level of competency. Indeed, participants’ views emphasise the cognitively complex nature of argumentative essay one of which may mean greater exposure to ideas. In fact, evaluating this type of text requires learners not only to assess the accuracy of the conventional writing rules like other modes of writing, but also to critically discuss ideas and intentions in greater depth due to the controversial nature of this type of essay. Yet, partners may lack knowledge of content and subject matter which, in turn, can limit their ability to provide helpful feedback. Further, unfamiliarity with distinctive argumentative essay structure – presentation of claim and counter claim accounts - places additional burden on L2 students’ capability. That is, constant grappling with ideas as well as their sound organisation may lead to cognitive overload. Lastly, students need to develop the appropriate communication skills to discuss
tactfully and critically ideas rather than maintaining a complimentary and unconstructive, or a hostile and unkind relationship.

9.7 Theoretical Contribution to the Knowledge

Peer reviewing during which students evaluate the writing performance of their classmates and provide feedback on one another’s drafts is grounded in social constructionist theory of learning and process-based approach to writing (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hu, 2005; Min, 2005, 2006; Kamimura, 2006; Yong, 2010; Shehadeh, 2011). Indeed, the social constructivist perspective of learning emphasises the collaborative nature of development that occurs through interaction among peers when they work in pairs or groups and provide each other mutual scaffolding. Besides, peer feedback fits well with the shift from product to process approach to the teaching of writing and is compatible with writing cycles, multiple drafting, and extensive revision which feature prominently process approach to writing (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Peer evaluation pedagogy has been widely adopted by writing teachers both in L1 and in L2 composition classrooms around the world during the last two decades. Specifically, it plays an important role as an alternative or complement to teacher-based forms of response in L1 context and has been found beneficial for learning providing a persuasive argument in favour of writing dyads/groups in L2 contexts.

However, due to differences between L1 and L2 learners, the inclusion of this technique in L2 classrooms has created some concerns (Leki, 1990; Nelson & Murphy, 1992, 1993; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Amores, 1997; McGroarty & Zhu, 1997; Carson & Nelson, 1994, 1996; Nelson & Carson, 1998; Tsui & Ng, 2000). L2 researchers and instructors, although acknowledging the benefits of peer feedback, point out potential problems inherent in peer response practice which cast doubts on its success in accomplishing its purposes in L2 writing classes. In other words, they argue that what works well in the first language classroom does not necessarily yield similar results in the L2 context. These problems mainly stem from L2 writers’ (a) divergent socio-cultural backgrounds that may reflect different attitudes towards collaboration and different expectations concerning pair or group dynamics as well as conflicting beliefs about the relative value of teacher and peer feedback, (b) level of language proficiency and their inability to offer useful feedback to each other, and (c) lack of experience and unfamiliarity
with peer evaluation technique. Hence, their comments may either be vague and unhelpful or over critical, unconstructive, and biased. They may also have problems detecting errors and providing quality feedback, focus heavily on surface level aspects of writing, and ignore addressing important issues of content and organisation. Failure to achieve the goals of peer evaluation technique is more likely to happen in contexts where learners have had limited formal writing skill instruction and have not yet developed adequate evaluative criteria for good writing even in their native language. Learning to write on the one hand and to evaluate on the other is a dual agenda which may eventually lead to cognitive overload and frustration in novice writers (Van Steendam, et al., 2010). Therefore, teachers’ intervention, whether direct or indirect, may be needed in all stages of writing process particularly when dealing with EFL students at lower levels of proficiency.

On the other hand, collaborative revision during which pairs jointly read, discuss, and revise each other’s drafts using their teacher’s feedback can be referred to as invaluable activity. Indeed, this technique can address the serious concerns raised by writing researchers and practitioners as to the efficacy of the incorporation of peer evaluation in L2 contexts. Like peer response, this activity takes advantage of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory of learning and process-based writing instruction. However, it has a key difference from peer reviewing. Whereas in peer evaluation students critic each other’s texts, teacher is still the main source of feedback in any collaborative revision activity. In this sense, some of the challenges associated with the validity and specificity of peer feedback, distrust in peer comments, and lack of experience in performing evaluation which originate from L2 learners’ divergent cultural norms and traditional educational pedagogies, as well as their poor knowledge of writing skill will be addressed to a great extent even though teachers’ responding load is not reduced. In fact, collaborative revision can be viewed as an interim stage on a continuum from sole teacher feedback/evaluation to sole peer feedback/evaluation in EFL writing classrooms. As the findings of the current study indicate, collaborative revision could be an ideal option in helping and preparing both teachers and students to transform from a traditional, teacher-centred, product-based, exam-dominated pedagogy to a more theoretically sound, student-centred, process-based approach to writing instruction in which collaboration and group work is central to the classroom. More precisely, it could be argued that according to the obtained results collaborative revision could be relatively more advantageous in EFL contexts in terms of (a)
students’ level of engagement and interaction during the task, (b) their attitudes towards the activity, (c) the extent of feedback incorporation in students’ subsequent revisions, and (d) the effect of the activity on their writing performance. In such a transitory period, the teacher comments on students’ written texts using review sheets and students respond to comments working together and interacting with one another, pooling their knowledge and strengths in a supportive and friendly atmosphere. Further, students learn evaluation techniques, get familiar with feedback strategies, understand what to look for, and gradually get prepared and develop the required skills and strategies to become peer evaluators. Diagram 9.1 delineates the theoretical model derived from the findings of current research:

Diagram 9.1. The research proposed feedback model in the EFL writing context

9.8 Methodological Contributions

Using multiple data sets was an attempt to obtain a clearer understanding of the issues under investigation. Indeed, methodological triangulation in the current qualitative case study research made data corroboration possible. Three interview sessions at different stages of the study, for example, helped me to track potential changes and contradictions in participants’ perceptions over time or in situations where they were interviewed individually or at the presence of their partners or other members of the focus group. Interviewing the participants at three different points during the study indicated that some of them changed their views over time. For instance, they expressed positive reactions towards multiple drafting at earlier stages, but later on they thought multiple drafting was
wasting of time and they preferred to practice more essay types rather than developing three drafts of the same essay. Besides when interviewed individually, students expressed their views freely and with no hesitation concerning some issues such as the usefulness of their partner’s feedback. However, during pair or group interview, they tried to monitor their response not to hurt their classmates which is an indication of pair or group effect on students’ reactions.

Using different sources of data also made cross-checking possible; an issue which has been ignored in most of the investigations performed on peer collaboration by other researchers so far. For example, by examining interview data, audio-recorded data, written texts, as well as observing the classes, I could check whether students’ perceptions supported their actual performance during the activities or not, and if not in what areas contradictions occurred. Also, collecting audio-recorded data along with written texts could show possible relationships between students’ negotiations focus and their feedback incorporation and revision behaviours as well as the areas of their writing which experienced progress. Lastly, the role I myself played as a teacher/researcher allowed me to access the context as a participant observer, involve in and monitor the activities directly and in natural way. Otherwise, I was deprived of such unique opportunity.

Further, this case study involved four L2 essay writing classes on two different days of the week, Mondays and Tuesdays, over a fifteen-week semester in 2010. While Monday classes were treated as the pilot population of the study, the actual data were collected from Tuesday classes. In this sense, I believe simultaneous piloting and conducting the study was one of its advantages. That is, Monday classes were used as a pilot population and any problems, deficiencies, limitations, or ambiguities whether pedagogical or practical, which were observed in Monday classes, were immediately addressed and amended for the classes which met the consecutive day. These problems, for instance, included (a) ambiguities caused by the phrasing of demographic questionnaire, (b) time limitation for performing multi-tasks of reviewing, discussing, and re-drafting papers during class time, and (c) uncertainties regarding the role and function of peer review sheets and the model essays. Consequently, (1) the questions that confused students were made clear by rephrasing. (2) Students were allowed to focus on reviewing and discussing each other’s texts during class time and redrafting was decided to be performed out of the class so that the students did not feel rushed. (3) Peer review instruction sessions involved not only oral explanation of the
usage of peer review forms, but also response procedure modelling. That is, feedback and comments in response to the model essays were typed and presented under each question so that all students had a completed sample peer review sheet, which practically demonstrated how they were required to use the peer response forms. And (4) where required, both first and second drafts of the model essays were underlined and highlighted providing the opportunity for students to not only detect the problematic areas and errors in first drafts, but also cross-check them with the comments written on peer review sheets and the amendments made in the revised drafts.

In conclusion, most of the time results derived from different data sources/sets, and methods corroborated each other. For example, class observations revealed that during the first writing cycle students were not that much familiar with their duties and responsibilities. This issue was supported while examining the participants’ interactions as the peers used more procedural negotiations during this cycle. The analysis of the written texts also revealed similar results as the writing progress noticed over process essays was smaller than argumentative essays. The responses of interviewees also confirmed their need for more preparation in order to get involved in the collaborative activities. Indeed, they maintained that they were confused at the beginning not knowing their roles, duties, and task demands. However, as the time passed, they became more confident and were more familiar with the tasks expectations. On the other hand, analysis of participants’ interactions and identifying a great number of negotiation episodes which mainly concentrated on form rather than content and organisation helped in better understanding and explaining of the greater improvement the local aspects of participants’ papers experienced compared to the global features. Finally, the distrustful feeling among peers was not only noticed during observations as the students frequently called for the instructor’s help and his intervention during collaborative tasks, but also during the analysis of the recorded audios, written texts, and interview sessions. More precisely, employing interactional strategies such as “certainty check” or “persistence” were evidence of participants’ distrust in the validity of advice given by their peers. Likewise, the lower uptake rate of feedback provided by the peers in the second drafts compared to that of the instructor’s in final drafts was a further sign of this scepticism. To all these can be added respondents’ accounts such as subjective, biased, misleading, and invalid nature of peer feedback which corroborates with the findings of all other data sources. Hence, it could be claimed that data triangulation
promoted a more comprehensive grasp of peer review and collaborative revision activities in this particular L2 essay writing course.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to report on a study into the nature of negotiations, revision behaviours, writing performance and perceptions of 5 EFL dyads who participated in peer review and collaborative revision activities during a semester long L2 essay writing course at a university in Iran. As outlined in chapter 1, my intention was to gain a greater insight into the interaction dynamics of novice L2 writers when they were involved not only in evaluating each other’s essays during peer review sessions, but also in responding jointly to teacher’s feedback and comments during collaborative revision sessions in two writing cycles. The revision behaviour of the participants’ including their reactions to the feedback they received whether from their peers or tutor as well as the focus of their revisions was another area of interest which I sought to investigate. I also aimed to trace the effect of advice provided by two different feedback sources on participants’ written drafts and endeavoured to elicit their perceptions of the activities implemented during the course of the study.

Through acting as teacher/researcher in a qualitative case study research, I utilised a variety of research instruments including audio-recordings, observations, interviews, and written texts. An extensive analysis of the data sets and the results obtained convinced me to conclude that due to the particular characteristics of EFL contexts, collaborative revision could be incorporated as an efficient technique which facilitates the shift from over reliance on writing instructor to more independent peer evaluation activities. However, I should stress that collaborative revision technique might not yield its presumed benefits without careful group/pair work organisation, detailed planning and training along with adequate modelling and practice.

In this final chapter of the thesis, I will first highlight the implications of the study. Then, I will go on to explain the limitations of the project and drawing on the findings of the project will offer suggestions for possible future research and practice. Finally, I will
conclude the chapter by reflecting on the process of undertaking the study and concluding remarks.

10.2 Implications of the Study

Since the current project is a study of the process-based approach to writing instruction as well as incorporation of peer evaluation and collaborative revision techniques in natural EFL classroom setting, the findings have direct implications for both theory and practice.

10.2.1 Implication for curriculum development

To date there have not been many studies investigating peer evaluation and collaborative revision in EFL context especially in Iran. Hence, a number of theoretical and pedagogical implications may be derived based on the findings of this exploratory study. The present study attempted to explore peer review and collaborative revision activities in an EFL context from a social constructivist perspective and could add further supportive evidence to the literature that acknowledges the fundamental role mutual scaffolding and co-construction of knowledge can play in stimulating learning. Indeed, as this study revealed, collaborative tasks particularly joint revision in which learners jointly revise a written text can provide students opportunities for sharing ideas and meaningful and purposeful negotiation, and engage them in more interactive student-centred activities that can be the source of developing superior quality L2 essays. However, the fact that students’ communications mainly concentrated on language and mechanics issues reveals that L2 learners need more training on other aspects of essay writing such as content and organisation for more effective writing. Therefore, writing instructors should consider establishing training procedures that can orient students most effectively to textual features in writing and explicitly encourage the negotiations which move beyond discussions of surface level issues. More precisely, L2 learners need to be taught that revision should cover various areas of writing and grammar correction is one of the aspects among many other features to focus on. For instance, before L2 learners actually evaluate and co-revise each other’s papers, tutors can arrange peer review training sessions for the whole class, encourage the students to actively participate in discussions, and provide comments on macro structure problems of sample texts.
Further, incorporation of process-based, student-centred writing pedagogy into L2 writing courses can help transform the classroom context and the outcome. Indeed, it changes the individualised learning atmosphere where the L2 teacher plays a dominant role as the only source of knowledge and encourages collaborative learning in which knowledge is constructed by interactions of L2 learners within their pairs/groups. As the participants of this study stressed, this type of learning could be an enjoyable experience since it moves away from the boring and tedious traditional product oriented approach which is characterised by teachers’ summative written feedback that encourages students’ passivity. However, to avoid the potential negative side effects of swiftly swinging from one extreme of the pendulum (teacher evaluation) to the other (peer review), curriculum developers can slow down this shift by incorporating a preliminary technique in the middle (collaborative revision) which is intended to find a better way to prepare EFL writing students for more productive and participatory forms of learning. That is to say, collaborative revision activity can facilitate student-centeredness in EFL writing classrooms by preparing students to take responsibility for participating in evaluation of their classmates’ papers and opens up a possibility for changing a traditional one-way teacher-to-student route of evaluation to multi-route peer-to-peer as well as teacher-to-student evaluation. As the analysis of the data collected for this small-scale study demonstrated, not only did students incorporate higher percentage of feedback into their revised drafts after collaborative revision activity than peer evaluation, but also the jointly revised texts were of better quality than those composed following peer evaluation.

To conclude, the present study makes an important contribution in providing empirical data on the importance of incorporation of collaborative tasks particularly joint revision into L2 composition classes. It puts forward some supportive evidence about the unique opportunity these tasks provide for L2 students to scaffold each other in the development of their writing skills. It also corroborates the theoretical belief that collaboration has the potential of improving the quality of L2 writers’ performance. It thus may be worth the L2 teachers’ and learners’ time and effort.

10.2.2 Implications for practice

Despite its small sample size, the results of this study provide valuable information about some of the aspects of peer feedback and collaborative revision that are most relevant for EFL writing pedagogy and L2 writing teachers who plan to implement collaborative
activities in their writing classrooms. In fact, the findings of this study can reassure L2 writing instructors that collaborative tasks can be helpful for their students and that writing instructors should integrate them into the composition courses with confidence. Performing these tasks help L2 learners improve their writing skills by pooling their knowledge and sharing their strengths. They provide the student writers the opportunity to explain, discuss, and clarify their points of view. They also give the student reviewers the chance to formulate, justify, and defend their comments through negotiation.

On the other hand, even though most EFL teachers agree with the philosophies underlying peer evaluation, many of them still have reservations about its practicality in their writing classes. In fact, their major concerns revolve around technical issues, which can be resolved by a well-planned implementation process which includes proper training and adequate preparation of the students. Drawing on the findings of the current study, it could be argued that collaborative revision may be one of the preliminary stages which its incorporation into composition courses can not only build positive attitudes towards peer review, but also make it a more productive and pleasant experience for EFL learners. In this sense, teachers provide students with opportunities to get familiar with more participatory forms of pedagogy and to realise that they can work together and use each other’s knowledge and strengths to develop a better quality text by using their instructor’s comments. Hence, collaborative revision technique can serve two purposes; (a) preparing students for peer evaluation and fostering productive exchange of views, and (b) modelling constructive comments by providing specific and concrete responses as well as highlighting the need for a balanced focus on micro and macro level concerns of the written texts.

The fact that collaborative revision did result in better essays in EFL writing context, should encourage teachers to make meaningful joint revision activity an integral part of the writing classroom. However, they should not assume that joint revision works automatically better and yields satisfactory results without well-designed instructions. Indeed, incorporation of peer collaboration tasks into writing courses is an on-going process. It takes time and effort to establish an environment that encourages productive collaboration. From the outset of the course the instructors should carefully explain the philosophy and objectives of collaborative tasks and make L2 students aware of their own role as well as the roles of the students during the whole process as clearly as possible. They should also decide on the organisation of the student pairs and consider which dyadic
structure is more beneficial in terms of creating a relaxed, stress-free, and positive learning environment. In other words, students’ L2 proficiency level, gender, individual difference in learning styles and personalities can contribute to the success and failure of collaborative activities integration in EFL settings where many students not only have serious doubts regarding their capability to help their peers improve their texts, but are concerned about some of the mismatches they notice between the new writing approach and its requirements with their socio-cultural norms and traditional, teacher oriented educational system.

Together with clear goal setting and appropriate dyad/ group organisation, extensive training and guidance on how to collaborate with peers is a crucial point which deserves special attention. If students are expected to co-construct knowledge mutually and scaffold each other skillfully, they need to be given the opportunity to learn how. Instruction improves collaboration practice in L2 writing classrooms.

The success of any collaborative writing task depends not only on the writing ability of the learners, but also on developing positive attitudes and motivation for active collaboration and group success. Hence, it is critical that teachers prepare their L2 learners by establishing an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect and even modelling the collaboration process to show their learners how they can actively co-construct knowledge meaningfully in a group and benefit from the experience of joint work by becoming more autonomous and less reliant on their tutors. In this sense students realize that writing and revision do not need to be isolated and boring activities, but the tasks they can enjoy doing and get more positive results.

10.3 Limitations/Dilemmas of the Study

This study was an attempt to include insights from an EFL context to the current ESL based knowledge of collaborative pedagogy, responding the calls made by some of the researchers of the L2 writing discipline. It should be noted that even though it reported some valuable results about the nature, quality, and efficiency of peer review and collaborative revision activities in EFL context, it does not yet provide conclusive evidence on the efficiency of one technique over the other and given the small scale of this study and considering the following limitations, further research is necessary in classroom settings to investigate the issues. Any research may carry limitations and face challenges during the
process of its implementation. In what follows, I will outline the limitations and dilemmas of conducting the present study.

During the investigation it became clear that time was the major limitation of the study. First, as it was the first experience of this cohort of L2 students being exposed to formal writing instruction both in their L1 and their L2 languages, as well as being introduced to process-oriented pedagogy, peer review and collaborative revision techniques, they needed more time internalising all these novel issues. Therefore, allocating 6 ninety-minute sessions discussing L2 writing generics and 8 sessions introducing and practising two different genres as well as incorporating novel approaches and tasks was definitely inadequate. In fact, some of the students felt overwhelmed and exhausted towards the end of the course even though they called the course very interesting and productive and as one of the most useful classes, they had ever attended in their academic life. More precisely, they stressed that they needed more time and practice to internalise the abstract notions they were introduced to during the course. They particularly maintained that argumentative essay was a more demanding genre, which required further preparation, training, and practice. Similarly, a couple of students stated that the indirect codes that were used during the two writing cycles to address particular types of errors needed additional examples and more extended practice. Considering the fact that argumentative essay and indirect coded feedback strategy assume a fairly advanced level of language proficiency, it is not surprising to hear such voices from the students who have not yet developed satisfactory level of writing skill. Besides, as the participants had 90 minutes to perform the activities, some of them complained about time constraint and felt they were rushed doing the tasks. Second, the large class size was an obstacle in conducting the research project. Indeed, as a teacher of four essay writing classes, I was ethically committed to pay equal attention to all students and address about 135 student drafts over a week. This very heavy workload and spending huge amount of time providing feedback and comments on written texts made me a composition slave. Further, it could potentially influence the quality of the responses I provided to the focus group particularly towards the end of the course, a point which was raised by a couple of interviewees during pair interview sessions at the end of second writing cycle. Third, as students in the pilot classes were in contact with their friends in research classes, a couple of them felt that Monday and Tuesday classes were not treated equally. They particularly believed that class atmosphere was more supportive and
friendlier on Tuesdays. However, with my explanations I apparently could convince them that what they had heard were just rumours and as a teacher, I was committed to treat all students equally regardless of their contribution or non-contribution in the study. Fourth, the writing performance of students was examined over drafts and the long-term writing skill progress of the participants was not investigated. Besides, the topics chosen for two types of essays may have influenced the results. The topic used for process essay, “How to get a good mark in essay writing module final exam,” might have been easy to write about; whereas, the topic of argumentative essay, “By taking a position either for or against give your opinion whether married women should work or not. Be sure to back up your opinions with specific examples” might have been difficult to compose. As a result, the performance of participants’ might have been influenced by the assigned writing prompts. Furthermore, it should be added that due to the attrition of the only male dyad in the middle of the study, the investigation was deprived of having access to a rich source of data which could provide more detailed picture of the potential role gender could play in collaborative tasks. Finally, the classroom size and setting were not appropriate for implementing collaborative tasks impeding me to freely join all dyads and supervise their discussions.

Despite these limitations and issues, the value of this study is in the details and the complexities it conveys. Case studies findings are most of the time criticised for not being generalizable to other settings. However, as Yin (2009) stresses “case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (p. 15). In addition, sometimes a study aims to get an in-depth understanding of a particular case or issue within its context rather than looking for setting a generalizable model (Punch, 2009). Hence, as was discussed, the most important finding of this study was that collaborative revision activity enabled EFL university students to compose superior quality papers compared to peer evaluation tasks. Yet, the students found both activities novel and pleasant stating that both contributed to their L2 writing skill progress.

10.4 Recommendations for Further Research

Due to the small sample size of this project, the findings should be interpreted carefully and the implications are not meant to be generalised beyond the scope of this study. However, as the preliminary findings suggest, having university EFL students jointly revise their
papers using their instructor’s comments seems to be more effective than peers evaluating each other’s drafts. As it was discussed, such findings may be due to the sociocultural and educational background of the participants of the study. Since they come from a teacher-centred background, these learners trust the feedback they receive from their lecturers and tutors more than the comments they get from their peers. In other words, it could be argued that the use of collaborative revision may serve as an effective technique for the writing processes and be worthy of further exploration. Hence, in addition to addressing the limitations of this study, further studies are needed to confirm, and expand the proposed model as well as to verify whether these findings are also upheld in other EFL contexts and populations. In this sense, a number of additional questions about implementation of peer evaluation and collaborative revision tasks as well as their efficiency in terms of feedback incorporation, students’ attitudes, and writing performance development both at the time and later deserve further empirical research:

1. The present study did not examine a possible connection between reviewers’ stances and the extent of feedback incorporation by the writers. A further study can explain how the stances reviewers take influence writers’ revision behaviours.

2. Some students, especially at later stages of the project, expressed negative feelings towards multiple-drafting and reported frustration due to three times redrafting of their texts. Participants’ change of perception regarding incorporation of process approach in L2 writing classrooms is an area worthy of further investigation and merit separate and independent inquiries.

3. Since the participants of the study had never experienced peer collaboration activities, it is worth performing a similar research with students who bring some prior knowledge and experience of engaging in such types of tasks into the class.

4. Due to the attrition of the only male-male participating pair at the end of first writing cycle, it was impossible to examine the role gender could play in collaborative tasks. Nature of gender interactions and behaviours are issues meriting further exploration.

5. The research involved low performance EFL writers. It would also be interesting to investigate the behaviours and performance of more advanced students engaged in peer collaboration activities.
6. It should be noted that this study explored the efficiency of two different collaborative tasks on EFL students’ writing performance in short term. It did not address whether collaboration and scaffolding can lead to writing improvement in the longer term and after a prolonged engagement in such activities. Other research can investigate not only the short term but also the long term effects of executing collaborative techniques on L2 students’ both feedback providing skill and writing performance and learning.

7. Further research is required to probe peer review and collaborative revision activities across different genres.

8. The feedback strategy used during this study was indirect coded feedback. Hence, it might have contributed to the writing performance of the participants. More precisely, as this strategy assumes a relatively advanced level of formal knowledge and/or acquired competence in the L2 student writer, other studies can provide further insights on how L2 learners process direct feedback and how different it can affect their performance.

9. Studies across settings and populations could provide more information about how students’ perceptions influence their engagement in collaborative tasks and allow for some generalisations about the relationships between students’ attitudes and their performance.

10. In the current study the interaction in the groups was in L1. Future studies might also investigate how the choice of language for interaction, L1 or L2, influences the discussions that occur in the pairs.

Finally, more studies are needed to compare the effects of peer review and collaborative revision in EFL contexts before we can reach consensus on the usefulness and effectiveness of collaborative revision as a preliminary stage to peer evaluation in EFL writing settings. However, this research has successfully demonstrated a framework to L2 learners’ collaborative interactions and writing processes and has explored their behaviours from a sociocultural perspective.

10.5 My Learning Journey

In what follows, I divide my learning experience into three interrelated episodes. In the first episode I will succinctly illustrate what triggered me to start my doctorate studies. Then, I will explain about my exposure to the new educational system and the challenges I faced...
before actually start my PhD project and in the final episode I will highlight my academic and personal development journey towards achieving my PhD.

10.5.1 Episode one

Before I start my PhD, I used to teach English as a Foreign Language to English Translation major undergraduates for at least eight years. During this period, I taught a variety of subjects including paragraph and essay writing. I should confess even though I spent plenty of energy to train my L2 students, I noticed that the instructions were most of the time useless, the classes were boring, and my attempts and efforts failed to achieve satisfactory results. Noticing exam papers still full of basic mistakes really upset me and made me feel frustrated. To be honest it was not the poor students’ fault not being able to write an acceptable short piece of writing at the end of the course, but I as a teacher, the course syllabus, and the decision makers were those to be blamed for this failure. As far as I am concerned, I was very organised, worked strictly based on textbook agenda and presented the lessons as it was prescribed in the book. I started writing courses by briefly introducing students with some writing generics as well as paragraph/essay structure which were followed by some drills and sentence level exercises. Interactions were solely limited between me and individual students and I was the most active member of the class with the students being passive and listening most of the time. Later on, I introduced some modes of writing like narration, description, comparison and contrast, etc. and discussed the characteristics of each by providing the class with models or referring them to the examples provided in their textbooks. After each training session, I assigned the students a topic and required them to write an essay as their homework based on the instruction. The following week, some of the students read aloud their papers and the rest of us listened to them and tried to provide them with oral feedback and comments. However, apparently it was just me who listened since other students rarely participated in the evaluation activity due to unknown reasons one of which could probably be their day dreaming. If the writers were lucky enough and I did not get distracted during their reading, I offered them some pieces of advice, mainly general and linguistic, on how to improve their papers. The rest of the students submitted their papers and I took them home, corrected them, and returned them the following week with no further follow ups. Interestingly, I thought them writing process and such issues as pre-writing, drafting, and revision. However, we practically performed just the middle stage - drafting - with no preparatory or complementary practices before or
after. The same scenario was repeated for other genres over semesters and I felt shattered correcting loads of poorly written papers each week with no evidence of progress.

Such concern was always with me and I kept on thinking about alternative methods and strategies to overcome this situation and improve the quality of my instruction which in turn could improve the quality of students’ written texts. Although as an EFL teacher I was familiar with the concept of student-centred pedagogy, I failed to incorporate this view into my classes first because I was not well aware of its procedures, and second because the context, the policy, and educational system automatically pushed me towards using more traditional, teacher-centred oriented approaches. Hence, as I was always keen on improving my professional qualifications, I enthusiastically welcomed the opportunity provided for me to continue my education at a higher level and through a complicated procedure was admitted as a doctorate candidate.

10.5.2 Episode two

Attending MSc courses at the outset of my PhD procedure provided me a great opportunity to not only get familiar with modern methods of instruction, but also get a better understanding of the nature of research itself. Upon entering classrooms and participating in lectures, I could recognise the distinct settings of the chairs and desks, incorporation of new technology, and research-based pedagogies all of which acknowledged student voice as central, requiring students to be active, responsible participants in their own learning with teachers being as the learning facilitators. After a period of confusion, I managed to find myself and excitedly found one of the missing pieces of the puzzle; collaborative learning.

In terms of research training, I was astonished to hear about new concepts such as philosophical and theoretical assumptions of research, qualitative and quantitative methodologies, etc. Until then, I had a very limited understanding of research. As a MA graduate, I was educated as pragmatic positivist who was just partially familiar with some quantitative methodologies such as survey, experimental, quasi-experimental, and correlational research with no further information about philosophical and theoretical assumptions of research. In fact, I was trained to discover an educational problem through causal mechanistic framework through a linear, objective, and value-free process. To make it brief, the key point I learnt during my research training courses was the fact that
educational research is not about the natural world, but it is about a social world. I also
learned that the social world is a reflexive world in which people can think, feel, argue, and
make decisions. Hence, scientific research does not properly address educational concerns
as unlike physical science, educational systems are open, dynamic, and live systems. In fact,
scientific research is not an appropriate approach to study social phenomena since
researchers can never recognise or control all the relevant factors/variables in social
systems.

10.5.3 Final episode

Coming from a positivist background, I found it quite challenging to change my
philosophical views about research at the beginning. I remember I had a very hot discussion
with my ex-supervisor on the first draft of my proposal for more than three months trying
to justify the design of my research project. He patiently listened to me and indirectly
encouraged me to look at the issue in a greater depth. Eventually I ended up changing not
only my research topic and its direction, but also its philosophical underpinning and the
methodology I adopted to address the problems.

As a qualitative research, I should admit, my project lacked clear research questions at its
outset. Rather, I just developed research objectives and defined some areas to focus on, but
gradually and through the research process I managed to develop clear and effective
research questions. Before entering the field and collecting data, I only reviewed the
seminal literature but my focus was mainly on developing sound and coherent research
design. Before data collection stage, I was always concerned about the quality and the
quantity of data. I kept on asking myself would the data be enough for PhD degree. Was
my study original? Would my research findings contribute to the existing knowledge? What
was the point of doing it? Everything became a question. There were no absolutes -
nothing to rely on. Data collection procedure lasted over six months and had its own weak
and strong points. Piloting and performing the study at the same time was one of the
methodological innovations of my study which I found it very beneficial in amending the
data collection procedure. Acting as a teacher/researcher was also a unique opportunity
which helped me access a natural educational course, get involved in the activities, and
observe the setting very closely. Back from the setting, I had collected an overwhelming
amount of data which took me more than 2 years to analyse and interpret. The collected
data and its analysis made many uncertainties clear. For example, I and could develop clear
research questions and started extensive literature review after data collection stage. In this sense, I was very clear about what to look for and on what areas to concentrate and saved time avoiding reviewing irrelevant articles. As I approached the final stages of my project, my earlier concerns and ambiguities were addressed automatically. In fact, visiting and re-visiting the data again and again made me feel that my research project would not only contribute to the existing knowledge but at the same time could make a difference to policy and practice. However, my supervisors rightly recommended me not to overstate the key finding of my study probably because no research is complete and perfect and findings should be reported in a tentative and modest way.

I believe that PhD is a learning process and PhD candidates should aim to grow as independent researchers. Yet, being independent does not necessarily downplay supervisors’ great job. By being independent, I mean young researchers should not simply sit and wait for their supervisors to tell them what to do. Rather, they should take initiative, engage in the tasks themselves, and when faced with challenges ask for their help since they are always there to support and offer solutions. Moreover, there is a popular comment among all those who are involved in PhD one way or another that PhD is a lonely process. However, networking can bridge this concern. My personal experience, for instance, was very positive in this case. Indeed, I was lucky to get to know some inspiring PhD colleagues in our school and those who shared the same office with me. I think my PhD experience would not have been so positive without them. We shared our thoughts and feelings about all aspects of the PhD process including our meetings with our supervisors and tried to support and motivate each other. It is so important to know that there are people who are experiencing the same challenges as you are, have the same concerns as you have, and are always ready to share their knowledge and experiences with you.

As I conclude the thesis, I definitely feel more informed about issues such as L2 writing, writing process, peer evaluation, feedback, revision, and assessment than I used to at the beginning of my study. I am also glad that my thesis has succeeded in throwing up a new way of thinking about peer review and collaborative revision techniques which can serve as a basis for a range of future research projects not only within EFL, but also ESL contexts. I am also more than happy to be able to achieve the dream I had with me from my childhood; becoming a researcher!?


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<th>Observation Topic: (peer review/collaborative revision)</th>
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<th>Descriptions (chronology of activities):</th>
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Appendix 2

Interview Protocol

Semi-structured interviews which were implemented in three phases included the following open-ended questions:

One-to-one interview (30 minutes)

1. What is your viewpoint about peer review activity? In other words, do you like it or not? Why?

2. What is your viewpoint about collaborative revision activity? In other words, do you like it or not? Why?

3. What is your viewpoint about multiple draft writing? In other words, do you like it or not? Why?

4. What use did you make of your peer’s comments? Did you use them in your revision? If so, what uses were they? If not, why not?

5. Were error codes user friendly? Why or why not? What problems, if any, did you see in understanding/applying them? Elaborate on your answer.

6. What type of peer feedback do you prefer? Use specific examples (content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary, etc.).

7. What was the focus of your peer’s feedback?

8. Did you find your instructor’s feedback useful? Why or why not? What problems, if any, did you see in understanding/applying them? Elaborate on your answer.

8. Did you benefit from reading your peer’s paper and giving him/her feedback? If so, what were the benefits? If not, why not?

9. Are there anything else you’d like to add about the course in general, and peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple drafting in particular?

- Probing questions were also asked in response to the answers provided by students.
**Pair interview (1 hour)**

1. What use did you make of your peer’s comments? Did you use them in your revision? If so, what uses were they? If not, why not?

2. Did you benefit from reviewing your partner’s paper? In other words, do you feel your evaluation skill has improved?

3. Were error codes user friendly? Why or why not? What problems, if any, did you see in understanding/applying them? Elaborate on your answer.

4. What type of peer feedback do you prefer? Use specific examples (content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary, etc.).

5. Did you find your instructor’s feedback useful? Why or why not? What problems, if any, did you see in understanding/applying them? Elaborate on your answer.

6. While writing your first draft, you knew your peer would be your audience. Did that have any effect on your writing or not?

7. To what extent peer review training prior to actual peer feedback activities was useful? Did you benefit from the training?

8. In what ways does writing genre affect peer oral feedback and collaborative revision?

9. Did you yourself initiate any revision without your peer’s or instructor’s advice?

10. What use did you make of writing generics introduced by the instructor during the first stage of writing course?

11. To what extent did the input match the output? In other words, was there any relevance between the training you received and the activities you were required to do?

12. Did you benefit from reading your peer’s paper and giving him/her feedback? If so, what were the benefits? If not, why not?

13. Are you satisfied with your writing progress? What went well? What needs further practice?

14. Are there anything else you’d like to add about the course in general, and peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple drafting in particular?
Focus Group Interview (2 hours)

1. What is your viewpoint about peer review activity? In other words, do you like it or not? Why?

2. What is your viewpoint about collaborative revision activity? In other words, do you like it or not? Why?

3. What is your viewpoint about multiple draft writing? In other words, do you like it or not? Why?

4. Were error codes user friendly? Why or why not? What problems, if any, did you see in understanding/applying them? Elaborate on your answer.

5. To what extent peer review training prior to actual peer feedback activities was useful? Did you benefit from the training?

6. Are you satisfied with your writing progress? What went well? What needs further practice?

7. Are there anything else you would like to add about the course in general, and peer reviewing, collaborative revision, and multiple drafting in particular?
Appendix 3

Demographic Questionnaire

These questions are for classification purposes only. All your answers will be treated confidentially.

1. Name/Surname:
2. What is your gender?
   Male ☐   Female ☐
3. How old are you?
4. How long have you been studying English (high school, university, language institutes)?
5. How do you describe your skills in English language writing?
   Excellent ☐   Good ☐   Fair ☐   Poor ☐
6. Have you ever had any opportunities to attend any English writing courses (paragraph or essay writing) than the current course?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

If your answer to question 6 is YES, then answer questions 7 and 8.

7. Have you ever had previous experience of multiple-drafts writing activities; i.e., rewriting your paper again using the feedback/comments you received from your teacher?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

your peer?
   Yes ☐   No ☐
8. Have you ever had previous experiences of peer review activities?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

collaborative revision activities?
   Yes ☐   No ☐
9. What are your goals for attending this essay writing course?
10. What are you future career goals?
Appendix 4
Supplementary Materials

Assignment 1: Methods of Organisation

Use chronological order to organize the sentences below. Write the number 1 beside the point that all other sentences support. Then number each supporting sentence as it occurs in time.

--- The table is right near the garbage bin.
--- So you reluctantly select a gluelike tuna-fish sandwich, a crushed apple pie, and watery lukewarm coffee.
--- You sit at the edge of the table, away from garbage bin, and gulp down your meal.
--- Trying to eat in the cafeteria is an unpleasant experience.
--- Suddenly you spot a free table in the centre.
--- With the last swallow of the lukewarm coffee, you get up and leave the cafeteria as rapidly as possible.
--- Flies are flitting into and out of the pail.
--- By the time it is your turn, the few things that are almost good are gone.
--- There does not seem to be a free table anywhere.
--- Unfortunately, there is a queue in the cafeteria.
--- The doughnut, coconut-custard pie, and iced tea have all disappeared.
--- You hold your tray and look for a place to sit down.
--- You have a class in a few minutes, so you run in to grab something to eat quickly.

Use emphatic order to arrange the sentences below. Write the number 1 beside the point that all other sentences support. Then number each supporting sentence, starting with what seems to be the least important detail and ending with the most important one (ascending order).

--- The people here are all around my age and seem to be genuinely friendly and interested in me.
--- The place where I live has several important advantages.

--- The schools in this neighbourhood have a good reputation, so I feel that my daughter is getting a good reputation.

--- The best thing of all about this area, though, is the school system.

--- Therefore, I don’t have to put up with public transportation or worry about how much it’s going to cost to park each day.

--- The school has also an extended day-care program, so I know my daughter is in good hands until I come home from work.

--- First of all, I like the people who live in the other flats near mine.

--- Another positive aspect of this area is that it’s close to where I work.

--- That’s more than I can say for the last place I lived, where people stayed behind locked doors.

--- The office where I’m a receptionist is only a six-block walk from my house.

--- In addition, I save a lot of wear and tear on my car.
Assignment 2: Outlining

Read each group of specific ideas below. Then circle the letter of the general idea that tells what the specific ideas have in common. Note that the general idea should not be too broad or too narrow.

1. Specific ideas: runny nose, coughing, sneezing, sore throat
   The general idea is:
   a) cold symptoms   b) symptoms   c) throat problems

2. Specific ideas: leaking toilet, no hot water, broken window, roaches
   The general idea is:
   a) problems   b) kitchen problems   c) flat problems

3. Specific ideas: putting sticky tape on someone’s chair, putting a “kick me” sign on someone’s back, putting hot pepper on someone’s cereal
   The general idea is:
   a) jokes   b) practical jokes   c) practical jokes played on teachers

4. Specific ideas: money problems, family problems, relationship problems, health problems
   a) poor grades   b) causes of poor grades   c) effects of poor grades

5. Specific ideas: going to bed earlier, eating healthier foods, reading for half an hour each day, trying to be kinder
   a) resolutions   b) problems   c) solutions

In the following items, the specific ideas are given but the general ideas are unstated. Fill in each blank with a general idea that accurately describes the list provided.

1. General idea: ---------------------------------------------------------------
   Specific ideas: washing dishes, preparing meals, taking out trash, dusting

2. General idea: ---------------------------------------------------------------
   Specific ideas: order the invitations, get the bride’s gown, rent the tuxedos, hire a photographer

3. General idea: ---------------------------------------------------------------
   Specific ideas: “I like your dress.”, “You look great in red.”, “Your new haircut looks terrific.”, “You did very well on the exam.”

4. General idea: ---------------------------------------------------------------
Specific ideas: convenient work hours, short travel time to job, good pay, considerate boss

5. General idea:

Specific ideas: greed, cowardice, selfishness, dishonesty

**In each of the lists below, major and minor ideas are mixed together. Put the ideas in logical order by filling in the outlines.**

1. Thesis: People can be classified by how they treat their cars.

| Seldom wax or vacuum car | I.  
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Keep every mechanical item in top shape | a.  
| Protective owners | b.  
| Deliberately ignore needed maintenance | II.  
| Indifferent owners | a.  
| Wash and polish car every week | b.  
| Never wash, wax, or vacuum car | III.  
| Abusive owners | a.  
| Inspect and service car only when required by state law | b.  

2. Thesis: living with an elderly parent has many benefits.

| Advantages for elderly person | I.  
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Live-in baby-sitter | a.  
| Learn about the past | b.  
| Advantages for adult children | II.  
| Serve useful role in family | a.  
| Help with household tasks | b.  
| Advantages for grandchildren | III.  
| Stay active and interested in young people | a.  
| More attention from adults | b.  

3. Extending the school day would have several advantages

| Help children academically | I.  
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Parents know children are safe at the school | a.  

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More time to spend on basics
Less pressure to cover subjects quickly
More time for extras like art, music, and sports
Help working parents
More convenient to pick up children at 4 or 5 PM
Teachers’ salaries would be raised
Help teachers
Sample Introductory Paragraphs

My friend X

1. Contrast: When I was younger, I loved loneliness. I didn’t care about making friends with my mates and preferred solitude. As I grew up, I realized that friends are part of my life and started changing my views. Now I have a few lovely friends I enjoy their company. X is one of those wonderful friends I can’t imagine life without him/her. Although he/she looks normal, his/her personality, and achievements are excellent.

2. Anecdote: I remember once I got the flu and since I was away from home, the only people who kept looking after me were my great friends. They came to my place every day and asked if I needed any help. Among them X was something else. Ever after we have been close friends and have deepened our friendship. Although he/she looks normal, his/her personality, and achievements are excellent.

3. Question: Do you have the same attitudes towards your friends as me? Do you agree that a good friend is a treasure? I have a few but valuable friends. I love them, proud of having them, and hope to keep them forever. X is one of those friends of mine I always admire. Although he/she looks normal, his/her personality, and achievements are excellent.

4. Quotation: “A friend in need is a friend indeed”. This well-known proverb amazingly applies to our modern period. Nowadays, people have forgotten the true meaning of friendship and relationships are faded due to the influence of modern life. However, there are still friends you can trust when facing a problem. My friend X is one of those friends. Although he/she looks normal, his/her personality, and achievements are excellent.

5. General to narrow: Friends are indispensable part of everybody’s life experience. If we look back, we see their tracks and effects all over our life. They are those whom we share our joys and grieves with and they are always there for advice/support. My friend X is one of those nice friends who have been very influential in my life. Although he/she looks normal, his/her personality, and achievements are excellent.

6. Relevance: No one can deny the effects a friend can have on one’s life. Great friend are invaluable while the notorious ones are real pain. So, people should be very careful in making friends. I am lucky to know X as my friend. She/he is such a sweet girl/boy. Although he/she looks normal, his/her personality, and achievements are excellent.
Useful Linking Words and Phrases For Essays

To indicate a contrast:

however instead rather still in spite of yet
on the other hand conversely in comparison as opposed to nevertheless although
alternatively on the contrary another possibility notwithstanding even though
in contrast in fact but despite this for all that

To provide an illustration:

for example in other words typical of this/such including chiefly
that is namely on such especially mainly
that is to say such as not least most importantly
in other words in other words in other words

To extend a point (to add):

similarly furthermore besides another
equally Indeed above all moreover
likewise in the same way as well again
also additionally in addition

To show cause and effect/conclusion:

so therefore thus
then as result/consequence resulting from
in this/that case consequently for this reason
owing to/due to the fact it follows that this suggests that
accepting/assuming this in conclusion it might be concluded in all
from this this implies
in short to conclude

To show the sequence:

first(ly) second(ly) place first and foremost another
first and most importantly then
for begin/start with after
in the first/second

To summarize:

in short consequently accordingly
to sum up thus therefore
due to all in all as a result
finally in summary in conclusion
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Assignment 3

Underline the 4 time signals in the following paragraph:

It is often easy to spot bad drivers on the road because they usually make more than one mistake: they make their mistakes in series. First, for example, you notice that a man is tailgating you. Then, almost as soon as you notice, he has passed you in a no-passing zone. That’s two mistakes already in a matter of seconds. Next, almost inevitably, you see him speed down the road and pass someone else. Finally, as you watch in disbelief, glad that he’s out of your way, he speeds through a red light or cuts across oncoming traffic in a wild left turn.

Underline the 4 contrast signals in the following paragraph:

In some ways, train travel is superior to air travel. People always marvel at the speed with which airplanes can zip from one end of the country to another. Trains, on the other hand, definitely take longer. But sometimes longer can be better. Travelling across the country by train allows you to experience the trip more completely. You get to see the cities and towns, mountains and prairies that too often pass by unnoticed when you fly. Another advantage of train travel is comfort. Travelling by plane means wedging yourself into a narrow seat with your knees bumping the back of the seat in front of you and being handed a “snack” consisting a pack of ten roasted peanuts. In contrast, the seats on most trains are spacious and comfortable, permitting even the longest-legged traveller to stretch out and watch the scenery just outside the window. And when train travellers hungry, they can get up and stroll to the dining car, where they can order anything from a simple snack to a gourmet meal. There is no question that train travel is definitely slow and low-fashioned compared with air travel. However, in many ways it is much more civilized.

Underline the 3 illustration signals in the following selection:

Status symbols are all around us. The cars we drive, for instance, say something about who we are and how successful we have been. The auto makers depend on this perception of automobiles, designing their commercials to show older, well-established people driving Cadillac and young, fun-loving people driving to the beach in sports cars. Television, too, has become something of a status symbol. Specifically, schoolchildren are often rated by
their classmates according to the brand names of their clothing. Another example of status symbol is the videocassette recorder. This device, not so long ago considered a novelty, is now as common as the television set itself. Being without a VCR today is like being without a record player in the seventies.
Sample Concluding Paragraphs

1. To sum up, although physical appearance may be the first impression one leaves on others, in long lasting relationships it is the other characteristics that do matter. Indeed, the same is true about my friend X. I really don’t care about how he/she looks. What is appealing to me is his/her positive features and his/her considerable abilities. These are what he/she is famous for and make everyone admire him/her. What about you? Are you among those people who prioritize physical appearance in their friendships? Or, you also look for some other aspects in approaching your would be friends?

2. In conclusion, human beings are sociable creatures. They can’t live on their own. They should socialize with others, exchange experiences, ideas, and beliefs, and express feelings and emotions. In fact, friends can gracefully fulfil all these. However, one condition should be met in making friends. Great care should be taken in order to find true friends. And finally as such friends are rare, after finding them, people should try to keep them forever. That’s what my friend X and I are determined to do.
Sentence Fragment

- While writing, students are expected to present their ideas and arguments in complete sentences. Every sentence must have a subject, a verb, and must express a complete thought. A sentence fragment is a part of a sentence punctuated as if it were a whole one.

- Before leaving for work this morning.
  - I had my breakfast before leaving for work this morning.

- Having completed her first year at law school.
  - Having completed her first year at law school, she was looking for a part-time job as an apprentice.

- I could not get into the house. Because I had forgotten my key.
  - I could not get into the house because I had forgotten my key.

- Forgot to check my briefcase.
  - As I was in a hurry, I forgot to check my briefcase.

Spotting and Editing Sentence Fragments

Ask yourself:

1. Does the construction have a subject?

Does the construction have a predicate (a verb and express a complete thought)?

Recognize and eliminate fragments in the following paragraphs

1. In “Grace”, James Joyce tells the story of a degraded drunkard, Mr Kernan. Who is persuaded by some friends to go to a Catholic retreat. Mr Kernan, his wife, and his friends all hope that by going he will receive the grace of God. And thereby save his soul. Joyce, however, complicates matters. By being ironically critical of the priest and certain members of the church at which Kernan is to retreat. It is, therefore, questionable. As to whether or not the type of religion offered to Mr Kernan is capable of redeeming him.
2. The story opens with Mr Kernan lying on the lavatory floor of a pub. And being helped up by two gentlemen. (Throughout the story Mr Kernan is continually being lifted up by others.) As he lies on the floor. His clothes are “smeared with the filth and ooze of the floor on which he had lain, face downward”. Mr Kernan, in his helpless state, is unable to pull himself up or better his condition. Must depend on others for help and guidance. In this sense, he is like many of the other characters described in Dubliners. Little Chandler, who needs the help of a friend to escape from Dublin.

3. The help Mr Kernan gets from his wife is of a dubious quality. Joyce is careful to say that she nurses him whenever he is sick from drinking. And that she tries to make him eat breakfast. She is dutiful. But her actions seem loveless. Lacking deep affection and concern for her husband. She views him as she does the weather. Both sometimes good, sometimes bad.

4. Mr Kernan eventually goes to a retreat. Largely because of the efforts of three friends who pretend that they too need to retreat for a time. The priest, as Joyce describes him, talks impersonally. As if he were directing a business meeting, saying such things as “verifying accounts” and “looking into accounts”. As if the grace of God was some kind of factor in mathematical equation. Rather than a gift of love to an undeserving but contrite sinner. Whether the visit and the talk help Mr Kernan is doubtful. Most unlikely.
Run-on

- A run-on sentence connects independent clauses with no punctuation or conjunctions between them. So, in run-ons we have two complete thoughts with no sign or mark between them.
  - Toddlers are welcome nurses are always on hand to supervise the activities.

How to edit run-ons?

A. Use a comma and a conjunction between the two clauses:
  - Toddlers are welcome, and nurses are always on hand to supervise the activities.

B. Use a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb between the two clauses:
  - Toddlers are welcome; indeed, nurses are always on hand to supervise the activities.

C. Put a semicolon at the end of the first clause:
  - Toddlers are welcome; nurses are always on hand to supervise the activities.

D. Put a period at the end of the first clause:
  - Toddlers are welcome. Nurses are always on hand to supervise the activities.

Rewrite the following run-on sentences using a semicolon, a comma plus a suitable conjunction, or a period.

1. Yellow sunlight played upon the waves the air turned warm.

2. As a slave, Sojourner Truth was denied access to formal education nevertheless, she became one of the most powerful lecturers of the late nineteenth century.

3. “In God we trust” was not the first motto on the first coin minted in the United States the first motto was “Mind your own business”.

4. In 1948 Russian defectors wrote about life under Stalin thus the world learned of his ruthless purges.
5. The French revolutionaries executed King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette in 1973 likewise Russian revolutionaries executed Czar Nicolas II and the Empress Alexandra in 1918.

In the following paragraphs, correct any run-on sentences.

1. Since World War II, Sweden has clung to a policy of neutrality it has often served as a mediator between quarrelling nations. Swedish troops are mobilized not to fight but to quell fighting, in fact, they have served as peace keeping forces in Israel, the Congo, and Cyprus. Yet two Swedish statesmen have been killed while seeking peace. Count Folke Bernadotte was assassinated during a peace mission to Israel likewise Dag Hammarskjold died in a plane crash in Africa.

2. Ski jumping is done on a hill that is specially designed for that purpose, a jumping hill is made up of four parts: the in run, the take-off, the landing, and the outrun. The in run is the steep slope on which the jumper picks up speed at the end of the in run is the take-off, where the jumper becomes airborne, and next comes the landing, a part of the hill on which the jumper lands the landing continues into the outrun, which allows room to slow down and stop.
Parallel Construction:

- The arrangement of two or more elements of a sentence in a grammatically equivalent patterns: noun lined up with noun, verb with verb, phrase with phrase, and clause with clause.

- Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote.

- Brenda treated the patient swiftly and calmly.

- In order to become a dancer, Lola is taking lessons, working in amateur shows, and auditioning for professional companies.

- If we are not careful, we’ll leave the next generation polluted air, contaminated water, and dead forests.

Edit the faulty parallelism in the following sentences.

1. On sunny days many like to skate on the village pond or sledding on Mount Knox.

2. Janice’s way of reading menus is better than most people.

3. According to the mayor, all police officers should march in the parade on July 4 and to attend the picnic supper.

4. Rather than love, than money, than famous, give me truth.

5. Tourists can reach the summit by taking the funicular railway or climb the steps on the eastern slope.

6. They advanced slowly but steady.

7. I was a personality before I became a person- I am simple, complex, generosity, selfish, unattractive, beautiful, and lazy.

8. Walking in dust can be more rewarding than to sit on silk.
Punctuation

A. Capitalization

I. Capitalize the first word of a sentence:

   a. Please enclose payment with your order.

   b. When did these geese migrate?

II. Capitalize proper nouns and proper adjectives, days of the weeks and months:

   France       French       Isfahan       General Motors       Hafez
   Iranian       July         April         Monday         Friday

III. Capitalize the pronoun I whenever you use it:

   a. I have not said I would take the job.

   b. Do I need to have another interview?

   ❖ Improve each of the entries by adding or removing capital letters whenever necessary.

1. My Mother and Father spent five days in Toronto recently.

   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

2. One of the most beautiful areas in the United States is the area within and around Yosemite National Park.

   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. Facilities are crowded in the Summer, when vacationers invade the region in large numbers; so better times for a visit are Spring and Fall.

   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. The park offers something memorable for everyone—children, their Moms and Dads, and Senior Citizens.

   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. I met Chris today. I asked him about the rumors I had heard last night.

   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
B. Comma

I. Use a comma before a conjunction (and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet) linking two independent clauses:

   a. The children were playing softball, and the adults were relaxing with the Sunday paper.

   b. Andrew had planned to leave Denver at 9.00 A.M., but he overslept and missed his flight.

II. Use a comma before a conjunction linking the last two items in a series:

   a. She left the bank with her hat, her coat, and all the money.

   b. The young couple visited Shiraz, Isfahan, and Yazd in their Norouz tour.

III. Use a comma before a conjunction to set off a contrasting phrase:

   a. He enjoys preparing meals, but not washing pots and pans.

IV. Use a comma after a transition word (Conjunctive adverb) beginning a sentence or clause:

   a. Many homeowners are faced with rising fuel costs. Consequently, they are seeking a cut in their property taxes.

   b. She is a gifted composer; in fact, she has written two symphonies.

V. Use a pair of commas to set off a conjunctive adverb placed in the middle of a clause or sentence:

   a. The first act went smoothly. In the third act, however, two actors forgot their lines.

❖ Each of the following entries requires addition of a comma or commas. Make the necessary changes.

1. The drawer was stuffed with shirts sweaters socks and neckties.

2. Road maps provide motorists with useful facts including the location of towns and cities the routes from place to place and the mileage between them.
3. The company did not operate for long but in those few months its accomplishments became legendary.

4. I would like to read many books. However I don’t seem to have enough time to read.

5. I want you to buy milk, eggs, and fruit juice; furthermore I want you to be sure to get cereal and ice cream.

6. Jane studies all the time. Billy in contrast never studies.

C. Semicolon

I. Use a semicolon to join two independent clauses when the second begins with or includes a conjunctive adverb, such as however, for example, or in addition.

   a. Renfrew is both creative and independent; for example, he designed and built his own house.

   b. John ate and ate; nevertheless, he never gained weight.

II. A semicolon can be used to sort out a complicated list containing many items, many of which themselves contain commas.

   a. In the meeting today we have Professor Wilson, University of Barnsley; Dr. Watson, University of Warwick; Colonel Custard, Metropolitan Police; and Dr. Jane Spiro, University of Bath.

   - Each of the following entries requires addition of one or more semicolons. Make the necessary changes.

1. John is Canadian however, he lives in the United States.

2. First prize was given to Jane Smervitz, Peoria, Illinois, second prize to Sam Frimpson, Duluth, Minnesota, third prize to Amber Ambleton, Oxnard, California.
3. Melissa travelled across Russia on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, as a result, she saw much more of the country than the average tourist does.

4. Star Trek, created by Gene Roddenberry, Babylon 5, by JMS, Buffy, by Joss Whedon, and Farscape, from the Henson Company.

D. Colon

I. Use colon to introduce a list coming at the end of a sentence:
   
   a. The tenants broke three appliances: the washing machine, the dryer, and the electric oven.
   
   b. I could only find three of the ingredients: sugar, flour, and coconut.

II. Use a colon to introduce an example or an explanation related to something just mentioned:

   a. The miser had only one desire: to see his gold coins.

   ➤ Each of the following entries requires addition of one or more semicolons. Make the necessary changes.

1. The hostage wants one thing freedom to go home.

2. Experienced hikers take three things with them on the trail a compass, a canteen filled with fresh water, and matches.

3. You will need to bring three things to the party some food, something to drink, and a small gift for the hostess.

4. I'll tell you what I'm going to do I'm going to quit!
5. I need to pick up a few things at the grocery store milk, bread, cheese, and juice.

E. Period

I. To mark the end of a declarative sentence, or an indirect question:
   a. I visited Australia last year.
   b. I asked my instructor how we could measure the spread of light.
   c. Customers keep asking what the specials are.

II. To mark the end of some abbreviations:
   Ms. Black    Dr. Davis    8.30 A.M.    Ms. Rollins    Mr. MacDonald
Appendix 5

Consent Form

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

................................................................. .................................................................
(Signature of participant ) (Date)

............................
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s):.................................................................

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

........................................................................................................................................

OR

........................................................................................................................................

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University’s registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.
Appendix 6

Process Essay Supporting Materials


➢ It tells the readers how to do something. It also explains how something works or how a process happens.

➢ This type of essay has the aim of describing a definite process through a series of steps and stages.

➢ A process essay describes a procedure. It gives a step-by-step explanation of a process that leads to an expected or planned outcome. There are two types of process essay:
  o Directional process essay- gives instructions on how to accomplish a specific task
  o Informational process essay- explains or analyses a process

➢ In process essay the writer needs to give clear and accurate guidance or directions, making the steps as simple as possible for the reader to follow. So, the writer must decide exactly what the reader already knows and what he or she needs to be told.

➢ Each step or part of the directions should be discussed in the same order as it occurs in the process.

➢ Process essays are generally organized according to time: that is they begin with the first step in the process and proceed in time until the last step in the process. It is natural, then, that transition words indicate that one step has been completed and a new one will begin.

➢ Three essential factors in effective process essay:
First, be sure that the steps and procedures are carefully organized, step by step—usually in the order in which they should be carried out—so that the reader can understand and follow your explanation.

Second, be sure that you include any information that the reader needs about any special materials or preliminary steps.

Third, include all the specific steps in the process.

Process essay examples: Recipes, operation manuals

- How to cook a pizza
- How to operate a personal computer
- How to kick a bad habit
- How to plan a perfect party
- How to apply for a university
Steps in Writing a Process Essay

I. Pre-writing

- Brainstorm and think about a promising title.
- Check if you have enough information available to support your title.
- Develop your thesis statement by either:
  - Saying that it is important that your readers know about this process
    (Knowing how to choose a pet wisely can ensure that the two of you have a
    happy relationship.)
  - Stating your opinion of this process (Quitting smoking is the most important
    single thing you can do for your health.)
- Make a list/outline of the steps you are describing.
- Number your items in time order (in the order in which they are performed). Strike
  out the items that do not fit in the list. Add others as they occur to you.
- Decide how the items can be grouped (major, and minor steps).

II. Drafting

- Use your list as a guide to write the first draft of your paper.
- In the introductory paragraph of the process essay, you will tell the reader what the
  process is that you will be discussing as well as why it is important to understand the
  process.
- In the body of the essay, you will describe the steps in chronological order. It is
  advisable to devote one paragraph per group of steps (main steps and their sub
  steps).
- In the concluding paragraph, you will summarize the activity you have just described
  and you will repeat the importance of understanding the process. So, it is best to
  summarize the main steps of the process in the concluding paragraph of the essay.
- Since process essay involves describing steps in chronological order, you should use
  transition words to show the relationships between these steps. In such papers time
  (sequence) transitions (signals) are especially useful.
III. Revising

- Ask yourself:
- Does the paper describe the steps in a clear, logical way?
- Have you used the transition words properly?
- Does the paper describe the necessary steps so that a reader could perform the task described?
Model Essay 1

How to Con an Instructor

Enter College, and you’ll soon be reminded of an old saying: “The pen is mightier than a sword.” That person behind the instructor’s desk holds your future in his or her ink-stained hands. So your first important assignment in college has nothing to do with required readings, examinations, or even the hazards of registration. It is, instead, how to con an instructor.

The first step in conning an instructor is to use your body language. You may be able to convince your instructor that you are special without even saying a word. When you enter the classroom, be sure to sit in the front row. That way the instructor can’t possibly miss you. Then as the instructor lectures, take note frantically. The instructor will be flattered that you think so much of his or her words that you want to write them all down. While you are writing, be sure to smile at the instructor’s jokes and nod violently in agreement with every major point. Most important, as class continues, sit with your body pitched forward and your eyes wide open, fixed firmly, as if hypnotized, on your instructor’s face. Make your whole body suggest that you are watching a star.

Once you have mastered body language, it is time to move on the second phase of conning the instructor: class participation. Everyone knows that the student who is most eager to learn is the one who responds to the questions that are asked and even comes up with a few more. Therefore, be sure to be responsive. Many students especially in large classes, get lost and never do anything to do themselves stand out. Another good participation technique is to wait until the instructor has said something that sounds profound and then ask him or her to repeat it slowly so you can get it down word for word in your notes. No instructor can resist this kind of flattery.

However, the most advanced form of conning an instructor happens after class. Don’t be like the others who slap their notebooks closed, snatch up their books, and rush out the door before the echoes of the final bell have died away. Instead, be reluctant to leave. Approach the instructor’s desk hesitantly, almost reverently. Say that you want to find out more about the topic. Is there any extra reading you can do? Even better, ask if the instructor has written anything on the topic- and whether you could borrow it. Finally, compliment your
instructor by saying that this is the most interesting course you’ve ever taken. Nothing beats the personal approach for making an instructor think you care.

Body language, questions, after class discussions—these are the secrets of conning an instructor that every college student should know. Once you master these methods, you won’t have to worry about a thing—until the final exam.
How to write an Essay

Do you know how to write an essay? Writing an essay could be easy or hard. Some students cannot do it well and that is why they hate it. If you devote the time needed and follow some fundamental steps, you can learn to craft a great essay. The actual writing of an essay consists of three key steps: pre-writing, drafting, and revising.

**Pre-writing** step begins with three basic questions: **who, what, why**. It is in this stage that you should decide on the audience, the title, and the purpose of your essay. Normally, in academic context the audience is the course lecturer and he/she is the one who assigns the title and determines the purpose of the task. If the title is not assigned, then you can find a promising title by **brainstorming**. Brainstorming is a technique which helps you find a suitable title that you think you have enough information about and can develop through your essay. After deciding on your title, main and sub points, you should write an appropriate thesis statement for your essay. Thesis statement is one or two sentences that include the central idea of the essay. In other words, it expresses what the essay is about and from what position the essay is written. Finally, prepare an outline for your essay. In fact, trying to make an outline is a good way to check if you need to do more pre-writing. In addition, an outline will help you think carefully about the point you are making, the supporting items for that point, and the order in which you will arrange those items.

Once you are done with pre-writing activities, you are ready to move to the second step: **drafting**. Drafting involves writing a strong introductory paragraph, detailed body paragraphs, and an effective concluding paragraph. The introduction is the first paragraph in your essay, and it should accomplish at least three specific goals: capturing the reader’s interest, expressing your opinion in thesis statement, and briefly introducing the main points you are about to present in the essay. Following the introduction come the body paragraphs each limited to one main idea that supports your thesis. You should ensure to back up each of the main ideas of the body paragraphs by offering facts, details, and examples. Then, it is time to write the conclusion. A conclusion restates the main idea of your essay, and sums up what your essay is about.

After you have completed the first draft of your essay, it is a good idea to re-visit it for revision and edition. In fact, this last step is a complement to the previous ones and
includes refining the essay against issues such as cohesion, coherence, and unity, as well as checking it for grammar, vocabulary choices, and mechanics—punctuation and spelling. Remember that revision means spotting and changing anything that would stop your reader from enjoying your essay.

In short, although many students have major difficulty writing an essay, yet those who follow these few simple steps will find that the essay almost writes itself. Then, they will be responsible only for supplying ideas, which are the important part of the essay anyway.
Appendix 7

Process Essay Sample Peer Response Sheet

Writing cycle: ① ②

Draft written by: Response provided by:

Date: Title of essay:

The purpose of peer reviewing is to provide your partner with honest but helpful reactions and responses as the reader of the essay. Read your peer’s essay carefully and think about the questions. After you have answered these questions, discuss them with him/her.

A. Content and Organisation:

1. Read the whole essay:

   1a. Is the essay well organized through introduction, body, and conclusion?

   1b. Has the writer devoted one paragraph per main step and its sub-steps?

   1c. Has the paper used a clear method of organisation (chronology/ emphatic)?

      1d. Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the structure, paragraphing, and organisation of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her.

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      ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

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      ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

2. Read the introduction:

   2a. Does the introduction contain a thesis statement?

   2b. Does it clearly tell what the writer is going to describe?

   2c. Does the writer try to state the importance of process or he/she intends to express his/her opinion of it?

      2d. Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the introduction and thesis statement of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her.

      ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..
3. Read the body paragraphs:

3a. Is all the essential and necessary information included so that any one reading the paper can follow the same process?

3b. Has the author provided a clear, step-by-step, and logical description of the process?

3c. Are the steps presented in a logical and correct order?

3d. Are transition words (signals) used properly and do they help the paper move smoothly from one step to another? Can you follow the writer’s train of thought with ease?

3e. Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the body of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her.

4. Now read the conclusion:

4a. Does the conclusion provide a summary of the major steps?

4b. Does it make clear the results or the benefits of the process?

4c. Is the writer ultimately successful in accomplishing his/her task?

4d. Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the conclusion of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her.

5. What did you learn from reading this essay, either in language use or content? Is there anything nice you want to say about this essay? Discuss it with your partner.
B. Grammar, Vocabulary, and Mechanics:

Use the following correction codes to point out the errors. Mark the codes in your peer’s draft and discuss them later.

V Error in verb tense/verb form (active/passive voice, present/past participle)
   Example: Suzan got a cold. She couldn’t went to London last week. ➪ (V) (go)

Art Article/other determiner missing or unnecessary or incorrectly used
   Example: I read book about New York. The author, however, was from California. ➪ (Art) (a book)

PP Preposition missing or incorrectly used
   Example: Please come to my office at Thursday. ➪ (PP) (on Thursday)

PR Pronoun
   Example: Bill was so drunk last night. She couldn’t even recognize his father. ➪ (PR) (He)

NE Noun ending (plural or possessive) missing or unnecessary
   Example: Two piece of chalk ➪ (NE) (pieces)

WW Wrong word/ wrong word form
   Example: He is a linguistics. ➪ (WW) (linguist)
   Example: The show is alive. ➪ (WW) (live)

SV Subject and verb do not agree
   Example: I took three tests yesterday. The tests was so difficult. ➪ (SV) (were)

SS Sentence structure: incorrect structures, wrong word order, sentence fragments, run-ons
   Example: Because I could not sleep. I turned on my light and read. ➪ (SS) (sentence fragment)
   Example: It is nearly half past five we cannot reach town before dark. ➪ (SS) (run-on)

IT unnecessary, incorrect, or missing transition
   Example: I wanted to cook a pizza; therefore, I had forgotten to by the ingredients. ➪ (IT) However

PU Punctuation, capitalization, or spelling errors
   Example: sarah and karla are from south Africa ➪ (PU) (Sarah, Karla, South Africa)
   Example: Thise books belong to Barbara. ➪ (PU) (These)

^ Missing word
   Example: Printed on the back of the carton are directions that how the appliance is to be assembled. ➪ (^) (explain)

! Unnecessary word
   Example: Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, helps to increase the surface are of the food particles and prepares them for digestion. ➪ (!) (are)
The digestive process is important in maintaining the lives of living organisms and in provide\(^{(V)}\) them with needed energy. Groups of organs, such as the mouth, oesophagus, stomach, and intestines, work together to perform these\(^{(Art)}\) complex task. Digestion is the process of breaking down food from large molecules into small ones to make it easier for absorption\(^{(PU)}\). The three major steps involved in the digestive process are ingestion, digestion, and absorption.

Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, is the first step of the digestive process. Before\(^{(TT)}\) food enters the mouth, the tooth\(^{(NE)}\) chew it. Saliva, which is produced by the salivary glands, play\(^{(SV)}\) a major role in breaking down the food into smaller pieces. In the stomach, digestion begins. When the chewed food reaches to\(^{(PP)}\) the bottom of the esophagus, contraction of the stomach wall mix\(^{(SV)}\) the food. Acidic gastric juices, which are secreted by the gastric glands in the stomach, help in mixing the food and in turning them\(^{(PR)}\) into a partial liquid\(^{(SS)}\) it will have the ability to move into the small intestine. In the small intestine, enzymes are secreted, and digestion is completed.

Absorption\(^{(SS)}\). Absorption takes place in the small intestine. Small molecules of food are absorbed by the huge number of villi. Some of these absorbed molecules enter the bloodstream to be distributed throughout the whole body.

Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, helps to increase the surface area\(^{(1)}\) of the food particles and prepares it\(^{(PR)}\) for digestion. In the stomach, digestion begins, and it continues until it reaches the small intestine, where absorb\(^{(WW)}\) takes place. The digestive process maintains organisms' lives by providing them with energy needed for different functions.
The digestive process is important in maintaining the lives of living organisms and in providing them with needed energy. Groups of organs, such as the mouth, esophagus, stomach, and intestines, work together to perform this complex task. Digestion is the process of breaking down food from large molecules into small ones to make it easier for absorption. The three major steps involved in the digestive process are ingestion, digestion, and absorption.

Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, is the first step of the digestive process. After food enters the mouth, the teeth chew it. Saliva, which is produced by the salivary glands, plays a major role in breaking down the food into smaller pieces. These small pieces travel to the stomach through the esophagus.

In the stomach, the second step of the digestive process begins. When the chewed food reaches the bottom of the esophagus, a valve lets the food enter the stomach. Contraction of the stomach wall mixes the food. Acidic gastric juices, which are secreted by the gastric glands in the stomach, help in mixing the food and in turning it into a partial liquid so it will have the ability to move into the small intestine. In the small intestine, enzymes are secreted, and digestion is completed.

The last step in the digestive process is absorption. Absorption takes place in the small intestine. The wall of the small intestine is lined with small, finger like projections called villi. Small molecules of food are absorbed by the huge number of villi. Some of these absorbed molecules enter the bloodstream to be distributed throughout the whole body.

In conclusion, the digestive process involves three major steps: ingestion, digestion, and absorption. Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, helps to increase the surface of the food particles and prepares them for digestion. In the stomach, digestion begins, and it continues until it reaches the small intestine, where absorption takes place. The digestive process maintains organisms’ lives by providing them with energy needed for different functions.
Appendix 8

Argumentative Essay Supporting Materials

**Argumentative Essay**

- The primary purpose of an argumentative essay is to show that you have a valid argument, allowing the reader either to agree or disagree with your position.

- In this kind of essay, we not only give information but also present an argument with the PROS (supporting ideas) and CONS (opposing ideas) of an argumentative issue. Therefore, we should clearly take our Stand.

- **Sample argumentative organisation pattern (claim/counter claim):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>background information, thesis statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Body paragraph</td>
<td>con idea 1 &amp; refutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Body paragraph</td>
<td>con idea 2 &amp; refutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Body paragraph</td>
<td>con idea 3 &amp; refutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Thesis restatement and summary of the main ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Strategies for argumentation:**
  
  - Use tactful, courteous language. Do not refer to your opponents and their opinions in rude terms.
    
    - “everybody knows that...”, “People with any intelligence agree that…”
  
  - Keep the focus on the issue you are discussing, not on the people involved in the debate.
    
    - “My opponents say that smoking shouldn’t be illegal.”
    
    - “Supporters of smoking believe that shouldn’t be made illegal.”
  
  - Point out common ground that you and your readers share. Find points on which people on all sides of the argument can agree.
- “Watching TV can be valuable for children. However, spending more than 5 hours a day watching it is harmful.”

- Acknowledge differing viewpoints. Acknowledging other viewpoints strengthens your position by giving your readers the impression that you are a reasonable person, willing to look at the issue from all sides.

- Do not substitute opinions for facts. Each claim must be supported by solid evidence.

- Do not use first person. By stating your argument in a factual manner rather than as an opinion, it carries more weight and has a greater impact upon the reader.
  - “I believe animal experimentation is cruel.”
  - “Animal experimentation is a cruel practice that must be stopped immediately.”
Steps in Writing an Argumentative Essay

I. Pre-writing

- Find a good topic. The topic should spark your interest and be controversial.
- Decide what position you agree and can support with reasoning.
- Consider both sides of the topic and make a list of both sides of the argument.
- Make up a brief outline of your supporting ideas and decide in which order you want to present them. Emphatic order (in which you end with your most important reason) is often the most effective way to organize an argument.

II. Drafting

- **Introduction**: The introduction of an argumentative essay should contain a brief explanation of the topic, some background information (the history of the problem), and a thesis statement. Your thesis can state both your claim (position), and the counter claim (the opposing position) of that particular controversial topic.

- **Body**: Using your list and outline, explain in detail the two sides of the controversy in separate paragraphs. In other words, after stating each counter point of the issue, present your own viewpoint by providing evidence that refutes that special point. Use a mix of evidence types such as statistics, examples, facts and/or expert quotations to support your claim and to rebut the counter claim.

- **Conclusion**: Restate your claim (position) and a summary of the main ideas in the concluding paragraph.
- Organize your ideas in an appropriate order (**emphatic order**).
III. Revising

Ask yourself:

- Have I clearly stated my opinion in the introductory paragraph?
- Are my ideas and reasons in emphatic order?
- Have I chosen strong facts and examples to support my reasons?
- Have I taken opposing views into account?
- Have I used transitions effectively?
- Have I included all the information my reader needs to understand and accept my reasons?
- Does my concluding paragraph restate my opinion and highlight the issue my essay discusses?
Model Essay 1

HEALTH AND HEALING AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

1. Throw out the bottles and boxes of drugs in your house. A new theory suggests that medicine could be bad for your health, which should at least come as good news to people who cannot afford to buy expensive medicine. However, it is a blow to the medicine industry, and an even bigger blow to our confidence in the progress of science. According to this challenging theory, healing is at our fingertips and we can be healthy by doing Reiki on a regular basis. Yet, there are many people who still believe in the power of medicine.

2. Supporters of medical treatment argue that medicine should be trusted since it is effective and scientifically proven. They say that there is no need for spiritual methods such as Reiki, Yoga, Tai Chi. These waste our time, something which is quite precious in our material world. There is medicine that can kill our pain, x-rays that show us our fractured bones or MRI that scans our brain for tumours. We must admit that these methods are very effective in the examples that they provide. However, there are some “every day complaints” such as back pains, headaches, insomnia, which are treated currently with medicine. When you have a headache, you take an Aspirin, or Vermidon, when you cannot sleep, you take Xanax without thinking of the side effects of these. When you use these pills for a long period, you become addicted to them; you cannot sleep without them. We pay huge amounts of money and become addicted instead of getting better. How about a safer and more economical way of healing? When doing Reiki to yourself, you do not need anything except your energy so it is very economical. As for its history, it was discovered in Japan in the early 1900s and its popularity has spread particularly throughout America and Western Europe. In quantum physics, energy is recognized as the fundamental substance of which the universe is composed. Reiki depends on the energy within our bodies. It is a simple and effective way of restoring the energy flow. There are no side effects and it is scientifically explained.

3. Opponents of alternative healing methods also claim that serious illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and cancer cannot be treated without drugs. They think so because these patients spend the rest of their lives in the hospital taking medicine. How can Reiki make these people healthy again? It is very unfortunate that these patients have to live in the hospital losing their hair because of chemotherapy, losing weight because of the side effects...
of the medicine they take. Actually, it is common knowledge that except for when the cancer is diagnosed at an early stage, drugs also cannot treat AIDS or cancer. Most of the medicine these patients use are to ease their pain and their sufferings because of the medical treatment they undergo. Instead of drugs which are expensive and have many side effects, you can use your energy to overcome the hardships of life, find an emotional balance, leave the stress of everyday life and let go of the everyday worries. Most of the chronic conditions such as eczema or migraine are known to have causes such as poor diet and stress. Deep-rooted anger or other strong emotions can contribute to viral infections as well. Since balancing our emotions and controlling our thoughts are very important for our well-being, we should definitely start learning Reiki and avoid illnesses before it is too late.

Some people may still maintain that in our material world, everything depends on time. It is even “lacking time” that causes much of the stress that leads to the illnesses we mentioned. How would it be possible to find time to do Reiki to ourselves and the people around us when we cannot even find time to go to the theatre? This is one good thing about Reiki; it does not require more than 15 minutes of our time. There is no need for changing clothes or special equipment. It is a wonderfully simple healing art, an effective method of relaxation and stress-relief. Most important of all, it is less time consuming than medicine if we think of all the time we spend taking medicine for some complaints and taking some more for the side effects as well.

Having said these, resistance to Reiki would be quite illogical. Reiki is natural and drug-free. What is more, it is easy to learn by anyone, regardless of age and experience. It can be used anywhere, anytime. It also enhances physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being and the benefits last a lifetime. It is definitely right time to get away from the drug boxes we store in our drug cabinet!
Model Essay 2

Should recycling be mandatory?

According to Chief Seattle, an Indian who lived in the western part of North America in the 1800s, “Man does not weave this web of life. He is merely a strand of it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.” This statement illustrates the importance of taking care of the earth, not merely to avoid global warming, but to preserve the natural balance of the planet. Some of the most pressing problems are the destruction of natural habitats, the depletion of natural resources, and the polluting of rivers, lakes, and oceans. One idea now debated is whether or not the government should require communities to participate in recycling programs. Although some argue that individual communities are free to choose if they take part, many people believe that due to the interconnectedness of the planet, governments have an obligation to encourage and require communities to participate in the recycling effort.

Some overly optimistic people contend that natural resources are for the most part replaceable, such as trees, or too abundant to worry about, such as oil. However, the fact is that currently trees are being cut down faster than it is possible to repopulate the forests. Furthermore, water is a finite resource that is polluted from oil refining and the creation of many modern products, for example plastic. In fact water shortages and water pollution are both problems affecting almost every country around the world. Certainly, without clean, fresh water, life would not be possible.

Some people assert that it is too difficult or complicated for citizens to recycle. However, logistically recycling requires only a separate trash bin for tossing in plastic, glass, aluminium and steel products. Newspaper, cardboard and office paper can be collected in another box. Once set up, recycling is as easy as throwing away materials in one trash can. The communities set up collection to coincide with the trash pickup days, so it can be as easy as when not recycling. Once people realize the importance and ease of recycling, they get involved and change their trash habits. In fact, community members feel a sense of pride when contributing to the betterment of the world.

A few naysayers have argued that products will be recycled naturally by the earth over time. Even though recycling does happen naturally over time, some products never do, such as batteries. Also, with the tremendous rise in global population and use of natural
resources, humans have to effectively combat these increases by recycling goods. In addition, recycling saves not only the resources that go into creating products but also landfill space when the products are tossed out. Some of the chemicals and materials that are put into the ocean are poisoning the fish, for example. Since fish are part of the human food chain, people are further poisoning themselves by eating polluted food.

Recycling is only a part of the solution, but it is an easy and important first step to fight pollution. Recycling aids in maintaining limited resources and is not too difficult to implement. People are happy to lend a hand in the deceleration of the global warming process. Overall, recycling supports the earth and supports life. Chief Seattle said the world is interconnected, so taking care of the earth is like taking care of our home.
Appendix 9

Argumentative Essay Sample Peer Response Sheet

Writing cycle: ① ②

Draft written by: Response provided by:

Date: Title of essay: Study Abroad?

The purpose of peer reviewing is to provide your partner with honest but helpful reactions and responses as the reader of the essay. Read your peer’s essay carefully and think about the questions. After you have answered these questions, discuss them with him/her.

A. Content and Organisation:

1. Read the whole essay:

   1a. Is the essay well organized through introduction, body, and conclusion?

   1b. Has the author used tactful and courteous language?

   1c. Has the writer devoted one paragraph for each claim and its counter claim?

   1d. Has the paper used a clear method of organisation (emphatic order)?

   1e. Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the structure, paragraphing, and organisation of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her.

   THE ESSAY HAS GOT AN INTRODUCTION, 3 BODY PARAGRAPHS, AND A CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH. HOWEVER, THE TRANSITIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PARAGRAPHS ARE NOT PROPERLY USED AND CONFUSE THE READER. AS A READER I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHICH ARGUMENT IS MOST IMPORTANT. THEREFORE, I THINK THEY SHOULD BE REVISED IN SUCH A WAY TO SHOW EMPHATIC ORDER CLEARLY. THE SAME PROBLEM APPLIES TO THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH WHICH DOESN'T HAVE ANY TRANSITION AT ITS BEGINNING.

   IN PARAGRAPH ONE YOU EXAGGERATE ABOUT THE ADVANTAGES OF STUDYING ABROAD BY USING WORDS SUCH AS “COUNTLESS, VIVID, AND INDISPUTABLE”. THEY DO NOT SEEM TO BE POLITE AND I THINK YOU HAD BETTER USE MORE PROPER AND NEUTRAL WORDS TO SHOW YOUR READERS THAT YOU ARE A RATIONAL PERSON.

   APPARENTLY, YOU TRY TO PROVIDE BOTH CLAIMS AND COUNTER-CLAIMS IN YOUR ESSAY, BUT IN THE THESIS STATEMENT AND THE FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH (PARAGRAPH 2), YOU FAIL TO DO IT. I THINK YOU NEED TO REVISE THEM.

2. Read the introduction:
2a. Has the author provided a brief history of the controversial topic?

2b. Does the introduction contain a thesis statement?

2c. Does the thesis clearly state both claim and counter claim of the debated issue?

2d. Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the introduction and thesis statement of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her.

THE AUTHOR HAS PROVIDED A BRIEF BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ISSUE AND THE INTRODUCTION CONTAINS A THESIS STATEMENT. HOWEVER, IT JUST INCLUDES THE CLAIM AND THE COUNTER-CLAIM IS NOT STATED.

3. Read the body paragraphs:

3a. Has the author acknowledged the opposing point of view in each of the supporting paragraphs?

3b. Has the author provided convincing evidence (facts, statistics, examples, quotations) to Support his/her argument?

3c. Are transition words (signals) used properly and do they help the paper move smoothly from one idea to another? Can you follow the writer’s train of thought with ease?

3d. Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the body of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her.

YOU HAVEN’T PROVIDED THE OPPOSING POINT OF VIEW AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND PARAGRAPH (1ST BODY PARAGRAPH). ALSO, IN PARAGRAPH 3 (2ND BODY PARAGRAPH) IT SHOULD BE EXPLAINED IN DETAIL WHAT “THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF CULTURE SHOCK” ARE. THIS REFUTATION SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY CONVINCING EVIDENCE.

SOME TRANSITION SLIPS ARE EVIDENT IN YOUR ESSAY LIKE PARAGRAPH 2 LINE 1, AND LINE 4. IF THE 4TH PARAGRAPH (THIRD BODY PARAGRAPH) CONTAINS THE MOST IMPORTANT IDEA OF THE ESSAY, THE TRANSITION USED IN THE 2ND PARAGRAPH (1ST BODY PARAGRAPHS) SHOULD BE CHANGED IN ORDER TO SHOW ASCENDING ORDER. SO, THE TRANSITION AT THE BEGINNING OF 2ND PARAGRAPH IS CONFUSING AND DOESN’T ALLOW THE READER TO FOLLOW YOUR ARGUMENTS WITH EASE.

4. Now read the conclusion:

4a. Has the writer restated his/her claim (position) in the concluding paragraph?

4b. Does the conclusion provide a summary of the author’s main argument?
4c. Is the writer ultimately successful in convincing the reader to believe his/her argument?

4d. _Can you think of any comments/suggestions which can help your partner improve the conclusion of his/her essay? Write it/them down and discuss it/them with him/her._

I THINK YOU HAVE RESTATED YOUR CLAIM IN THE CONCLUSION, BUT THE SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ARGUMENTS IS MISSING. ALSO, THE CONCLUSION SHOULD HAVE A PROPER TRANSITION WORD AT ITS BEGINNING TO INDICATE THAT THE WRITER IS WRAPPING UP HIS/HER ESSAY. MEANWHILE, THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH IS VERY SHORT. IT'S JUST A SENTENCE, NOT A PARAGRAPH.

I THINK YOU HAVE TRIED TO PRESENT GOOD POINTS AS YOUR FIRST DRAFT; HOWEVER, SOME OF THE ARGUMENTS NEED FURTHER SUPPORT, SOME AMBIGUOUS CONSTRUCTIONS SHOULD BE REVISED, AND THE LANGUAGE AND MECHANICS ERRORS NEED EDITION IN YOUR NEXT DRAFT.

ALSO, YOU NEED TO MAKE A CLEARER ORGANISATION, AND USE TRANSITIONS PROPERLY.

5. What did you learn from reading this essay, either in language use or content? Is there anything nice you want to say about this essay? Discuss it with your partner.

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
B. Grammar, Vocabulary, and Mechanics:

Use the following correction codes to point out the errors. Mark the codes in your peer’s
draft and discuss them later.

V  Error in verb tense/verb form (active/passive voice, present/past participle)
Example: Suzan got a cold. She couldn’t went to London last week.  ➔ (V) (go)

Art Article/other determiner missing or unnecessary or incorrectly used
Example: I read book about New York. The author, however, was from California.  ➔ (Art) (a book)

PP Preposition missing or incorrectly used
Example: Please come to my office at Thursday.  ➔ (PP) (on Thursday)

PR Pronoun
Example: Bill was so drunk last night. She couldn’t even recognize his father.  ➔ (PR) (He)

NE Noun ending (plural or possessive) missing or unnecessary
Example: Two piece of chalk  ➔ (NE) (pieces)

WW Wrong word/ wrong word form
Example: He is a linguistics.  ➔ (WW) (linguist)
Example: The show is alive.  ➔ (WW) (live)

SV Subject and verb do not agree
Example: I took three tests yesterday. The tests was so difficult.  ➔ (SV) (were)

SS Sentence structure: incorrect structures, wrong word order, sentence fragments, run-ons
Example: Because I could not sleep. I turned on my light and read.  ➔ (SS) (sentence fragment)
Example: It is nearly half past five we cannot reach town before dark.  ➔ (SS) (run-on)

IT unnecessary, incorrect, or missing transition
Example: I wanted to cook a pizza; therefore, I had forgotten to by the ingredients.  ➔ (IT) (However)

PU Punctuation, capitalization, or spelling errors
Example: sarah and karla are from south Africa  ➔ (PU) (Sarah, Karla, South Africa)
Example: Thise books belong to Barbara.  ➔ (PU) (These)

^ Missing word
Example: Printed on the back of the carton are directions that-how the appliance is to be assembled.  ➔ (^) (explain)

! Unnecessary word
Example: Ingestion, which occurs in the mouth, helps to increase the surface are of the food particles
and prepares them for digestion.  ➔ (!) (are)
Study Abroad? (first draft)

1. Education is very important in life. Many people even think that is his\(^{(PR)}\) priority. Therefore, pursuing studies abroad has been the most plausible trend nowadays for the purpose of gaining international exposures and experiential learning. Every year growing numbers of people leave the comforts of their homes to study abroad. In fact, the advantages of leaving and studying in another countries\(^{(NE)}\) are vivid, countless, and indisputable. They include academic and professional, society and culture, and personal benefits.\(^{(SS:\ unparallel\ construction)}\)

2. First and foremost\(^{(IT-PU)}\), by study\(^{(V)}\) abroad students will benefit from many unique experience\(^{(NE)}\) unavailable at their home universities. Such experiences include: learning from students from different cultural, ethnic and national backgrounds, mastering a foreign language, and exposure to new ideas and philosophies. In contrast\(^{(IT)}\), these students acquires\(^{(SV)}\) skill sets that influence their career path. Studying abroad can also ignite an interest in an exceptional career direction.

3. Moreover, culture shock\(^{(SS:\ sentence\ fragment)}\). People in favour of studying at local universities claim that leaving home and travelling to study in a new country can be a stressful experience. They refer\(^{(PP)}\) culture shock as one of the most popular stressful experiences that can effect\(^{(WW)}\) international students. It is important to stress that culture shock is entirely normal and usually unavoidable, yet it is normally a temporary phase and is minimized after a short period. In fact, there is\(^{(SV)}\) very positive aspects of culture shock.

4. Last and most importantly, those inclined against studying abroad may come up with some other reasons for not doing it. This\(^{(Art)}\) may include separation from loved ones, losing contact with friends or feeling homesick. Nevertheless, the rapid advance of computer technology and\(^{(Art)}\) internet has amazingly addressed this concern to a great extent. Facilities such as Yahoo, Skype, MSN, Facebook, etc. have made it very easy to keep in touch with the beloved ones; and therefore, relieve the tensions caused by loneliness and being apart from people students feel close to. Indeed\(^{(PU)}\) living and studying\(^{(\wedge)}\) can help students to increase their self-confidence, gain independence and maturity, be prepared to face challenges in the future, learn to creatively solve problems, and better understand their personal strengths and weaknesses.
Studying abroad is a good choice and full of wonderful experience \(^{\text{NE}}\) that will equip students to face challenges presented by the real world during your \(^{\text{PR}}\) education and in your \(^{\text{PR}}\) professional career.
Study Abroad? (second draft: revised)

Education is very important in life. Many people even think that is their priority. Therefore, pursuing studies abroad has been the most plausible trend nowadays for the purpose of gaining international exposures and experiential learning. Every year growing numbers of people leave the comforts of their homes to study abroad. While some people believe that living and studying in another country is not a nice experience, many confess that it is one of the best practices of our modern time. They assert that studying overseas can have several advantages, such as academic and professional, social and cultural, and personal benefits.

First of all, it is frequently argued that the cost of living in other countries is quite expensive and students need to spend lots of money. We should admit that in some cases such an argument is true. However, the academic benefits students gain, outweigh what they lose. In fact, by studying abroad students will benefit from many unique experiences unavailable at their home universities. Such experiences include: learning from students from different cultural, ethnic and national backgrounds, mastering a foreign language, and exposure to new ideas and philosophies. In addition, these students acquire skill sets that influence their career path. Studying abroad can also ignite an interest in an exceptional career direction.

Moreover, people in favour of studying at local universities claim that leaving home and travelling to study in a new country can be a stressful experience. They refer to culture shock as one of the most popular stressful experiences that can affect international students. It is important to stress that culture shock is entirely normal and usually unavoidable, yet it is normally a temporary phase and is minimized after a short period. In fact, there are very positive aspects of culture shock. The experience can be a significant learning experience, making students more aware of aspects of their own culture as well as the new culture they have entered. It will give them valuable skills that will serve them in many ways now and in the future and which will be part of the benefit of an international education. Besides, living and studying in any new country is likely to broaden the mind. Experiencing new cultures, interacting with those with a background different from one’s own, seeing a different way of life, and experiencing the way other peoples do things is generally a positive, enhancing experience. Furthermore, exploring cultures and civilizations outside of
one’s own, which may happen when studying abroad, is intellectually and spiritually enriching.

Last and most importantly, those inclined against studying abroad may come up with some other reasons for not doing it. These may include separation from loved ones, losing contact with friends or feeling homesick. Nevertheless, the rapid advance of computer technology and the internet has amazingly addressed this concern to a great extent. Facilities such as Yahoo, Skype, MSN, Facebook, etc. have made it very easy to keep in touch with the beloved ones; and therefore, relieve the tensions caused by loneliness and being apart from people students feel close to. Indeed, living and studying abroad can help students to increase their self-confidence, to gain independence and maturity, to be prepared to face challenges in the future, to learn to creatively solve problems, and to better understand their personal strengths and weaknesses.

In conclusion, studying abroad is a good choice and full of wonderful experiences, from learning new language(s), cultures and skills to making new friends from diverse ethnic and national backgrounds. In the end, students will return to their countries with a new sense of independence and more confidence. That will equip them to face challenges presented by the real world during their education and in their professional career.
## Appendix 10

### Sample Dyadic Negotiation Categorisation Procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of episodes</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Error code/Problem</th>
<th>Interactional Strategies Used</th>
<th>Summary of Discussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>Art: A</td>
<td>Reviewer: advising - reading Writer: advising - admit advice</td>
<td>As Mani reads and says here you need an article, Maryam herself says A GOOD… showing that she expected her partner's feedback on that and she easily admits the advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>PU; Capitalisation: ESSAY</td>
<td>Reviewer: advising - instructing - persistence Writer: Ask question - persistence - instructing - admit advice</td>
<td>Maryam asks the reason why she should capitalise ESSAY and Mani explains since it is the beginning of a new sentence. Maryam rejects it and says we should just capitalise the first word of the essay not all the words at the beginning of each sentence. Mani shows her some examples (PROBABLY FROM THE MODEL ESSAYS THAT THE INSTRUCTOR HAD PROVIDED BEFORE) and seems has been able to convince Maryam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>Art: AN</td>
<td>Reviewer: advising</td>
<td>They don’t read the essay line by line. Mani just points to the codes and mistakes and offers his suggestions. Here: AN EASY WORK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>PU; Punctuation: COMMA</td>
<td>Reviewer: response to confirmation request -advising Writer: confirmation request</td>
<td>Mani reads the sentence. He doesn’t mention as it is a conditional sentence, the second clause needs a comma. But just says a comma is needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>PU; Capitalisation: THERE</td>
<td>Reviewer: advising - referencing Writer: admit advice</td>
<td>Mani reminds Maryam again that here the word should be capitalised and Maryam admits that all such cases should be capitalised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>PU; Spelling: CAUSE</td>
<td>Reviewer: advising Writer: admit advice</td>
<td>Mani says that the word is misspelled and Maryam admits it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>V: HAVING, KNOWING</td>
<td>Reviewer: advising - justifying Writer: laughing</td>
<td>Although Mani’s MINI LESSON is inappropriate, but his correction (alternative) is accurate and helps the grammar of the paper improve. Maryam just laughs implying she herself didn’t expect to make such mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>V: HAVING, KNOWING</td>
<td>Reviewer: advising - justifying Writer: laughing</td>
<td>Although Mani's MINI LESSON is inappropriate, but his correction (alternative) is accurate and helps the grammar of the paper improve. Maryam just laughs implying she herself didn’t expect to make such mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>V: HAVING</td>
<td>Reviewer: Advising - referencing Writer: response to referencing - advising</td>
<td>Here the problem is the same as 8 and Maryam herself produces the right form of the verb HAVING. Although the instructor hasn’t discussed indentation in his instructions,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mani recommends Maryam to indent her new paragraphs and Maryam apparently agrees.

As Mani is providing his feedback, Maryam listens and confirms. He just says here the word should be in capital form.

Mani gives a mini lesson here saying that after for as a preposition, the gerund form of the verb is needed. As he is explaining, Maryam corrects the verb herself.

As Maryam has started a new sentence, Mani suggests capitalising it and at the same time changing it to gerund.

Mani explains that a modal is needed before the main verb but doesn’t explain why. Maryam doesn’t challenge her and apparently admits it.

As the mistakes are repeated, Mani uses the term AS BEFORE and offers the correct form without saying the reason which has the preposition FOR.

Again the same. Mani very briefly just provides the correct form which is capitalised form of THE. Maryam just listens with no reaction.

First he says I don’t know why I have marked it but after reading the sentence again, he says COMMA should be replaced by FULL STOP. But when Maryam challenges this advice, he says because the meaning of the sentence is complete, a full stop should be used.

Mani believes that EXACTLY doesn’t look appropriate here and a better word like WELL is needed. Here, Maryam translates the sentence into Persian and expresses her intended message claiming very WELL doesn’t express the message. However, she says I don’t know. May be your advice is right.

Mani doesn’t try to defend his feedback and goes to the next point.

Mani suggests replacing HAVE with HAVING.

The explanation for capitalising THE is not given as it is repeated again. He just touches it.

The same as 15 & 17.

| 10 | 2.25 | Surface | PU; Capitalisation: THERE | Reviewer: Referencing - advising Writer: response to referencing | Mani recommends Maryam to indent her new paragraphs and Maryam apparently agrees. |
| 11 | 2.27 | Surface | V: HAVING | Reviewer: advising - instructing - response to confirmation request Writer: confirmation request | As Mani is providing his feedback, Maryam listens and confirms. He just says here the word should be in capital form. |
| 12 | 2.33 | Surface | PU & V: INCREASING | Reviewer: advising - instructing - response to confirmation request Writer: confirmation request | Mani gives a mini lesson here saying that after for as a preposition, the gerund form of the verb is needed. As he is explaining, Maryam corrects the verb herself. |
| 13 | 2.45 | Surface | ^: MODAL | Reviewer: advising - providing options Writer: admit advice | As Maryam has started a new sentence, Mani suggests capitalising it and at the same time changing it to gerund. |
| 14 | 2.57 | Surface | PU; Spelling: STORIES | Reviewer: advising | Mani explains that a modal is needed before the main verb but doesn’t explain why. Maryam doesn’t challenge her and apparently admits it. |
| 15 | 3.03 | Surface | V: INCREASING | Reviewer: advising -referencing Writer: advising - response to referencing | As the mistakes are repeated, Mani uses the term AS BEFORE and offers the correct form without saying the reason which has the preposition FOR. |
| 16 | 3.06 | Surface | PU; Capitalisation: THE | Reviewer: advising - referencing | The explanation is the same as 15. Maryam just listens with no reaction. |
| 17 | 3.08 | Surface | V: INCREASING | Reviewer: referencing | The explanation is the same as 15. Maryam just listens with no reaction. |
| 18 | 3.12 | Surface | PU; Punctuation: PERIOD, FULL STOP | Reviewer: advising - guessing - response to question - reading Writer: ask question - admit advice | First he says I don’t know why I have marked it but after reading the sentence again, he says COMMA should be replaced by FULL STOP. But when Maryam challenges this advice, he says because the meaning of the sentence is complete, a full stop should be used. |
| 19 | 3.35 | Surface | WW; wrong word; EXACTLY | Reviewer: reading - advising - persistence Writer: clarifying - persistence - reject advice - express uncertainty - repetition | Mani believes that EXACTLY doesn’t look appropriate here and a better word like WELL is needed. Here, Maryam translates the sentence into Persian and expresses her intended message claiming very WELL doesn’t express the message. However, she says I don’t know. May be your advice is right. Mani doesn’t try to defend his feedback and goes to the next point. |
| 20 | 4.05 | Surface | !: WE | Reviewer: Reading - advising Writer: reading - admit advice | Mani says subject is not needed here and corrects the whole sentence saying this way is better without providing any reason. Although his feedback is most of the time accurate, it seems that he is using his personal knowledge. |
| 21 | 4.05 | Surface | V: HAVING | Reviewer: Reading - advising Writer: reading - admit advice | Mani suggests replacing HAVE with HAVING. |
| 22 | 4.19 | Surface | PU; Capitalisation: THE | Reviewer: advising -referencing | The explanation for capitalising THE is not given as it is repeated again. He just touches it. |
| 23 | 4.19 | Surface | PU; Punctuation: COMMA | Reviewer: advising | Mani says after THE LAST a COMMA is needed. |
| 24 | 4.22 | Surface | V: | Reviewer: advising | The same as 15 & 17 |
| 25 | 4.22 | Surface | V: INCREASING | Reviewer: advising - referencing | The same as 15 & 17 & 24 |
| 26 | 4.27 | Surface | PU; Capitalisation; THEY | Reviewer: advising - referencing Writer: response to referencing | The same as 10 |
| 27 | 4.28 | Surface | ^: THE | Reviewer: advising Writer: admit advice | Mani without explaining since BEST is a superlative form of an adj, it needs the article THE, just says THE is needed and Maryam confirms it by repeating it with him (PROBABLY MARYAM KNOWS THIS GRAMMATICAL RULE AND THIS PEER REVIEWING HELPS HER TO RETRIEVE HER GRAMMATICAL KNOWLEDGE). |
| 28 | 4.30 | Surface | V: HAVING | Reviewer: advising | He even doesn’t read the wrong form of the verb. When he reads, he just read the corrected form |
| 29 | 4.33 | Surface | V: KNOWING | Reviewer: advising - referencing Writer: response to referencing | He even doesn’t read the wrong form of the verb. When he reads, he just read the corrected form |
| 30 | 4.38 | Surface | PU; Capitalisation: ESSAY | Reviewer: advising - referencing | The same as 10 & 26 |
| 31 | 4.40 | Surface | WW; wrong word: MORE | Reviewer: advising - reading | Mani recommends using A LOT OF instead of MORE. Maryam is passively listening. |
| 32 | 4.48 | Surface | Art: A | Reviewer: Reading - advising Writer: admit advice | As Mani reads and explains the case, Maryam pronounces article A. Both say it at the same time. |
| 33 | 4.57 | Surface | PU; Punctuation: SEMICOLON | Reviewer: advising - response to question Writer: ask question | Mani has written a code above the word THEREFORE but he forgets discussing it. Maryam asks him to explain why he has used this code and he says a SEMICOLON is needed before this transition. |
| 34 | 4.50 | Surface | ^: PAY ATTENTION | Reviewer: advising - reading | Mani just says PAY ATTENTION IS CORRECT |
| 35 | 5.05 | Surface | !: THE | Reviewer: reading - advising - repetition | He just says THE is unnecessary |
| 36 | 5.14 | Surface | PU; Capitalisation: THIS | Reviewer: advising - referencing | The same as 10,26,30 |
| 37 | 5.16 | Surface | Art: A | Reviewer: advising - referencing Writer: response to referencing - writing reminder or correction | As Mani reads and explains the case, Maryam pronounces article A and asks surprisingly herself why she has left out the article A in all these cases. |
| 38 | 5.19 | Surface | Art: A | Reviewer: advising Writer: advising - express surprise | Here Maryam initiates correction and she herself says article A is needed. |
| 39 | 5.22 | Surface | V: HAVING | Reviewer: advising Writer: advising | Both of them correct the verb without any further discussion and reading. |
| 40 | 5.22 | Surface | V: KNOWING | Reviewer: referencing Writer: advising | Both of them correct the verb without any further discussion and reading. |
| 41 | 5.25 | Surface | PU (PR): THESE | Reviewer: advising | Mani has used a wrong code since here a plural pronoun like THESE is needed. He doesn’t discuss it and just suggests the correct form. |
| 42 | 5.27 | Content | Comment on content | Reviewer: Restating - assessment - information | Mani points to the second body paragraph saying that Maryam has frequently talked about METHODS OF ESSAY |
WRITING WITHOUT GIVING ANY SPECIFIC DETAIL AND EXAMPLE. Maryam, on the other hand, explains that by METHOD she meant THAT AN ESSAY SHOULD HAVE BODY PARAGRAPHS, CONCLUSION, ETC. and Mani says YOU SHOULD HAVE EXPLAINED THEM IN DETAIL. THIS WAY, YOUR READER DOES NOT GET THE IDEA AND GETS CONFUSED.

Mani checks his notes and finds the second point. He states that at the end of the introduction Maryam has said HAVE A GOOD WRITING. To him good writing is vague. What does it mean? It is not a good choice. He believes having a good writing and knowing the methods of essay writing are both the same. Maryam rejects the advices and says they are different. Mani seems to try to appropriate Maryam’s choice by saying YOU HAD BETTER WRITE CORRECT WRITING (A GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT AND SPELLING FREE ERRORS). Maryam rejects the advice and adds by GOOD WRITING she didn’t mean that. Both in 41 and 42 Mani points out valuable comments but is unable to provide useful suggestions for change. In fact both strategies are vague and general and not only the word choices are inappropriate, but the explanations are very general.

Mani finishes commenting, but Maryam notices something on her peer review sheet and asks for explanation and Mani again explains it is about the indentation of her paragraphs that he had already explained.
Appendix 11

Sample Interview Data Analysis Procedure

Main Theme (COLLABORATIVE REVISION)

5. Categorisation

A. Pooling of ideas and knowledge
   A1. Supportive
   B. Limited knowledge base
   C. Lengthy process
   D. Complement to peer reviewing
   E. Improve the content
   F. Double opportunity
   G. Immediate reference
4. Highlighting

A. Individual interview

Nasrin

Effective as the points were reviewed by repetition during interaction - Shared our knowledge and supported each other to write a better essay – doing it on my own may not yield similar results

Mina

Helpful - Supportive: helping each other and using each other’s strength – We can complement each other: helping each other to remind the forgotten or unattended points - having the chance to review and analyse two papers instead of one

Mani

Much better than the first activity (2) - Two thoughts and minds concentrated on one paper regardless of whose it was and supported each other to fix the mistake

Maryam

It was very good and it makes studying more interesting and easy - Sometimes I may not understand or spot a problem or can’t fix it, but with the help and support I receive from my friend I can easily fix it

Tina

Excellent (2) - Better than the first activity: it was a complement to the previous activity - In cases neither my partner nor I were able to fix the error; our level of language proficiency didn’t help us improve some of the problematic areas

Mahdi

Helpful activity (2) - Essays are reviewed, evaluated, and assessed by two people – Our concentration on one essay was very helpful as we shared our information

Roya

Excellent - We collaborated together to fix the mistakes – My partner could identify the problems that I myself might have neglected

Afrouz

We didn’t reach an agreement in dealing with the codes used by the instructor due to our lack of knowledge

Azam

Very helpful - Sometimes I myself didn’t get why certain feedback (codes) were used and the purpose of some comments, with the assistance of my peer I could understand what the problem was and how I could improve it
Fariba

Was very good - The time allocated for this activity was short and we couldn’t cover everything. Some of the raised issues needed paraphrasing, developing content, changing the structure. However, due to time constraint we were unable to fulfil the task thoroughly – Collaboration and working together on one paper helped us share our ideas and views

B. Group interview

Nasrin

She favours team and group work than working alone (2) - Sometimes I couldn’t understand the source of my mistake but with the explanation of my peer, I could realise and fix it.

Mina

This activity is advantageous – Especially in terms of content our partners could help us express our views in a clearer way.

Mani

When two people collaboratively address the feedback, the partners can play the role of easily accessible reference to fix the mechanics and language errors on the spot - As for content, the partners can give illuminating ideas to their peers and can help them develop the content of the papers since the students may not be able to detect and develop the content on their own

Maryam

It was an effective method - All our problematic areas were first spotted and then with the help of our partners and through interaction we could easily fix them - Two minds worked collaboratively and two people shared their knowledge to understand and fix the errors (2) - It was better than working alone as sometimes we did not understand the feedback – on the negative side, we sometimes did not understand the feedback even when we worked together and we had to either delete the sentence or paraphrase it – Time was short

Tina

It was a helpful activity - We could interact and share knowledge with our partner - Sometimes I couldn’t understand the source of my mistake but with the explanation of my peer, I could easily realise and fix it

Mahdi

It’s clear that two heads are more effective - But there were some cases when neither my partner nor me were able to fix the error or incorporate the feedback into our paper. In such cases we deleted the construction. We also didn’t get what the missing word could be. I think this problem happened because of our lack of English structure knowledge. We are
novice writers and our English language competency isn’t advanced enough to be able to address all the feedback – Partners learn to evaluate each other’s paper

Roya
Sharing the ideas and trying to sort out the problems collaboratively is better than working alone – Sometimes we could not fix the problems even by working together so we asked for your help

Afrouz
We shared our knowledge in this activity - Sometimes we couldn’t understand the reason behind some of the feedback due to our low level of English language proficiency. In such cases we had to ask the instructor, delete it, or change it. So, the problem still exists in the third draft.

Azam
Another idea which was offered by my partner could help me improve and fix my problems - Due to time shortage, the partner’s role in collaborative revision was not that much effective.

Fariba
If I myself wanted to address the feedback I couldn’t understand some of the codes,… but with the challenge NOT COOPERATION I had with her partner, I could realise the purpose of the delivered feedback - Sometimes even both of us couldn’t understand the feedback and in such cases we either paraphrased the sentence or omitted it completely.
3. Data Translation

A. Individual interview

Nasrin
Effective - the points were reviewed by repetition during interaction - shared our knowledge and supported each other to write a better essay – doing it on my own may not yield similar results

Mina
Helpful - Supportive: helping each other and using each other’s strength – we can complement each other: helping each other to remind the forgotten or unattended points - having the chance to review and analyse two papers instead of one

Mani
Much better than the first activity (2): two thoughts and minds concentrated on one paper regardless of whose it was and supported each other to fix the mistake

Maryam
It was very good - It makes studying more interesting and easy - sometimes I may not understand or spot a problem or can’t fix it, but with the help and support I receive from my friend I can easily fix it

Tina
Excellent (2) - better than the first activity: it was a complement to the previous activity - in cases neither my partner nor I were able to fix the error, our level of language proficiency didn’t help us improve some of the problematic areas

Mahdi
Helpful activity (2): essays are reviewed, evaluated, and assessed by two people – our concentration on one essay was very helpful as we shared our information

Roya
Excellent: we collaborated together to fix the mistakes – my partner could identify the problems that I myself might have neglected

Afrouz
We didn’t reach an agreement in dealing with the codes used by the instructor due to our lack of knowledge

Azam
Very helpful - Sometimes I myself didn’t get why certain feedback (codes) were used and the purpose of some comments, with the assistance of my peer I could understand what the problem was and how I could improve it
Fariba

Was very good - The time allocated for this activity was short and we couldn’t cover everything. Some of the raised issues needed paraphrasing, developing content, changing the structure. However, due to time constraint we were unable to fulfil the task thoroughly – collaboration and working together on one paper helped us share our ideas and views

B. Group interview

Nasrin

She favours team and group work than working alone (2) - Sometimes I couldn’t understand the source of my mistake but with the explanation of my peer, I could realise and fix it.

Mina

She also thinks this activity is advantageous – especially in terms of content the partners could help us express our views in a clearer way.

Mani

He states when two people collaboratively address the feedback, the partners can play the role of easily accessible reference to fix the mechanics and language errors on the spot - As for content, the partners can give illuminating ideas to their peers and can help them develop the content of the papers since the students may not be able to detect and develop the content on their own

Maryam

It was an effective method - All our problematic areas were first spotted and then with the help of our partners and through interaction we could easily fix them - Two minds worked collaboratively and two people shared their knowledge to understand and fix the errors (2) - It was better than working alone as sometimes we did not understand the feedback - this time learning and internalisation happened and we will never forget them in future – on the negative side, we sometimes did not understand the feedback even when we worked together and we had to either delete the sentence or paraphrase it – time was short

Tina

It was a helpful activity - We could interact and share knowledge with our partner - Sometimes I couldn’t understand the source of my mistake but with the explanation of my peer, I could easily realise and fix it

Mahdi

It’s clear that two heads are more effective - But there were some cases when neither my partner nor me were able to fix the error or incorporate the feedback into our paper. In such cases we deleted the construction. We also didn’t get what the missing word could be. I
think this problem happened because of our lack of English structure knowledge. We are novice writers and our English language competency isn’t advanced enough to be able to address all the feedback – partners learn to evaluate each other’s paper

**Roya**

Sharing the ideas and trying to sort out the problems collaboratively is better than working alone – sometimes we could not fix the problems even by working together so we asked for your help

**Afrouz**

We shared our knowledge in this activity - sometimes we couldn’t understand the reason behind some of the feedback due to our low level of English language proficiency. In such cases we had to ask the instructor, delete it, or change it. So, the problem still exists in the third draft.

**Azam**

Another idea which was offered by my partner could help me improve and fix my problems - due to time shortage, the partner’s role in collaborative revision was not that much effective.

**Fariba**

If I myself wanted to address the feedback I couldn’t understand some of the codes,… but with the challenge NOT COOPERATION I had with her partner, I could realise the purpose of the delivered feedback - sometimes even both of us couldn’t understand the feedback and in such cases we either paraphrased the sentence or omitted it completely.
2. Data Reduction

Individual Interview

Nasrin:

ممنون: منظر از این بود که خیلی خوب بود. من این حس کردم که می‌توانست به راحتی به بررسی‌هایی که انجام گرفته‌اند به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کند. من می‌فهمم که این نوع نظرات به‌طور زیادی به بهترین روش‌ها مربوط می‌شود. من این امر را به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام. من به‌طور عمومی به‌طور مداوم با مهندسی کار می‌کنم و این بود که من به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام.

Mina:

می‌توانسته‌ام که به این نظرات منطقی باشد. من با همکاری همکاران من، این نظرات را بررسی کرده‌ام. من این نظرات را به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام. من به‌طور عمومی به‌طور مداوم با مهندسی کار می‌کنم و این بود که من به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام.

Mani:

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Maryam:

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Tina:

می‌توانسته‌ام که به این نظرات منطقی باشد. من با همکاری همکاران من، این نظرات را بررسی کرده‌ام. من این نظرات را به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام. من به‌طور عمومی به‌طور مداوم با مهندسی کار می‌کنم و این بود که من به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام.

Mahdi:

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Roya:

می‌توانسته‌ام که به این نظرات منطقی باشد. من با همکاری همکاران من، این نظرات را بررسی کرده‌ام. من این نظرات را به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام. من به‌طور عمومی به‌طور مداوم با مهندسی کار می‌کنم و این بود که من به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام.

Afruz:

می‌توانسته‌ام که به این نظرات منطقی باشد. من با همکاری همکاران من، این نظرات را بررسی کرده‌ام. من این نظرات را به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام. من به‌طور عمومی به‌طور مداوم با مهندسی کار می‌کنم و این بود که من به‌عنوان یک جزء از آنها اشاره کرده‌ام.

Azam:

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Fariba:

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B. Group Interview

کار گروهی خوبی بود.

مختصراین در مورد مفهوم - بعنوان مفهوم‌ها توجه نمی‌کردیم. دانشی‌ن دنیوتیپیک می‌آوریم. بود مثلاً حرف شدید. ولی کسی که

اصلاً نمی‌پذیریم، بعنوان مفهوم‌ها توجه کرد. به قابلیت فهم نیست و این برای یک مفهوم و این که نخست خوبی بود.

می‌آوریم در مورد کار گروهی کار گروهی، آگاه این چیز علی‌رغم می‌پذیری.

انی از دو بعده نظر از این بود. بینی به مفهوم هست از نظر این. structure این، از نظر واقعیتی، به حمله علمی باید در خاک مولفی خصوصی draft توجه خویشتن.

می‌آوریم refrence یک سطح بیشتری که گویا حاصل سیستمیک گفته یک. آن در مورد ما در مورد این توجه هست. این در تنها هست.

مانی

نیک که داشت از این نظر، نگاهی این که این از چهار مورد است. هر قطعهنظرات بی‌طرف، دفتر که هست. این در تنها هست.

نگاه خاص از این که این از چهار مورد است. هر قطعهنظرات بی‌طرف، دفتر که هست. این در تنها هست.

Maryam

ان روش خاصی بود. با استان. بعد به پارانتس هم صنایع می‌کردیم و اینچنان می‌پذیریم، هم‌ونهایی هست. این در تنها هست.

اصلاً این در تنها هست. این در تنها هست. این در تنها هست.

Tina

به نظر نمی‌کردیم که کار گروهی خوبی بود. این از چهار مورد است. هر قطعهنظرات بی‌طرف، دفتر که هست. این در تنها هست.

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Roya

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Afrouz

به نظر نمی‌کردیم که کار گروهی خوبی بود. این از چهار مورد است. هر قطعهنظرات بی‌طرف، دفتر که هست. این در تنها هست.

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Fariba

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Azam

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Nasrin

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Roya

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Nasrin
1. Sorting the Data (original data)

A. Individual Interview

Prompt: 2. What is your viewpoint about collaborative revision activity? In other words, did you like it or not? Why?

Nasrin:

.comment

[...] feedback

Mani:

[...] writing
Maryam:

محقق: روش دومی که ما انجام دادیم. این بود که از اولم، برگه‌های شما رو کمیت کرده فتهه بعد. تو بتوکم یک نظر می‌گرفتم. ایستاده اند دادم. برگه‌های رو رفع کنید. بعد که برگه‌های مرسید. شب دری می‌گرفتم. feedback و comment

شکر با راه برگه‌ران، می‌گیرم. نظر درباره این چه؟

مهم: اینگلیسی خوب بود. ما درم هم نگرش پرتره داشیم، پاره‌گزاره نوشی. بعد چیزی که ما رعایت می‌کردیم، شاید استادمان از راک탱ی من می‌تواند خیلی راحت، از مطالعه کرده، یکی از موضوعاتی که مطالعه کرده، یکی از مقاله‌ها می‌تواند. دیگر مهم، یکی از مقاله‌ها می‌تواند. بر طور کامل جذابیتی که داشتیم. تا پیدا کرده بر روی توضیح

یکی، دو از این مطالعه‌های که این به جای این چه‌گونه راه‌هایی می‌تواند در این مطالعه‌ها. این به جای این چه‌گونه راه‌هایی می‌توانند. این به جای این چه‌گونه راه‌هایی می‌توانند. این به جای این چه‌گونه راه‌هایی می‌توانند.

محقق: خوب اینکه درست. من از این خواندن اینکه هر چه این در انجام دادیم. فکر می‌کنی نظرت در راه این چه؟

مهم: چهل خنثی. چون وقتی به اشکالی رو می‌بینید، شاید ایستاده رو خودت‌هایی که چه باید بودیم. شاید خیلی ساده بانه اشتباه باها که دوست‌داری خیلی راحت بتوکم این رو حل کنیم. مه‌هایی در راه و جالبی مه‌برنامه.

Tina:

محقق: دومین روشی که کار کرده‌ایم، این بود که مقاله‌های و همراهی گرفته شده، همراهی نوشتن، خواندن. داماد و کد گشتن بعد از این خواندن که ما مقاله‌های و با کمک همکار گر کمیک و ایراداشت رو رفع کنید. بعد برید ساخت مقاله

مهم: یکی درون روی نظر هچ چه‌چیزی یا؟

تینا: این چه‌گونه خوب بود. خیلی دیگر یک چیزی از روش قابل بود. به نظر من داشته این مقاله رو کامل تر می‌کردیم. ولی شاوه بین جا احساس

ضعف می‌کرد. توی این بود که خوشنویس هاون این بوده که از حسن می‌کردیم خو به یک جایی حسن که همه از کس ها که این همه یا بر اساس. بعد اگر این باعث بشده که چشمه‌ها به این دنک خو مدل فرمیشناب از این یکی که هم چشمه کرده، یکی دیگر خو مدل‌هاست. یکی از تابع مه‌ها ما این اشتباه در بینی و خو مدل‌ها ما این اشتباه در بینی و دخالت نه ما هم چشمه کرده، یکی دیگر خو مدل‌هاست. یکی از تابع مه‌ها ما این اشتباه در بینی و دخالت نه ما هم چشمه کرده، یکی دیگر خو مدل‌هاست.

بنی ناهاش بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه نظریه‌ها که نظر از آن‌ها بی‌نجوم بی‌پیشینگی این چه N

Mahdi:

محقق: دیروز ما امید حالا ها روش دیگر بی کردیم. برگه‌های شما رو از جمع کردن فتهه پیدا. و یکی هم کد

دادر به صورت لیست. و یکی هم کد comment در مورد دادر

برای مورد مقاله پیوسته اول که دادر، برسی کرده بی امکان که کوتا، به گزینی

content and organisation و mechanicals

نقش تکمیل. در مورد این مقاله گر استاد آن چه، به گزینی

مهمی: در مورد این مقاله گر استاد آن چه، به گزینی

به نظر این مقاله که اگر قرار گرفته شما را این نظر می‌باید، بازم نظر من که مشه.

محقق: به قرار نیست بر اساس یکین نظر داده به یک نظر، داده به یک نظر، داده به یک نظر، داده به یک نظر، داده به یک نظر، داده به یک نظر، D

Roya:

محقق: این به یکه دیروز collaborative revision

در داستان. یعنی اینکه از توصیف کردن مقاله هاونون، نه بر روی رفتگاه مقاله هاونون

تاکه میکردیم و بررسی مقاله هاونون. به همگی کمک میکردیم که این روی

improve کنید. این جویی را به جویی را به جویی را به جویی R

نظرت در مورد این که چه‌گونه راه‌هایی می‌توانند. این به جویی را به جویی R

و نظرت در مورد این که چه‌گونه راه‌هایی می‌توانند. این به جویی R

نگرفته‌ها گذاشتن روی یکی

408
آفروز:
مهم‌ترین اشکال ام اینجا تفاوت می‌کنیم. می‌گفتیم دوست‌هایم که خواندن، و دوست‌هایِ دوست‌هایِ خواندن بوده.

Azam:
بی‌اختیاری که آنها در امراهان هستند، می‌گفتند، بی‌اختیاری که آنها در امراهان هستند، می‌گفتند.
Fariba:

Comment: دیروز امکان پیدا کرده‌ایم که تاکنون که می‌خواهیم feedback را در مورد این اجرا کنیم، باید ابتدا می‌توانیم feedback را در مورد این اجرا کنیم.

Fariba: از این نظر، درمان چگونه بود؟ چگونه می‌توانیم ساختار ایجاد کنیم؟ آینده چه بود؟ این مسئله چگونه بود؟

Fariba: این روش خلیف بود استادن. چون مورد این مسئله ما گرفته می‌شود. زیرا این واژه ای که تبلیغات ما در مورد همین موضوع به مورد این موضوع، این ساختار همیشه درون می‌شود.

Fariba: این روش خلیف بود استادن. چون مورد این مسئله ما گرفته می‌شود. زیرا این واژه ای که تبلیغات ما در مورد همین موضوع به مورد این موضوع، این ساختار همیشه درون می‌شود.

B. Group Interview

Fariba: این روش خلیف بود استادن. چون مورد این مسئله ما گرفته می‌شود. زیرا این واژه ای که تبلیغات ما در مورد همین موضوع به مورد این موضوع، این ساختار همیشه درون می‌شود.

Fariba: این روش خلیف بود استادن. چون مورد این مسئله ما گرفته می‌شود. زیرا این واژه ای که تبلیغات ما در مورد همین موضوع به مورد این موضوع، این ساختار همیشه درون می‌شود.

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Fariba: این روش خلیف بود استادن. چون مورد این مسئله ما گرفته می‌شود. زیرا این واژه ای که تبلیغات ما در مورد همین موضوع به مورد این موضوع، این ساختار همیشه درون می‌شود.

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DE چه می‌خواهید؟

روشنی کردن محیط کامپیوتر

Interviewer

Fariba

Maryam

Fariba

Maryam

Fariba

Maryam

False
Mani: حضور پارنتر به نظر من این حالت رو به پارنتر میده که حالا هم میتوانه نظر بعدم. این قدرت ایده پیدا میکنه. پس میتوانه در مورد نظر به مقاله نظر بعدم. این از پیش است.

Mahdi: این هم هست که مقاله میگرده نظرش رو اعلام کنه راجع به پیش این اثر رو داره.

Interviewer: بله تاثیر داره ولی تاثیر رو درست نوشتن بگیره به نظر من صفره.

Mani: چیزی جدید بگیره.

Mhadi: فقط همفکری میکردنی، مشاگیره حل بشه. ولی خوب چون دانشجو همونه که بیمه گفتند تو سطحی نیود که بتوین.

Roya: فاطمه فقط همفکری میکردنی، مشاگیره حل بشه. ولی خوب چون دانشجو همونه که بیمه گفتند تو سطحی نیود که بتوین.

Afour:وني سرو دومی که بايد draft سوم رو میتوانستیم. جون بعضی جاها بودن، مثل ss هایی که مزید. اونجا مثل من دوست روه فنک میکردن، دوست قناعت میش. بعد میگفتم چرا استاد، مس این که چرا استاد این نوشتی به این مشکل داشتم. یا باید از خود شما میسرین، یا همونطور که چه گفتند باید حذف میکردن. بالاخره هم، بالا سردر میاورنیم که به نظر من اون میلی که سردر میومد، draft که دست همان دیده، همون مشگل همچنان بود. متنها فرمش فقط عوض شده بود.

Interviewer: توی draft peer reviewing
Appendix 12
Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

DISSERTATION/THESIS

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications and view the School's Policy online.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND

Your name: ALIREZA MEMARI HANJANI
Your student no: 580036555
Return address for this certificate: Studio 402, Iron Bridge Studios, Lower North Street, Exeter EX4 3RB
Degree/Programme of Study: PhD
Project Supervisor(s): Dr Li & Prof Myhill
Your email address: am425@exeter.ac.uk
Tel: 07554231339

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my dissertation / thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: .................................. date: .... ........................

NB For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must not be included in your work. It can be kept for your records.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
updated: April 2012
Certificate of ethical research approval

Your student no: 580036555

Title of your project: Peer Review, Collaborative Revision, and Genre in L2 Writing

Brief description of your research project:

The present study is one of the first attempts to probe the nature and effectiveness of peer oral feedback and collaborative revision activities in an Iranian EFL writing classroom. Indeed, inspired by sociocultural framework and informed by its key tenets such as mediation, and scaffolding, the primary purpose of this case study research is to examine the nature of interactions that occur during peer reviews and collaborative revisions in multiple-draft process approach to L2 writing and to deepen our understanding of their potential role in students’ subsequent revisions.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

Participants will include 25-30 students aged 20-25 enrolling in a semester-long L2 essay writing course in an Iranian university. From among this group, four focus dyads are organized based on purposive criterion sampling strategy.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents:

To address the school’s ethics policy, at the outset of the project the teacher/researcher develops a code of conduct and explains the process of the study to the students stating the nature of the investigation. Participants will also be made aware of how the research findings will be used. Besides, the researcher will recognize participants’ and the university’s right of anonymity and confidentiality by not publicizing their names and identities. Moreover, the researcher protects and respects the interests and rights of the participants and reminds them of their right to withdraw from the research at any stage they wish. Finally, written consent to use student materials, observing and interviewing them will be obtained from students prior to the beginning of investigation.

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009
Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:
Data will be collected from four main sources: class observations, audiotaping of the focus pairs’ interactions, follow-up interviews with the focus cases, and students’ written texts. Data analysis, then, will include transcription and interpretation of the students’ audiotaped negotiations and interviews, and examination of students’ written texts.
The researcher will be very cautious not to cause any feeling of insecurity or reactivity in students while observing them and before interviewing the participants he will seek for their permission for any types of recordings, providing information about the length of the interview and its scope, and giving the interviewees the chance of verifying their stories.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):
Due to the nature of research, data is collected using multiple sources such as observation, interviewing, and students’ texts. Records of the data collected including transcripts and any audio recordings will be stored in a secure and safe place and when they are no longer required, the written information will be destroyed by shredding and securely disposing and audio recordings will also be disposed of digitally.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):
N/A

This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School’s Research Support Office for the Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: Feb. 2010 until: Aug. 2010

By (above mentioned supervisor’s signature): .................................................. date: ................................

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009
SELL unique approval reference: 01/09/10/29

Signed: .................................................. date: 10/12/2009
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

This form is available from  http://education.exeter.ac.uk/students/
## Appendix 13

### Interactional Strategies Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Interactional Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>The activity involves offering choices to revise the written text in terms of form or meaning either by the reviewer or by the writer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Admit advice</td>
<td>Accepting suggestions given by the partner and involves clearly and explicitly agreeing with the changes or solutions proposed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reject advice</td>
<td>Not all suggestions are welcomed by the peers. In some cases the students reject the advice proposed by their partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Requesting advice</td>
<td>It is used when one of the partners explicitly asks the other one for assistance by providing suggestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Change advice</td>
<td>It refers to those instances in which whether the reviewer or the writer provides an advice earlier in their discussion and amends it later as they become aware of its inaccuracy or face with their peers’ negative reaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ask question</td>
<td>It takes place when the reviewer or writer asks a linguistic question such as a grammatical point or checks what is written or said is accurate from linguistic point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Response to question</td>
<td>In this activity one of the partners answers the linguistic questions raised by his/her peer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Clarification request</td>
<td>In such occasions the reviewer feels ambiguities in the written text and asks for elucidation to puzzle out the meaning in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Clarifying</td>
<td>Clarifying is generally a response to the reviewer’s clarification request and occurs when the writer elaborates what he/she has written in her text. In other words, he/she tries to give more explanation about the meaning of an unclear term or idea to the reviewer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Instructing</td>
<td>It refers to those activities in which whether the reviewer or the writer explicitly offers his/her partner mini lessons on issues of grammar, vocabulary, mechanics or higher aspects of writing such as content and organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Justifying</td>
<td>This type of activity is often used by the writers, as they feel they should justify and defend their choices in response to the comments expressed by the reviewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Referencing</td>
<td>Referencing occurs when a particular error keeps repeating in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Response to referencing</td>
<td>In response to the referencing activity used normally by the reviewers, the writers sometimes express their confirmation or rejection. When they confirm the reference, it means the type of problem was also the same in their views. However, rejecting the reference indicates that the writer does not think the type of the error marked and discussed in that particular case falls in the category of the previous one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Repetition is observed when the reviewer or the writer repeats their saying more than once unintentionally and just for keeping the conversation going.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>This feature is used by both reviewers and writers. In such occasions, the reviewer insists on repairing a mistake, while the writer keeps rejecting his/her peer’s suggestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Comprehension check</td>
<td>This interactional strategy is employed when the reviewers ask the writers to confirm that they have properly understood the authors’ message. It is also used by the writers when they double-check their understanding of the comments delivered by the reviewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Response to comprehension check</td>
<td>It is normally expressed in response to comprehension request where the participants whether confirm or reject their partners’ understanding of what is written or said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Information request</td>
<td>This interactional strategy is mainly used by the reviewer when he/she reads the writer’s text and feels some information is missing and further information or support is required. In such cases, the reviewer asks the writer to provide new or additional information, examples, reasons, or results about what has been written in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Informing</td>
<td>In response to the reviewers request for further information, writers sometimes provide new or additional information, examples, reasons, or results orally to clarify their intentions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Restating</td>
<td>Restating involves reiterating what other person has written or said on the basis of understood meaning whether in L1 or L2. In other words, either the reviewer or the writer summarises or rephrases what has been written or said to show understanding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
end up to either confirmation or rejection.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment or evaluation is used when the reviewer makes an evaluative judgement on the quality, absence, or presence of textual elements or aspects of the written text. Assessment does not necessarily involve advising or offering any suggestions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Response to assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to assessment is writers’ reactions to the evaluation and judgement made by the reviewers on the quality, absence, or presence of textual elements or aspects of their written texts. In such occasions the writers either admits/rejects the reviewer’s attitudes, or declares that special textual element is present in their paper and located it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Certainty check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes one of the interlocutors is doubtful about the advice and whether directly or indirectly double checks if his/her partner is sure about his/her suggestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Express certainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is usually expressed by the reviewer in response to the direct or indirect distrust expressed by writer about the validity of the suggestion provided. Besides, writers sometimes use this activity to emphasise the accuracy of their choice in the written text when faced with their partner’s criticism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Express uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This interactional strategy is used when either the reviewer or the writer first offers a suggestion and later expresses doubt about what they have proposed. It also occurs when a deficiency is marked and detected, but the interlocutors struggle to repair it by expressing hesitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Guessing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes the pairs are not sure about the accurate alternatives. In such cases they speculate about what could be a proper choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Decoding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decoding refers to those activities in which the participants try to work out the meaning of the codes used by their partners or the instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Defining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes the peers are not sure about the definition of a particular term or disagreed about its suitability in the context. So, they refer to a dictionary to find the meaning of that special word or recall it from their memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Flashback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It refers to those behaviours where an error is previously spotted and commented on by one of the partners in the first draft, but is ignored or not incorporated by the other. Therefore, the mistake is still there and marked by the instructor in the second draft. Upon noticing that, the partner who has earlier advised the change, recalls his/her advice and complains about not incorporating his/her comment by his/her pair in the following draft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Providing options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   | By this interactional strategy, the reviewers offer the authors more than
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>Confession</strong></td>
<td>Confession occurs in cases where the writers themselves realise their mistakes immediately after noticing the codes or marks on their papers and explicitly admit their mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>Express surprise</strong></td>
<td>At times the students do not believe the mistakes they have made and get amazed noticing they have made such rudimentary errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>Express understanding</strong></td>
<td>By this interactional strategy, one of the partners declares their understanding of what is being told by their peers. In fact, they ensure their peers that they have got the feedback they have received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>Express confusion</strong></td>
<td>This type of reaction is used when the peers fail to understand the rationale behind the codes employed by the instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
<td><strong>Express frustration</strong></td>
<td>Confusion and inability to fix the errors marked sometimes leads to disappointment and frustration. In such cases, the students explicitly criticise the activities or correction methods utilised by the instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
<td><strong>Express lack of knowledge</strong></td>
<td>In response to the feedback they received from their reviewers, the authors at times confess that they did not know what the correct form of that particular element was otherwise they did not write it that way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>Appropriation</strong></td>
<td>Appropriation take place when one of the partners takes the lead and imposes his/her view on his/her peer’s text despite the attempts made by the peer clarifying and justifying his/her original intention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>Critiquing idea</strong></td>
<td>This interactional strategy is noticed when the reviewer evaluates the author’s written text and criticises its content. In such cases the reviewer does not agree with the writer’s viewpoint and as a result disapprove it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td><strong>Response to criticism</strong></td>
<td>When the authors are criticised by their reviewers, they try to defend their opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>Reading occurs in a variety of forms. Sometimes the students read the whole essay from the top to the bottom. In cases they just read the portions of the text which were marked and required revision, and at times reading and correction are performed together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ask for reading</strong></td>
<td>It happens when one of the interlocutors explicitly asks her partner to initiate reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>Relinquish</strong></td>
<td>Relinquishing occurs when the reviewers withdraw from their suggestions during revision. In some instances, the reviewer gives up his/her advice due to his/her peer’s persistence. In other instances, the reviewer relinquishes from his/her stance when he/she notices the inaccuracy and invalidity of his/her feedback or is unable to support his/her opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Knowledge check</td>
<td>The participants ask their partners explicitly if they know the usage of a particular grammatical construction or a specific terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Writing reminder or correction</td>
<td>Writing the correct forms of the mistakes or reminders above or under the lines usually occurs during the revision sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Blaming others/partner for one's mistake</td>
<td>This interactional strategy takes place when one of the participants blames his/her partner or a third person for the misleading advice/instruction which caused him/her to make a particular mistake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Reject the blame</td>
<td>It is a reaction expressed by one of the partners in response the blame. In such cases, the accused partners do not take the blame and deny their negative role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Give directives</td>
<td>It happens when one of the participants makes the decisions about the actions which should be taken, and orders his/her partner what to do during the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Discussing task procedures</td>
<td>Participants discuss task procedures, talk about their responsibilities, clarify instructions, and make decisions about how to carry on with the task. Both reviewers and writers participate in this type of discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Ask for instruction</td>
<td>It refers to those activities in which whether the reviewer or the writer explicitly asks his/her partner a linguistic question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Inability to provide advice</td>
<td>Due to their low level of English ability, sometimes the peers are unable to provide suggestions and have to abandon the problem, leave it for the authors to correct it, or ask their instructor or classmates for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Refuse to provide advice</td>
<td>In such cases the reviewers refused to provide their peers with suggestion due to their unfamiliarity with their responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Pronunciation correction</td>
<td>In addition to providing advice on grammar, mechanics, content, and organisation of their peers’ papers, participants occasionally correct their partners’ incorrect pronunciation too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Choice is yours</td>
<td>It happens just in rare cases when the partners get disappointed persuading their peers to incorporate their feedback into their following drafts. Therefore, upon noticing their partner’s persistence on not agreeing with any corrections being made, they abandon and leave it for the authors to make any decisions they prefer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Lack of respect for comment</td>
<td>It involves laughing at the writer’s mistakes or showing no respect for the reviewer’s comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Distraction</td>
<td>Distraction occurs when one of the participants interrupts the revision activity and talks about issues unrelated to the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Pointing</td>
<td>Pointing is an interactional strategy in which the reviewers just point to the mistakes without taking any further actions including offering any solutions as the errors are so obvious that the reviewers think the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
authors can fix them themselves and do not need wasting time discussing them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>59</th>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>It includes addition or substitution of a sentence, few sentences or even a paragraph. In such cases one of the partners dictates the corrections while the author write it down.</th>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Laughing</td>
<td>At times partners laugh at each other because of the mistakes they have made, laugh together for not being able to solve the mistakes, or do it in order to make the atmosphere friendlier.</td>
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## Appendix 14

### Interactional Strategies Distribution

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Requesting advice</td>
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<td>Change advice</td>
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<td>Ask question</td>
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<td>Response to question</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Clarification request</td>
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<td>Express uncertainty</td>
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<td>Express surprise</td>
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### Appendix 15

#### Student Dyads’ Negotiation Activities

**Cycle 1**

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Scaffolding negotiation, by definition, is the verbal support provided to L2 writers by their peers irrespective of their writing and linguistic abilities to broaden/extend their cognitive and linguistic development. The scaffolded feedback which is dialogic in nature involving both students, should meet at least one of the following conditions:

1. drawing peers’ attention to the trouble-source(s);
2. offering solution(s)/ alternative(s);
3. extending the scope of the immediate task so that the students can improve their writing abilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Feature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admit advice</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject advice</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requesting advice</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>Change advice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response to question</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarifying</td>
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<td>Instructing</td>
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<td>Justifying</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response to comprehension check</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Response to confirmation request</td>
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<td>Express certainty</td>
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<td>Knowledge check</td>
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<td>Writing reminder or correction</td>
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<td>Blaming others/partner for one's mistake</td>
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<td>Reject the blame</td>
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<td>Give directives</td>
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<td>Discussing task procedures</td>
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<td>Ask for instruction</td>
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<td>Refuse to provide advice</td>
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<td>Choice is yours</td>
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<td>Lack of respect for comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laughing</td>
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Appendix 17
Sample Negotiation Excerpts

(1) Scaffolding Negotiations

Decoding

All the participants including the instructor were required to use standard codes to mark the papers. The peer review sheet which was prepared for this purpose included a group of codes the students needed to utilize and address language and mechanics errors they found in their partners’ drafts. It also contained some examples of each code to clarify what type of error(s) each of them covered and referred to. Decoding, therefore, refers to those activities in which the participants tried to work out the meaning of the codes used by their partners or the instructor. Below are some examples of decoding:

Extract 1 (Pair 3)

(1) Mahdi: I think there has been a mistake with plural here. I should have added E to the word [worriss]. I don’t exactly know.
(2) Tina: pu [code] does not refer to pluralisation. It refers to punctuation, capitalization, and spelling error.
(3) Mahdi: What about pv? Do we have pv as a code?
(4) Tina: It’s not pv. We don’t have pv. It’s pu.
(5) Mahdi: Is that pu?
(6) Tina: You whether have a punctuation or capitalization, or spelling error.
(7) Mahdi: That’s spelling error. E is missing.
(8) Tina: Would you like to add it in order not to forget it?
(9) Mahdi: Have you got a pencil?

Mahdi notices a code on his paper and thinks the code “PU” which is used by the instructor indicates pluralisation error. Tina, on the other hand, does not agree with him and clarifies what the code refers to (turns 2, 4, and 6). Her clarification helps Mahdi understand his mistake and as a result fix it (turn 7).
Extract 2 (Pair 2)

(1) Mani: What is sv? Don’t subject and verb agree?
(2) Maryam: It has got a verb error.
(3) Mani: “subject and verb don’t agree: I took three tests yesterday. The tests was…”
    [reading from the code key]. Aha! It is correct then.
(4) Maryam: No!
(5) Mani: Yes! “the instructors teach”. The noun is plural and the verb agrees with it.
(6) Maryam: You should change teach into plural.
(7) Mani: We can’t pluralise the verb.
(8) Maryam: Shouldn’t we say lessons?
(9) Mani: I mean teaching. It is a verb.
(10) Maryam: Yes! That’s a verb.
(11) Mani: “instructors teach”, the instructor has marked the word instructors as unnecessary. Why? In that case the sentence has no subject. “You have to be in class, and be all ear and listen carefully to the points that the instructors teach”. Shall we ask it from the instructor?
(12) Maryam: You are saying: we should listen carefully to the points and lessons.
(13) Mani: No, I mean we should listen carefully to the points that the instructor teaches. It was my intention. [He turns to the instructor at this point and asks him about this problem].
(14) Mani: What’s wrong with this?
(15) Instructor: Is instructor singular or plural?
(16) Mani: I intended to use it as plural.
(17) Instructor: But it is singular in the above turns. You had better be consistent in your noun choices.
(18) Mani: Aha! In that respect? That’s right. Since it is singular in other cases, it should be singular as well.

In the above example Mani asks Maryam to help him interpret the code “SV” (turn 1). As his partner is not of that much help, he himself tries to find it out (turn 3). In fact, the instructor could use a more suitable code like “NE” which indicates noun ending mistake. This inconsistency of code usage sometimes misled the students. Eventually, Mani decides to ask it from the instructor. The instructor reminds Mani to be consistent in his noun
choices and adds as the term “instructor” is singular in the above lines, he should change this one to singular and use a verb form which agrees with the singular noun (turns 15 and 17).

**Defining**

Sometimes the peers were not sure about the definition of a particular term or disagreed about its suitability in that specific context. In such occasions, they referred to a dictionary to find the meaning of that special word or recalled it from their memory. Defining is demonstrated in the following extracts:

**Extract 1 (Pair 3)**

1. Mahdi: What about the code IT; towards?
2. Tina: It’s unnecessary. Whether it is unnecessary or inaccurate.
3. Mahdi: Missing Transition
4. Tina: Missing Transition
5. Mahdi: I’ve probably used a wrong transition. I think I should use another transition.
6. Tina: Towards, towards means, let me check. What do you mean by towards?
7. Mahdi: I’m not sure what I intended to express by using towards [laughing].
8. Tina: Towards means in the direction of, to, on the way to, en-route for, on the road to [checking a bilingual dictionary]. See what your intention is. Do you want to write these definitions down? You can use them later; the direction of, to, on the way to, en-route for, on the road to. You can fix it later.

In this extract by using the code IT, the instructor intends to show that the term “towards” is not an accurate choice. Mahdi understands it (turn 5), but does not provide any alternative. Tina tries to understand Mahdi’s purpose of using this transition word and by looking up its meaning from the dictionary, offers the definition of the term used (turn 8).

**Extract 2 (Pair 4)**

1. Roya: next to is inaccurate.
2. Afrouz: the person close to you I mean. Next is a wrong word.
3. Roya: BESIDE you. Yes! You should use BESIDE.
4. Afrouz: Why next is incorrect?
(5) Roya: **next** means being beside you physically. It means then, after that.
(6) Afrouz: I mean the person close to you.
(7) Roya: I think you should use **BESIDE**
(8) Afrouz: Both are synonyms.
(9) Roya: Let’s ask it later [from the instructor].

As the instructor believes “next to” is not an appropriate preposition in this construction, he has marked it. Afrouz does not get why her choice is wrong (turn 4). However, her partner rightfully explains that “next to” is physical closeness, and does not mean intimacy. So, she suggests that “beside” better expresses Afrouz’s message (turns 5 and 7).

**Extract 3 (Pair 2)**

(1) Mani: Why have you used **benefit** here?
(2) Maryam: I think **benefit** is misspelled.
(3) Mani: I also think it has got a spelling error but...
(4) Maryam: ...“will earn” valuable experiences [I mean]
(5) Mani: ...“will earn **USEFUL** experiences” is better. **Benefit** means advantage.

In the above example, Mani first asks Maryam’s intention of using the term “benefit” (turn 1). Upon noticing that it is not a suitable option in this case, he proposes his own option “useful” (turn 5) as a more appropriate alternative.

**Flashback**

This refers to those behaviours where an error was previously spotted and commented on by one of the partners in the first draft, but was ignored or not incorporated by the other. Therefore, the mistake was still there and received the same comment by the instructor in the second draft. Upon noticing that, the partner who had earlier advised the change, recalled his/her advice and complained about not incorporating his/her comment by his/her pair in the subsequent draft. The following excerpts include flashback:

**Extract 1 (Pair 2)**

(1) Maryam: That’s the term you recommended me to change last session, but I didn’t.
(2) Mani: Didn’t you revise it?
(3) Maryam: No!
(4) Mani: You ignored my advice.
(5) Maryam: [laughing] “You should study very exactly”.

(6) Mani: VERY WELL, VERY WELL, VERY GOOD

In this excerpt Maryam notices that the error previously spotted and commented on by Mani is also marked by the instructor. She feels embarrassed and admits her non-incorporation of Mani’s suggestion in her first draft (turn 1). Mani’s tone shows his irritation and he repeats his advice three times (turn 5).

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

(1) Mina: And this one: “study”, error in verb tense/verb form
(2) Nasrin: Yes! I told you. If you say this one, you should use an INFINITIVE form [of the verb].
(3) Mina: You mean to study the book?
(4) Nasrin: Yes! TO STUDY the book, TO STUDY all the points
(5) Mina: “To study the book, and to study all the points which are told”, ok! To study.
(6) Nasrin: I think. It’s my idea.

In this extract, Nasrin reminds her partner Mina that she recommended her to use the infinitive form of the verb in this sentence (turn 2). Mina indirectly admits it and corrects the mistake based on Nasrin’s advice (turn 5).

Extract 3 (Pair 1)

(1) Mina: “Paragraph two is also very short. What is studying regularly? How should it be done and to what extent it is useful”? [Mina is reading the instructor’s comments; however, she sometimes struggles reading some of the terms. In such cases Nasrin tries to help her.]
(2) Nasrin: Do you know I told that it is very short? Ok! Go back to your paragraph.
(3) Mina: “The second subject which is important is studying regularly. Do all activities in the book and those [those] which are given by the instructor”.
(4) Nasrin: “The second”, that is all [is that all]?
(5) Mina: That’s all.
(6) Nasrin: [laughing]
(7) Mina: I think we should tell…
(8) Nasrin: “The second subject which is important is studying regularly. Do all”…

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(9) Mina: That’s ok! It should be supported with another [other] sentences.
(10) Nasrin: “activities in the book and thoes [those] which are given by the
instructor”. Read it again. Read it again your paragraph.
(11) Mina: “The second subject which is important…”. Ok!
(12) Nasrin: You should explain about how they should study regularly. Or if they
don’t do it, what will happen for [to] them? You should explain this I think. For
example, you can say that **IF YOU DON’T STUDY REGULARLY,
SOMETHING, SOME OF THE POINTS WILL BE FORGET BY YOU** [you
will forget some of the points]. Something like this. Explain about that.
(13) Mina: **IF YOU DON’T STUDY REGULARLY**…
(14) Nasrin: Yes! **SOME POINTS WILL BE LOST** or **MISSED**.
(15) Mina: **SOME POINTS**, especially when you can remember them, when we study
them regularly…
(16) Nasrin: Yes! Exactly. And you will be more successful, when you read step by
step.
(17) Mina: Aha! You can put down all the roles, all the things that are considering for
writing essay, when you do them, when you do all the activities, when you read it
regularly.
(18) Nasrin: Yes, you should explain about that.
(19) Mina: **BE FIRM FOR DOING THIS STEP BECAUSE WITH DOING ALL
THE ACTIVITIES YOU CAN BE SURE ALL THE POINTS, ALL THE
POINTS, ALL THE POINTS** [repeating].
(20) Nasrin: **WILL KEEP IN YOUR MIND** [both are helping to support the main
idea while Mina is writing them down].
(21) Mina: **ALL THE POINTS** [she is trying to retrieve a term in English but she
can’t; therefore, she pronounces its Persian translation and asks for its English
equivalent].
(22) Nasrin: **regard, consider, account**
(23) Mina: **POINTS**
(24) Nasrin: **WILL BE CONSIDERED IN YOUR**
(25) Mina: **WILL BE CONSIDERED**…
(26) Nasrin: But I’m not sure about the grammar.
(27) Mina: Ok! **WILL BE CONSIDERED IN YOUR WRITING ESSAY.** I think it’s correct.

(28) Nasrin: Yeah!

In the above extract, the instructor believes that Mina’s second paragraph is not supported with enough details. As Mina is reading the comments, Nasrin emphasises on her similar advice in the previous session (turn 2) and they both try to develop the main idea of the paragraph in the rest of the conversation unit.

**Extract 4 (Pair 2)**

(1) Mani: “One paragraph is devoted to each main step and the information in the body paragraphs are logical. However, the information is general. Everybody knows that in order to get a good mark we should have a good writing and methods of writing” [Mani is reading the instructor’s comments and in some cases Maryam helps him]. He says what you have written is not interesting. All know these things.

(2) Maryam: [laughing] What should I write then?

(3) Mani: All people know that in order to get a good mark, you should write a good [essay]. Let’s read what he [instructor] has written next. “But to what extent and how they can be of any help. In your body paragraphs, especially the second one, you need to present more detailed information” [still reading the comments].

(4) Maryam: It requires further support.

(5) Mani: Yes! It does. Your second body paragraph needs more information. “General information can’t help your readers”…

(6) Maryam: He says general information does no help.

(7) Mani: “You should say what you mean by different methods”, aha! That’s what I told you. Again, you didn’t revise it. I recommended you to specify the methods.

(8) Maryam: I added them.

(9) Mani: No! You didn’t.

(10) Maryam: Look! I have mentioned them [showing Mani her second paragraph]. That’s why the paragraph is longer [in the second draft]. I wrote them. I have given an example. What else should I add? That’s what I meant.

(11) Mani: Is that it?

(12) Maryam: Yes! These are the methods of essay writing; we should write body, introduction…”
(13) Mani: “You should say what you mean by different methods, and how they can improve our writing skill, [still reading the instructor’s comment]”…

(14) Maryam: I haven’t mentioned that.

(15) Mani: You haven’t elaborated that. “and as a result essay writing mark [reading the last bit of the instructor’s comment].”

(16) Maryam: Haven’t I explained that?

(17) Mani: No! You should write how! You should give guidelines and instructions.

Mani reads the instructor’s comment on Maryam’s second body paragraph. When he notices that the comments highlight what he had recommended Maryam to do earlier in her first draft, he reminds her that he indicated the same issue last week (turn 7 and 9). But Maryam emphasises her addition of some examples to the general points in her second draft and they both read it together. She also believes she has provided enough explanation to support what she means by “having good writing” (turns 8, 10, and 12). Mani listens to her, and both check the body paragraph, but do not take any further actions to improve it according to the instructor’s comment.

Extract 5 (Pair 5)

(1) Azam: “Second, many students don’t study during the term and they have a high stress in final exam, this case, effecting your exam that is most common”.

(2) Fariba: The verb is incorrect. I think it doesn’t need –ing. Am I right?

(3) Azam: “effecting your exam”?

(4) Fariba: Yes!

(5) Azam: It influences…

(6) Fariba: Yes! It influences, [I mean] this case influences…

(7) Azam: I told you it is inaccurate in the previous session.

(8) Fariba: But your comment was not precise. Yours feedback was very general.

(9) Azam: I think you should say: “this case HAVE AN EFFECT ON your exam that is most common”.

In this example, Azam claims she had marked this point in Fariba’s first draft indicating its inaccuracy (turn 7). Fariba admits her partner’s claim; however, she states that Azam’s comments and feedback were very general and she could not use them to improve her paper (turn 8).
Extract 6 (Pair 4)

(1) Afrouz: And this one is **wrong word** [code]. Last session I told you it’s incorrect [most importantly] and you claimed you have copied it from the instructor’s [model essays or hand-outs].

(2) Roya: Because there was a similar phrase there. That’s why I used it.

(3) Afrouz: I don’t know.

When Afrouz notices Roya’s previously discussed mistake is marked by the instructor in her second draft, she reminds her that she raised the same issue in the peer review session (turn 1). Roya feeling uncertain asserts that she has seen a similar transition used in the hand-out provided by the instructor and she thinks it is correct (turn 2).

**Confirmation request**

During joint revision, in some cases peers offered a suggestion and as they themselves were unsure about its accuracy, they waited for their partners’ positive/negative reactions. The following excerpts contain confirmation request expressed by the participants:

Extract 1 (Pair 3)

(1) Mahdi: Here we have got **subject and verb do not agree**.

(2) Tina: So, everyone **DOES**, ok?

(3) Mahdi: “everyone does these methods”.

In this short piece of conversational unit, Mahdi reads the code and its interpretation. As he is reading, Tina corrects the mistake herself and waits for Mahdi’s reaction (turn 2). By re-reading the sentence in its corrected form, Mahdi confirms his partner’s alternative.

Extract 2 (Pair 5)

(1) Azam: First, here the term **develop** is a **wrong word**, yes, **develop** is a **wrong word**.

(2) Fariba: Ok!

(3) Azam: You should have said “which things”...

(4) Fariba: “may”

(5) Azam: “may develop your mark”...

(6) Fariba: “in final exam”. Do you mean it needs **ed**?
(7) Azam: No, it doesn’t need ed. You’ve used a wrong word here. You should have used another word here. In your first draft I noticed that this term is wrong.
(8) Fariba: I wanted to mention the techniques which could help our final exam mark get better.
(9) Azam: “in other words, which things may develop your final exam”. I don’t know. Your intention was to introduce those activities which could help your mark get better. Wasn’t it?
(10) Fariba: Yes!
(11) Azam: Improve has the same meaning as develop.
(12) Fariba: Yes! Improve is a synonym of develop. Or I could replace it with better. Is that ok?
(13) Azam: Yes! WHICH THINGS CAN MAKE YOUR MARK BETTER, WHICH THINGS CAN MAKE YOUR MARK MORE BETTER [better].
Yes! Write it down, then we will ask it from the instructor.

In the above example the term “develop” is not a right choice and both partners struggle finding a better alternative (turns 11 and 12). After reading that portion of the paper several times together, Fariba suggests replacing “develop” with “better” and seeks her partner’s confirmation (turn 12). Azam confirms her alternative and tries to fix the error, but she herself makes a mistake using the term “better” as a comparative adjective (turn 13). Turns 6 and 7 are also examples of confirmation request and a response to the confirmation request.

Extract 3 (Pair 2)

(1) Mani: “It has 3 steps”. What does WW refer to? Should I write THEY ARE? What should I write?
(2) Maryam: You should change it. You should write THERE ARE 3 STEPS.
(3) Mani: Ok! wrong word/wrong word form
(4) Maryam: You have used a wrong word.
(5) Mani: What should I write?
(6) Maryam: Write for example THERE ARE 3 MAJOR STEPS.
(7) Mani: I should use ARE, THERE ARE 3 STEPS.
(8) Maryam: Replace it has with THERE ARE
This extract contains another example of seeking confirmation which is used by Mani as he reads the sentence requiring correction (turn 1). He also asks Maryam to help him fix the error. Maryam in response provides her alternatives (turns 2, 6, and 8).

**Extract 4 (Pair 1)**

(1) Mina: “but you will also realise your weaknesse” [weakness]

(2) Nasrin: “weaknesse” [weakness], I think **weaknesse** [weakness]

(3) Mina: **Punctuation** [reading the code] [laughing]

(4) Nasrin: Aha! In this way; **WEEKNESS** [weakness]. Am I right?

(5) Mina: It has a **noun ending** [reading the code, the term weakness is both misspelled and needs a plural s]. **WEAKNESSES, YOUR WEAKNESSES, YOUR WEAKNESSES**. No, no, no! I’m not sure about it. Do not write it. [apparently, Nasrin is writing Mina’s suggestion on her paper]. Missing or unnecessary [reading from the key].

In this example, the term “weaknesses” has both spelling and noun ending error. As Mina reads Nasrin’s paper, Nasrin herself suggests an alternative and double checks it with her partner (turn 4). Mina, on the other hand, indirectly rejects Nasrin’s correction and provides her own suggestion (turn 5). However, it is not clear why she expresses uncertainty about her advice.

**Response to confirmation request**

It was used in response to confirmation request expressed by one of the partners during the activities. Response to confirmation request might end up to either confirmation or rejection. Examples of this interactional strategy are demonstrated below:

**Extract 1 (Pair 4)**

(1) Roya: “These efforts included”

(2) Afrouz: “These efforts included”

(3) Roya: What’s wrong with it? “These efforts included”, should I write **INCLUDE**? In present tense?

(4) Afrouz: verb [reading the code]. I think it needs –**ING**. You mean consist of, am I right?

(5) Roya: Yes!
In turns 3 and 7, Roya suggests two alternatives using the present and past tense of the verb “include” and seeks Afrouz’s approval. Afrouz, on the other hand, does not confirm her partner’s choice (turn 8) and stresses that in this instance the present form of the verb is appropriate (turns 8, and 10).

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

(1) Mina: “being teacher’s pet can help”, can help...
(2) Nasrin: Help STUDENTS I think.
(3) Mina: “being teacher’s pet can help”...
(4) Nasrin: ALL THE STUDENTS
(5) Mina: missing word
(6) Nasrin: ALL THE STUDENTS
(7) Mina: or THE STUDENTS, yes?
(8) Nasrin: Yes!

In the above extract as Mina reads the sentence, Nasrin suggests her corrections: “students” and “all the students”. Mina admits that a subject is missing in this sentence and corrects it by inserting the term “the students” and asks if Nasrin agrees (turn 7). Nasrin approves it by saying “yes” (turn 8).

(2) Non-scaffolding Negotiations

Clarification request

This interactional strategy took place quite frequently. In such occasions the reviewer felt ambiguities in the written text and asked for elucidation to puzzle out the meaning in the text whether in English or Persian. This is illustrated in the following extracts:
Extract 1 (Pair 2)

1. Maryam: And here your sentence is a bit problematic. “and listen very carefully to
   the points or”. What do you mean by this?
2. Mani: I mean the points and the lessons which are covered by the instructor.
3. Maryam: Here, I think you should have used OR [and], or is not appropriate here.
4. Mani: Why?
5. Maryam: Because the points are the same as the lessons the instructor gives.
6. Mani: Ok. In that respect?
7. Maryam: You should carefully listen to all points.
8. Mani: That’s right.
9. Maryam: This has made your sentence look awkward.
10. Mani: I should delete one of them [points/lessons].

In this example, Maryam does not understand the message and asks for clarification (turn 1)
prompting Mani to politely explain his intention verbally (turn 2). Later in their negotiation,
Maryam offers a suggestion which is welcomed by Mani.

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

1. Mina: Ok. “wouldn’t work unless you do the last role.” Ok! Role. What do you
   mean by role?
2. Nasrin: The last step I mean.
3. Mina: Are they synonym?

Mina does not understand what Nasrin means by using the word “role” in this construction.
So, she asks for elucidation (turn 1). Nasrin addresses her question and in response to
Mina’s sceptical reaction, she emphasises on her right choice.

Clarifying

This type of interactional strategy was generally a response to the reviewer’s clarification
request and occurred when the writer elaborated what he/she had written in her text. In
other words, he/she tried to give more explanations about the meaning of an unclear term or
idea to the reviewer. Clarifying might occur whether in L1 or L2 language. This
characteristic is illustrated in the following extracts:
Extract 1 (Pair 1)

1. Mina: What do you mean by *tring* [trying]? Your *tring*?
2. Nasrin: Yes, Tring [trying] refers to whatever you have done so far. For example, about the first step and second step. If actually they didn’t work, you can use this one.
3. Mina: It means that you are trying to have a good mark at the end of the semester. Yes?
5. Mina: But I think it is not a correct word here. I don’t know. I don’t know what is the correct word. I am not sure about the writing.
6. Nasrin: Ok! Do you have any other words to use instead of that?
7. Mina: “There is another step which is essential to do in order to complete your *tring* [trying].”
8. Mina: Your, Your…
9. Nasrin: Your *attempt* you mean? Your *effort*? All of them are synonym. What do you mean?
11. Nasrin: You *are tring* [trying] during the semester. You *are tring* [trying] to do all of them.
12. Mina: Ok!

Mina does not understand a word and asks for explanation saying ”What do you mean by “trying” (turn 1)? Nasrin clarifies her intention and says that by using this term she refers to the aforementioned steps introduced earlier in the essay (turns 2, 4, and 11). Mina, however, does not think Nasrin’s choice is correct and is also unable to suggest a good alternative when Nasrin asks for her advice. Nasrin even proposes a couple of synonyms such as: “attempt” or “effort” but Mina neither confirms nor rejects them and her tone shows she is not convinced. Unable to solve the problem, they abandon it.

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

1. Nasrin: Here: “It can help to remember all the elements of writing which has two parts”. What do you mean by that? “It can help”…
(2) Mina: “It can help to remember all the elements of writing which has two parts”.
(3) Nasrin: “It can help to remember all the elements”
(4) Mina: All the things you need to write.
(5) Nasrin: Only by having study before?
(6) Mina: Study before the class, study the book, and study all the points the teacher were told [has told] before the class.
(7) Nasrin: You mean that the elements which your teachers are teaching to you?
(8) Mina: Or may be you can find it in the book.
(9) Nasrin: I don’t know.
(10) Mina: Because you are studying.

Nasrin finds one of the sentences written by Mina is vague, so she asks for clarification (turns 1, 5, and 7). Mina tries to clarify her intention (turns 2, 4, 6, and 8); however, it seems that she has failed to illuminate her intention since Nasrin is still confused as she says: “I don’t know” (turn 9).

**Response to comprehension check**

This interactional strategy was also quite common. It was normally expressed in response to comprehension request where the participants whether confirmed or rejected their partners’ understanding of what was written or said. The following extracts contain such behaviour:

**Extract 1 (Pair 5)**

(1) Azam: As I reviewed your essay, I understood that you intended to introduce two issues. Is that right?
(2) Fariba: Yes, that’s right, two issues.
(3) Azam: You wanted to mention two issues. One of the problems I noticed was that you quickly presented what you had in your mind, presented what you had in your mind. You didn’t attempt to explain the procedure step by step. For example, if you do this, that will happen. You didn’t follow step by step. That’s what I think.
(4) Fariba: Actually, I explained my recommendation.
(5) Azam: Yes, I think you didn’t explain step by step. If you had done that, it would have been much better. You quickly mentioned whatever you yourself intended to say [not considering your reader].
In turn 1 Azam used comprehension check to ensure if Fariba intended to introduce two steps in her essay and Fariba confirms her partner’s understanding in the following turn (2). Later on, Azam criticizes Fariba for being too quick and not describing the procedures step by step and with enough details.

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

1. Mina: “As after all”
2. Nasrin: “As after all”, yes. What do you mean? What’s the problem here?
3. Mina: After all of them you mean, yes?
4. Nasrin: After all of them. Yes!
5. Mina: It is after all of them?
6. Nasrin: Yes, when you have done all of them, here there is another one. Yes.
7. Mina: Ok!

In this excerpt as Mina reads the text, she notices the phrase “as after all” and gets confused. In fact, the conjunction causes ambiguity and she tries to puzzle it out. Therefore, she checks her understanding with Nasrin two times (turns 3 and 5) and Nasrin confirms her partner’s understanding (turns 4 and 6).

Response to assessment

Response to assessment was writers’ reactions to the evaluation and judgement made by the reviewers on the quality, absence, or presence of textual elements or aspects of their written texts. In such occasions, the writers either admitted/rejected the reviewer’s attitudes, or declared that special textual element was present in their paper and located it. This behaviour is demonstrated in the following extracts:

Extract 1 (Pair 5)

1. Fariba: I think the introduction of your essay didn’t include thesis statement.
2. Azam: Yes! You are right. It is my mistake. That’s one of the points I mentioned in my essay. In my essay, I have recommended the readers to listen carefully to their instructors’ instructions. However, I have forgotten to do it myself.

In her evaluation, Fariba stresses that Azam’s introductory paragraph lacks thesis statement. Azam admits her partner’s comment and suggests that is one of the problems her essay has got.
Extract 2 (Pair 2)

(1) Mani: “Reconsider your main steps and check how you can support them with more specific detail. [reading the instructor’s comment]”
(2) Maryam: haven’t I supported them?
(3) Mani: Yes! He says you haven’t supported your main ideas enough.
(4) Maryam: My essay would be very long then..
(5) Mani: It doesn’t matter. Mine [my paper] is 4 pages. Let’s read the comment again:
   “Reconsider your main steps and check how you can support them with more specific detail”.
(6) Maryam: I should also re-state the main idea in the conclusion.
(7) Mani: No! You should expand your main steps in the body paragraphs, add more details to them.

The instructor requires Maryam to support her main steps in detail (turn 1). In response, Maryam claims her essay would be longer then (turn 4). Mani believes that is ok and stresses the importance of developing the main points in detail.

Extract 3 (Pair 4)

(1) Roya: I think that in general your essay is ok. The only issue I think you should consider is that the thesis statement is written near the end of the introductory paragraph. I think you had better write it earlier in the paragraph to stress its importance to your reader.
(2) Afrouz: I don’t think it is a problem.
(3) Roya: I don’t know. I also don’t think it makes that much problem.
(4) Afrouz: Because last term Mrs…
(5) Roya: I know it is not a problem but I think that way you emphasise its importance [if you present it earlier in your introductory paragraph].

In her preliminary assessment, Roya judges the piece in general by calling it a good essay. Yet, later she tries to convince Afrouz that the thesis statement is not written in the right place (turn 1). Afrouz, on the other hand, resists and claims she does not think the way she has written the thesis statement is wrong (turn 2).
**Restating**

Restating involved reiterating what other person had written or said on the basis of understood meaning whether in L1 or L2. In other words, either the reviewer or the writer summarised or paraphrased what had been written or said to show understanding. The following excerpts highlight how the reviewers paraphrased what were written by the writers:

**Extract 1 (Pair 5)**

1. Azam: Let me say this: In your two **body paragraphs**, you have introduced two steps, but in the conclusion you have just mentioned one of them.
2. Fariba: Yes, I have stressed if you follow these **steps**…
3. Azam: Yes.
4. Fariba: If you follow the above mentioned issues…
5. Azam: Wait a minute. Here is your **conclusion**…
6. Fariba: I’ve mentioned both of them.
7. Azam: “I said you have a”. You have mentioned the final exam…
8. Fariba: No, no! I have mentioned it here: “If you”…
9. Azam: I know. You have mentioned cramming the night before final exam is a bad habit, but you haven’t mentioned the other one which is team working…
10. Fariba: I think by writing this first sentence, I have expressed my idea…
11. Azam: No. It certainly has had a problem that I haven’t been able to get it. I don’t know. That’s my feeling that you haven’t mentioned that point. When I read your essay, I quickly got your message. But when I read the **conclusion** I realized that you have not mentioned studying in group, but you have indicated the night before final exam.
12. Fariba: No, no. The night before final exam has nothing to do with the steps.
13. Azam: I know…
14. Fariba: I just wanted to say that some students do not follow these steps and leave them for the night before final exam.
15. Azam: Yes! One of your body paragraphs was about studying in groups, it means they should decide whether they want to study individually or in group, select their partners.
16. Fariba: I thought this sentence…
Azam: In your next paragraph, you have recommended students not to leave things for the night before final exam because it is hard due to increase in the stress and so. In the **conclusion** you have talked about the night before exam but not the other step which is studying in group or individually. That’s my feeling.

In this excerpt, turns 1, 7, and 9 includes restatement in which Azam summarises what Fariba has written in her body paragraphs. Azam believes that of the two main steps introduced in the body paragraphs, just one of them is mentioned in the concluding paragraph (turn 1). In other words she helps Fariba understand whether her intended message is well received by an authentic audience. Fariba states that she has restated those two elements in the first sentence of her concluding paragraph (turns 6, 8, and 10). They go back to Fariba’s paper and it seems that Azam is right because one of the main steps is directly mentioned and the other one is not mentioned explicitly.

**Extract 2 (Pair 4)**

(1) Afrouz: “In spite of”, the structure here, **may be. If be** is separate from **may**, it is wrong. It isn’t used this way. If they are used together…

(2) Roya: “In spite of student’s friend”

(3) Afrouz: Your intention is to say even if the students’ friends may explain it to them. You have written **may** and **be** separately.

(4) Roya: Yes, that’s right.

(5) Afrouz: **May be** means probably.

(6) Roya: Perhaps

(7) Afrouz: If you write them together and don’t separate them from each other, then it means perhaps. **May** is a **modal** verb and **be** is passive. Here you confuse the reader.

Afrouz gives an improper advice in this extract and her comment is ungrammatical, although it may sound accurate in its Persian translation. Turn 3 includes a restatement of what Roya has written on her paper from the reviewer’s view point. The paraphrase is confirmed by the writer (turn 4).
Confession

Confession occurred in cases where the writers themselves realised their mistakes immediately after noticing the codes or marks on their papers and explicitly admitted their mistakes. The excerpts below display an instances of this behaviour:

Extract 1 (Pair 3)

(1) Mahdi: “from”…
(2) Tina: “another”, I have made a mistake here.
(3) Mahdi: “another”
(4) Tina: “sources”
(5) Mahdi: FROM OTHER SOURCES. Another means one more. Here you want to mention more than one source. OTHER SOURCES

In this example, Mahdi is reading Tina’s paper. As he is reading and upon noticing the code, Tina admits her wrong word choice (turn 2) and fixes it with the support of her partner.

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

(1) Nasrin: I myself, I know that here there is a big mistake: “If you there is this question”, I think I should use IF THERE IS THE QUESTION…
(2) Mina: What is written here?
(3) Nasrin: What do you mean? Structure
(4) Mina: “Re-arrange the sentence in a clear way” [reading the instructor’s mini comment written above the line].
(5) Nasrin: You think that is not correct. Let me read it.
(6) Mina: Give it to me.
(7) Nasrin: Is there any problem here? “If there is”
(8) Mina: “If there is”, I can’t see.
(9) Nasrin: “If there is this question, how you can obtain a good mark in Essay Writing exam on your mind”.

In the above example, Nasrin is reading her article and Mina is following. Before she reads, Nasrin acknowledges her mistake (turn 1) and tries to fix it while Mina is reading the mini comment written by the instructor on the margin of Nasrin’s paper.
Extract 3 (Pair 4)

(1) Afrouz: “remember it”, I really added it [the pronoun it] in my second draft. “flattery gets you nowhere”.

(2) Roya: Instead of improving your essay over drafts [you deteriorate it]. Of course both of us are the same.

In the above example, as Afrouz reads her paper, she herself understands her mistake which is unnecessary use of the pronoun “it” and admits that she has added it to the sentence in her second draft (turn 1).

Informing

In response to the reviewers request for further information, writers sometimes provided new or additional information, examples, reasons, or facts in oral form to clarify their intentions. In extracts below, the writers explain their intention in more detail by providing some general examples:

Extract 1 (Pair 2)

(1) Mani: Here you have frequently talked about methods; methods of writing, without providing any examples. You have just said “essay writing has more methods”, again: more methods, again: this method, you haven’t given any example.

(2) Maryam: Do you mean I should have explained the methods?

(3) Mani: At least, you should have explained one of them in detail, so that your reader could understand what you mean by method.

(4) Maryam: I mean the methods that we must have; a body [paragraph], our essay should have a body. It should have a conclusion.

(5) Mani: You haven’t mentioned them here. The reader doesn’t understand.

(6) Maryam: Should I write all of them?

(7) Mani: Yes. At least you should have written one of them, so that your reader could understand your message.

In this instance, Mani requests for more information on “methods of writing” (turns 1, 3, 5, and 7), commenting that Maryam has frequently used “methods of writing” without providing any specific details or examples to clarify them. In response to his request,
Maryam states that by “Methods” she means different parts of an essay: body and concluding paragraphs (turn 4).

**Extract 2 (Pair 5)**

1. Azam: In the conclusion you had mentioned the main arguments, but **about good experience**, you should elaborate what you mean by **good experience**. What is **bad experience**? You have just mentioned it develops **good experience**.
2. Fariba: From my viewpoint, I believe working is a **good experience** on its own right.
3. Azam: Ok! You should explain what you mean by that. The prompt of the essay requires us to explain about the good and bad experiences of working.
4. Fariba: I just wanted to say that working outside is in general a good experience. Even the bad experiences…
5. Azam: No, some of the experiences like discrimination or harassment are not good.
6. Fariba: I think they cause more…
7. Azam: It is not a good experience.
8. Fariba: This by itself increases our knowledge and awareness about our context and surrounding.
9. Azam: I agree with working outside but if one day I disagree with it, it is just because women are harassed.
10. Fariba: That’s right. This is what we always keep in mind.
11. Azam: Ok! Isn’t it better to focus on the conclusion? We are distracted.

In the above example, Azam, the reviewer, asks her partner Fariba to be more specific about good experience (turns, 1 and 3). Fariba, on the other hand, believes no further information is needed as working outside potentially a good experience and even bad experiences teach women valuable lessons (turns, 2, 4, 8, 10).

**Response to referencing**

In response to the referencing interactional strategy used normally by the reviewers, the writers sometimes expressed their confirmation or rejection. When they confirmed the reference, it meant the type of problem was the same in their views. However, rejecting the reference indicated that the writer did not think the type of the error marked and discussed
in that particular case fell in the category of the previous one. The following extracts show instances of positive reaction to referencing:

**Extract 1 (Pair 2)**

1. Mani: Here again you should do the same.
2. Maryam: *is having*
3. Mani: Yes. *IS HAVING*

Here as soon as Mani refers Maryam to the same error which was dealt with earlier, she herself produces the right form of the verb “is having” without waiting for Mani’s correction.

**Extract 2 (Pair 4)**

1. Afrouz: Here again when you start a new paragraph…
2. Roya: Ok! *Capitalisation*
3. Afrouz: Yes! *Capitalization*

Here as soon as Afrouz refers Roya to the error which has been dealt with earlier, Roya understand it and does not wait for Afrouz’s suggestion. She initiates it herself.

**Ask for instruction**

It refers to those activities in which whether the reviewers or the writers explicitly ask their partners to explain about a linguistic point. The following examples show sample instruction requests:

**Extract 1 (Pair 4)**

1. Roya: “for example”, why has he marked *for example* as *punctuation* error?
2. Afrouz: *CAPITAL*
3. Roya: Should I capitalize *a* too? A *seat*? When do we normally *capitalize* a word?
   
   We don’t use *capitalization* after comma. Do we?
4. Afrouz: As far as I know, we use small letter after comma.
5. Roya: Should we use capitalization after full stop and colon?
6. Afrouz: After colon?
7. Roya: What does it mean here [she means pu code which is used by the instructor]?
Afrouz: Hang on! [she apparently checks the hand out the instructor has provided them earlier and shows Roya an example of proper application of punctuation mark in a similar case].

In the above example, Roya asks Afrouz a general linguistic question on capitalization and punctuation (turn 3). Afrouz herself is unsure but tries to help her showing a sample she finds in model essays or hand outs provided by the instructor (turns 4 and 8).

**Knowledge check**

In cases the participants asked their partners explicitly if they knew the usage of a particular grammatical construction or a specific terminology. The use of this activity can be observed in the following example, where the reviewer asks her partner whether she is familiar with the term “usage” and its application:

**Extract 1 (Pair 1)**

1. Mina: I don’t know why you used **usage** here.
2. Nasrin: **usage**
3. Mina: “every text more than once in order to figure out”
4. Nasrin: Do you know the meaning of **usage**?
5. Mina: Ok! I know [laughing].
6. Nasrin: Ok! How to use the words and structures. I was explaining if you read some texts or I don’t know some books, you can understand something about the structure; how to use some words, how to use some structures and they can help you…
7. Mina: I can understand it easily. But here can we use it?
9. Mina: “in order to figure out the usage of words and structures”, **usage**?

In this extract, Mina does not understand the reason why Nasrin has used the term “usage” in this sentence (turn 1). In fact, she struggles understanding it. In response, Nasrin asks if Mina knows the meaning of “usage” and its application (turn 4). When Mina Laughingly responds yes (turn 5), Nasrin starts clarifying her intention and ensures Mina about the accuracy of her word choice (turns 6 and 8). Mina is still in doubt about Nasrin’s word choice.
Certainty check

Sometimes one of the interlocutors was doubtful about the advice and whether directly or indirectly double checked if his/her partner was sure about his/her suggestion. Certainty check is demonstrated in the excerpts below:

**Extract 1 (Pair 4)**

1. Afrouz: Here you’ve got a preposition error.
2. Roya: Why?
3. Afrouz: Wait. The appropriate preposition for priority is **TO** not **in**
4. Roya: **to learning**, Are you sure?
5. Afrouz: Yes! **PRIORITY TO**
6. Roya: If we use **to**, then the verb which follows it won’t be in **-ing** form.
7. Afrouz: Yes it will. That’s a preposition too. **PRIORITY TO! to** functions as preposition.
8. Roya: But **priority in learning** is correct.
9. Afrouz: As far as I know, the preposition for **Priority** is **to**. However, check it again.
10. Roya: Ok. I will.

Afrouz believes that Roya has used a wrong preposition here and the appropriate preposition for “priority” is “to” (turn 3). Roya asks if she is sure about her advice and Afrouz stresses yes (turns 4 and 5). Although Afrouz stresses her certainty about her proposed alternative more than one time, Roya is still not convinced about the solution provided by her and intends to check it later (turns 8 and 10).

**Extract 2 (Pair 4)**

1. Roya: Here again you have placed **for instance** between two **commas**.
2. Afrouz: I am sure about it Roya. I have checked it.
3. Roya: Between two **commas**?
4. Afrouz: We have it in our textbook that **for instance** is put between two commas.
5. Roya: If you put a **comma** here, then this part will be considered as part of the next sentence.
6. Afrouz: No. I think it won’t.
7. Roya: Look: “Therefore, you should apply some principles”.
(8) Afrouz: We’ll ask it from the instructor. If he says it is wrong, I will change it.
(9) Roya: I say two commas are not used. That’s it.

In this example, Roya questions the way Afrouz has punctuated “for instance”. Afrouz rejects her suggestion and ensures her partner about the punctuation mark she has used (turns 2 and 4). But when she faces her partner’s doubt and persistence (turns 3 and 5), she states she will double check it with the instructor.

Express certainty

It was usually expressed by the reviewer in response to the direct or indirect distrust expressed by writer about the validity of the suggestion provided. Besides, writers sometimes used this interactional strategy to emphasize the accuracy of their choice in the written text when faced with their partner’s criticism. In such cases, the interlocutor self-confidently ensured his/her peer about the validity and correctness of his/her feedback or choice. The following excerpts demonstrate examples of this activity:

Extract 1 (Pair 1)

(1) Mina: And this one: “on your mind”, [should be] IN your mind.
(2) Nasrin: On your mind
(3) Mina: IN your mind. Look up my dictionary. IN your mind.
(4) Nasrin: Are you sure?
(5) Mina: Yes, in some body’s mind. Yes, in some body’s mind. Look up my dictionary.
(6) Nasrin: But I have heard that, for example, there was a song saying; there is something on my mind.
(7) Mina: IN your mind
(8) Nasrin: On my mind
(9) Mina: Look at my dictionary
(10) Nasrin: Ok. Check it again.
(11) Mina: But I’m sure about it.
(12) Nasrin: I’m sure too. Ok. Go to the next mistake.
(13) Mina: No, no. [checking her dictionary]. In somebody’s mind [finds it in a dictionary].
(14) Nasrin: Ok! You can find other examples too. Time is passing. We can find it after class.
(15) Mina: But I’m sure.
(16) Nasrin: I’m sure too.

This is a very clear example of expressing certainty by both partners. In fact, in this excerpt both participants firmly and insistently defend their choice of preposition and express their certainty repeatedly and there is no sign of withdrawal from both sides of the debate (turns 5 - 16).

Extract 2 (Pair 4)

(1) Afrouz: Look at here: you have written: “don’t let things make his/her absence-mind”. Absence-mind means forgetfulness.
(2) Roya: No, no, no. It means distraction.
(3) Afrouz: Absent-mind means distraction?
(4) Roya: Yes, I’ve checked it. I swear. It means distraction.
(5) Afrouz: Even if it means distraction…
(6) Roya: I mean they don’t let things distract them.

In this example, Afrouz believes that based on the Persian translation Roya provides, “absence-mind is not a right option and it should be replaced by another term such as “distract”. Roya, however, does not agree and claims she has checked it. It is a right choice and she even swears (turn 4).

Express understanding

By this interactional strategy, the partners declared their understanding of what were told by their peers. It was also used to ensure their peers that they got the feedback they received. The extracts below contain examples of such behaviour:

Extract 1 (Pair 3)

(1) Tina: Concerning the content and organization of your essay, I noticed that it consists of introduction, body, and conclusion. The language you used was somehow courteous. But in some of the paragraphs, the counter-claim was either not stated or not supported adequately.
(2) Mahdi: Of course I think you have realized that I have devoted one paragraph explaining the proponents’ view points, and one paragraph the opponents’ ideas. I used this format.

(3) Tina: To be honest, I did not notice the pattern the instructor advised us to follow last week; that is, counter-claim, claim, support. I did not get whether you agree with the issue or disagree.

(4) Mahdi: I didn’t express my personal idea at all.

(5) Tina: No. I understand what you mean. I know we shouldn’t include our personal ideas directly. However, I think you should clarify your stance. As a reader, I should understand which view point you support. In some cases you have supported the counter-claim, and sometimes the claim. I got confused and didn’t understand what your position was.

In the above extract, Tina is evaluating Mahdi’s essay as a whole. She believes Mahdi has not followed the pattern recommended by the instructor. Mahdi defends his style. Tina, on the other hand, suggests she understands why he has followed this format, but she still believes the instructor’s instructions should be applied (turn 5).

Extract 2 (Pair 2)

(1) Maryam: You have said when you do your assignments in class or out of class, what happens? You haven’t explained that.

(2) Mani: “the instructor will understand”

(3) Maryam: How could the instructor understand?

(4) Mani: Ok! We should hand in our assignments.

(5) Maryam: when you do your assignments in class, …

(6) Mani: Or out of class, your instructor will understand that you are interested in the course. “Therefore”…

(7) Maryam: What is it here?

(8) Mani: “the instructor will understand how interested you are in that course”. It means the extend you…

(9) Maryam: It means the extent you, he understands the extent you are interested in the course. Then, you have continued “you”

(10) Mani: No, no, no. This you refers to me.
(11) Maryam: No, I know. The instructor will understand how interested you are in that course. You haven’t explained it properly.

(12) Mani: That’s a correct [structure]. That’s a **noun clause**.

(13) Maryam: I know.

(14) Mani: That’s a **noun clause**.

In this example, Maryam believes the structure written by Mani is ambiguous and needs elaboration. In fact, it seems that she is not competent enough about the usage of “relative clause” in English Grammar. Mani tries to convince her that the construction is grammatically accurate (turn 12). Maryam, on the other hand, is scared of losing her face and stresses her grasp of the noun clause structure in English (turn 13).

**Express lack of knowledge**

In response to the feedback they received from their reviewers, the authors at times confessed that they did not know what the correct form of that particular element was otherwise they did not write it that way. Below, examples of this interactional strategy are presented:

**Extract 1 (Pair 3)**

(1) Tina: **Otherwise**, what I intended to say? My intention was to show contrast

(2) Mahdi: You could say **IN THE OTHER HAND** or **INDEED**, but **IN THE OTHER HAND** is more suitable. Otherwise means if not and does not fit here.

(3) Tina: I wasn’t sure about it; therefore, I asked one of our classmates and she proposed using **otherwise**.

In the above instance Tina explains what her intention was by using the transition word “otherwise”. Based on her clarification, Mahdi believes the transition is not a suitable one as it doesn’t express the writer’s intention. Tina adds that she did not know what to use and one of her classmates advised her to use the term (turn 3).

**Extract 2 (Pair 3)**

(1) Tina: Here I think after **said** and **told**, you need **punctuation mark**.

(2) Mahdi: I didn’t know that. I checked the instructor’s hand out on **punctuation marks**, I didn’t see anything about it.

(3) Tina: Speech acts usually require **punctuation mark**. I mean said, told.
In the above example, Tina recommends her partner to use appropriate punctuation mark in construction which include speech acts. Mahdi, on the other hand, expresses his lack of grammatical knowledge concerning such cases (turn 2).

**Relinquish**

Relinquishing occurred when the reviewers withdrew from their suggestions during revision. In some instances, the reviewer gave up his/her advice due to his/her peer’s persistence. In other instances, the reviewer relinquished from his/her stance when he/she noticed the inaccuracy and invalidity of his/her feedback or was unable to support his/her opinion. The following extract include examples of relinquish by the reviewer:

**Extract 1 (Pair 1)**

1. Nasrin: “teacher’s pet can help to”
2. Mina: “and being teacher’s pet can help to get a good mark in essay writing final exam”
3. Nasrin: I think it’s not correct “in essay writing final exam”. **IN FINAL ESSAY EXAM**
4. Mina: Ok! It is here: “in essay writing final exam, in essay writing final exam” [She reads the prompt of the essay]
5. Nasrin: Ok! That’s ok!
6. Mina: That’s Ok!
7. Nasrin: I made a mistake. Sorry!
8. Mina: Don’t say sorry.

In this instance, Nasrin tries to find a mistake in one of the sentences Mina has written. She believes that sentence is inaccurate (turn 3). However, when Mina shows her that she has used the same construction as their instructor in the prompt of the essay (turn 4), Nasrin withdraws and accepts that she has wrongly marked the sentence. She also expresses her apology for her invalid advice (turns 5 and 7).

**Extract 2 (Pair 5)**

1. Fariba: In the **conclusion** of your essay, you should have presented a **summary** of your **main points**.
2. Azam: I have done it in my **conclusion**.
Fariba: Yes! Your **conclusion** was very good, very good.

Fariba first asserts that Azam should have included a summary of her main steps in the concluding paragraph (turn 1). But when she faces Azam’s reaction that stresses the presence of these elements in her concluding paragraph, she admits that the concluding paragraph was well written (turn 3).

**Choice is yours**

It happened just in rare cases when the partners got disappointed persuading their peers to incorporate their feedback into their following drafts. Therefore, upon noticing their partner’s persistence not agreeing with correction being made, they abandoned and left it for the authors to make any decisions they preferred. The following extracts include this interactional strategy:

**Extract 1 (Pair 1)**

1. Nasrin: “different kinds of attitudes [attitudes]”.
2. Mina: I will kill you. I will kill you. The **dictation** is problem [incorrect].
3. Nasrin: No! There is no problem.
4. Mina: Yes!
5. Nasrin: No!
6. Mina: Yes! Are you sure? Did you look up your dictionary?
8. Mina: Really?
9. Nasrin: Really. But it’s not correct one. There isn’t…
10. Mina: [It needs] **ES** [She has looked up the word from the dictionary and is showing her partner the correct spelling of the word].
11. Nasrin: No! There is no **e**. I checked it.
12. Mina: [it requires] **E**.
14. Mina: [it requires] **E**.
16. Mina: I don’t care if you get angry or not. The correct spelling is like this [showing her the right dictation].
17. Nasrin: I don’t get angry at all.
(18) Mina: Ok! but it is [needs] E.
(19) Nasrin: There is no e.
(20) Mina: Choice is yours [angry tone].
(21) Nasrin: Yes, of course.

In this example, Mina notices a spelling error and recommends Nasrin to fix it several times. But, upon noticing her partner’s insistent rejection, she abandons the discussion out of desperation (turn 20).

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

(1) Nasrin: And here; “I recommend study”. What do you mean by this?
(2) Mina: “I recommend study...”
(3) Nasrin: **Recommend to whom**?
(4) Mina: I recommend study, **to all the students**, to a person who wanna [wants to] read this essay.
(5) Nasrin: Yes! I understood. But why you didn’t mention the **object**? You should say I recommend ALL THE STUDENTS or I recommend TO YOU. Something like this. Your...
(6) Mina: No.
(7) Nasrin: “I recommend study before the class”?
(8) Mina: I’m not speaking. I’m not talking to a person. I’m writing.
(9) Nasrin: You mean in writing we don’t need...
(10) Mina: When a person read[s] this, he can understand it easily.
(11) Nasrin: But you should make it clear. **To whom you are writing for**? **To whom you are writing**?
(12) Mina: To every person who reads this essay.
(13) Nasrin: They are [Are they] students, or they are [are they] teachers? Who they are [are they]?
(14) Mina: Of course, at first, at the beginning of the paragraph I spoke about the students.
(15) Nasrin: Who they are? I’m sorry. Who are they [here Nasrin self-corrects her ungrammatical sentence]?
(16) Mina: Ok! **Students**
(17) Nasrin: Ok! That’s my idea. You can keep it or forget it.
(18) Mina: Ok!
In the above instance, Nasrin believes the sentence needs an object (turns 3, 5, 11, 13 and 15) and offers her advice. However as Mina does not agree with Nasrin’s idea, she stops insisting on her suggestion and while disappointed she moves to the next trouble-source (turn 17).

**Appropriation**

Appropriation took place when one of the partners took the lead and imposed his/her view on his/her peer’s text despite the attempts made by the peer clarifying and justifying his/her original intention. The following extracts include appropriation:

**Extract 1 (Pair 5)**

1. Azam: “don’t take”, hang on! “don’t take advantage of your exam”. Ok? What does it mean? Do you remember last session I told you this sentence was ambiguous?
2. Fariba: I intended to say; as a result you can’t get a good result from your exam.
3. Azam: You could say; you can’t pass your exam, **YOU BLEW IN YOUR EXAM, BLEW, BLEW EXAM.**
4. Fariba: I don’t think therefore is mistake.
5. Azam: But he [the instructor] has marked it as mistake. **SO, you had better use SO.** “Don’t”, when you use don’t at the beginning of the sentence, you use an imperative form. **SO, YOU WON’T PASS YOUR EXAM SUCCESSFULLY.** Or; **SO, YOU WILL BLEW IN YOUR EXAM.** It means you don’t get a good mark in exam. We should ask it from the instructor. Or; **YOU CAN’T PASS YOUR EXAM SUCCESSFULLY.** “However, other students be partial to study hard during the term”.
6. Fariba: I want to say that others study hard during the term.
7. Azam: It is irrelevant. You can say; **BUT SOME OF THE STUDENTS WHO STUDIED HARD DURING THE TERM, THEY GET A GOOD MARK.**
8. Fariba: But I wanted to say that some students are interested to study hard during the term.
9. Azam: But you should state what happens to those who study hard during the term. You should stress they get a good mark. You should say; **SO, YOU WILL BLEW IN YOUR EXAM. BUT OTHER STUDENTS or OTHER GROUPS...**
Fariba: Doesn’t however have the same meaning [as but]?

Azam: No! I changed the sentence this way: BUT OTHER STUDENTS WHO STUDIED, ok?

Fariba: STUDY

Azam: Why? It’s in the past, STUDIED HARD DURING THE TERM, DEFINITELY THEY CAN GET A GOOD MARK. I think this way it is better. They definitely can get a good mark.

Fariba: Do you mean identity?

Azam: No, definitely, certainly

This extract is a very good example of appropriation. Although Fariba explains her intention in Persian (turns 2, 6, and 8), Azam does not pay attention to her and tries to change it based on her new version (turns 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 13). Even when Fariba asks if the term “but” and “however” interactional strategy the same, Azam responds no (turns 10 and 11) and continues changing the whole construction ignoring her partner’s intention and claiming her alternative improves the quality of Fariba’s sentences.

Extract 2 (Pair 5)

Azam: “working outside the house”…

Fariba: This is Unnecessary [pointing to phrase coded in the text by the instructor]

Azam: Yes, “working outside the house like men for women”…

Fariba: I wanted to say Woking outside for women like men…

Azam: No, you should have written, aha, you should have written, “working outside the house”. You should change some of your sentences. You should have written; WOMEN CAN FACE WITH EMPLOYED MEN, what? Discrimination?

Fariba: Discrimination. I mean the unfairness in recruiting women.

Azam: “like men”…

Fariba: No, I meant if women want to work out like men, they most of the time face discrimination.

Azam: No, you should have written; IF WOMEN WORK OUTSIDE THE HOUSE, ok! LIKE MEN, THEY MAY, no, THEY FACE …

Fariba: WITH EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION.
Azam: No, you can say; IF WOMEN WANT TO WORK LIKE MEN, THEY INTERESTED TO WORK, THEY FACE SOME PROBLEMS…

Fariba: Yes, THEY FACE SOME PROBLEMS

Azam: LIKE for example, IF WOMEN WERE INTERESTED…

Fariba: TO WORK…

Azam: TO WORK, yes, LIKE MEN OUTSIDE THE HOUSE…

Fariba: OUTSIDE HOME, THEY FACE…

Azam: THEY FACE SOME PROBLEMS…

Fariba: SOME PROBLEMS. With some problems?

Azam: Yes!

Fariba: LIKE, for example what I have written here. The sentence is accurate then.

Azam: You can also use may be…

Fariba: No, no. I have used it here myself.

Azam: Oh yes, may face

Fariba: I can use MAY FACE. But the instructor has detected it as error

Azam: That’s because it is wrong word.

Fariba: Does he mean Face is a wrong? Does it need –ed? What does he mean? I don’t think so. I think the structure is wrong. I shouldn’t have used face here.

Azam: You have got a wrong word.

Fariba: I’ll ask the instructor later.

Azam: I have got lots of mistakes in my own essay. OK! Let’s read the rest of your essay.

In this long excerpt, at first Azam attempt to appropriate Fariba’s structure (turns 5, 9, 11). However, as she faces Fariba’s resistance and explanations, they both try to develop a correct construction. In the last turn Azam refers to her own essay expressing unhappiness about the large amount of errors in her own essay which as an instance of distraction, yet she herself calls her partner to re-focus on the essay they are currently revising.
(3) On-task Negotiations

Repetition

Although at the first glance this interactional strategy may seem similar to persistence, it is actually different. Repetition was observed when the reviewer or the writer repeated their saying more than once unintentionally and just for keeping the conversation going. It also included repeating what the other person had already said. The following excerpts contain repetition:

Extract 1 (Pair 1)

(1) Nasrin: “the points which were told in last session”. Who told this?
(2) Mina: Ok! The teacher
(3) Nasrin: Why you used were here?
(4) Mina: which were
(5) Nasrin: The points which were told.
(6) Mina: The points which were, the points, were, which were
(7) Nasrin: Yes, yes. You are right. Sorry!
(8) Mina: You are welcome!

Nasrin first asks about the reference of “who” and then questions the reason for using “were” - passive voice - in this sentence (turn 3). Mina refuses to respond to her question directly and repeats the term/phrase several times to help her partner find out the reason herself (turns 4 and 6). Eventually, Nasrin pretends she has got the point. It is not clear whether she really has got the point or she is pretending it in order not to lose her face. It should be noted that Mina’s tone is not friendly and it is a bit rude or arrogant.

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

(1) Mina: “most of the time, the first two steps”, the first two steps. Is it Farsi?
(2) Nasrin: I think no.
(3) Mina: The first two steps, the first two steps [translation into Persian].
(4) Nasrin: Ok! Exactly that one.
(5) Mina: Is it correct? I think the structure is…
(6) Nasrin: Persian?
(7) Mina: Yes! Farsi
(8) Nasrin: I’m not sure. I only wanted to mention these two steps.

(9) Mina: Ok!

In the above example, Mina thinks the phrase Nasrin has used – the first two steps - is not native like. However, as she herself is dubious about its accuracy, she keeps repeating it both in English and Persian (turns 1 and 3). Interestingly, Nasrin is also unsure about her choice trying to clarify her intention by using this phrase (turn 8).

Extract 3 (Pair 2)

(1) Mani: Here the is unnecessary. “We should pay attention to all of the methods”.

The is not needed

In this short extract, Mani repeats two times that the article “the” is not necessary. He is doing so to keep the conversation going.

Critiquing idea

This interactional strategy was noticed when the reviewer evaluated the writer’s written text and criticised its content. In such cases the reviewer did not agree with the writer’s view point and as a result disapproved it. Examples of this interactional strategy are illustrated in the following extracts:

Extract 1 (Pair 3)

(1) Maryam: “They can be a good partner for men”, they can be good partners for their husbands to do everything?

(2) Mani: Everything. No, partner means colleague. I mean in their jobs.

(3) Maryam: You should change your sentence; “to do everything”, they can’t do everything. Probably their husbands would do something illegal. So, “they can compete [complete] each other.

(4) Mani: That’s right.

(5) Maryam: Do you mean as they work together, they can complete each other?

(6) Mani: No, I mean if they do something together, they can be successful. That’s what I mean.

(7) Maryam: I understand your intention, but what you have written here does not express your message.
(8) Mani: No, I mean since they complete each other, they can properly do everything jointly. That’s it.
(9) Maryam: They can’t do everything together.
(10) Mani: I mean that sort of job people normally do.

In the above example, Maryam is criticising one of the sentences Mani has written in the second draft of his essay. She believes women cannot do everything and they probably do not fit some of the jobs and recommends Mani to change it as it does not express what Mani intends to express (turns 3 and 7, and 9). Mani, on other hand, rejects her criticism and claims by “doing everything” he means the normal job and not atypical ones (turn 10).

Extract 2 (Pair 3)

(1) Maryam: “In order to”, so that manage their life?
(2) Mani: Manage their lives better
(3) Maryam: Do you mean if they [women] don’t work out, they cannot manage their lives?
(4) Mani: No, I mean [they can manage their lives] better.
(5) Maryam: Where is it? You haven’t used better at all.
(6) Mani: [laughing]
(7) Maryam: You have mentioned that both men and women should work in order to manage their lives.
(8) Mani: I mean [they can manage their lives] better.
(9) Maryam: Do you mean the housewives can’t manage their lives?
(10) Mani: Better, manage better I mean [both laugh]. By this sentence I intended to defend married women’s working outside home.
(11) Maryam: This sentence needs amendment.
(12) Mani: Which one?
(13) Maryam: This one. Instead of manage, you can write WOMEN CAN ALSO WORK OUTSIDE IN ORDER TO SUPPORT [the family] FINANCIALLY or FOR THEIR OWN ENTERTAINMENT. This way the sentence sounds better.

In the above example, Maryam disapproves the idea that only employed women can manage their lives and asserts that it is not fair to undermine the role of housewives in
handling the family (turns 3 and 9). Not convinced by her partner’s explanations, she therefore, recommends Mani to change the sentence (turns 11 and 13).

Response to criticism

When the writers were criticised by their reviewers, they tried to defend their opinions. Justifying ideas was noticed in few cases and is displayed in the extracts below:

Extract 1 (Pair 3)

(1) Maryam: You have stated that “They believe that...has several advantages such as giving chance...”
(2) Mani: To prove themselves
(3) Maryam: Do you mean make better?
(4) Mani: **Improve** means make better, **prove** means establish, ascertain.
(5) Maryam: There is a better term you can use.
(6) Mani: What? **Assert**?
(7) Maryam: Yes, **assert**
(8) Mani: They are the same [synonym]. They don’t differ.
(9) Maryam: Why don’t they differ?
(10) Mani: They’re synonyms.
(11) Maryam: We give them the chance. You shouldn’t say we give them the chance. It’s their right to work. It is not an opportunity.
(12) Mani: If men do not allow them, they cannot work.
(13) Maryam: Men don’t have the right not to allow their wives to work.
(14) Mani: Yes, they have.
(15) Maryam: No.
(16) Mani: Some men don’t allow.
(17) Maryam: Some do not let, but...
(18) Mani: So it’s a chance given to them, whether they prove or disprove [themselves].
(20) Mani: To prove their capabilities
(21) Maryam: How can they prove their abilities? Modify this sentence.
(22) Mani: How?
(23) Maryam: Change “to prove themselves”

(24) Mani: What do you suggest?

(25) Maryam: You can say TO ENTER THE SOCIETY. That sounds better.

In the above extract, there is an ideological conflict between the partners. While Maryam believes working out of home is women’s right (turns 11, 13, 15, and 17), Mani responds that working out is an opportunity given to the women (turns 12, 14, 16, and 18). In fact, that’s a social convention in the country that husbands should be happy with their wives working out of home after marriage.

Extract 2 (Pair 3)

(1) Maryam: “Moreover, they should not work outside because the boss”, I didn’t get what you mean by this sentence.

(2) Mani: [laughing] “because the boss behave like a dirt”, I mean their boss abuse employed women.

(3) Maryam: Why do they abuse them?

(4) Mani: I have provided an example to clarify it.

(5) Maryam: Where does it happen [in our job market]?

(6) Mani: That’s the counter-claim. Some people believe that women should not work out because they are misbehaved. That’s the opposing view point. I am going to reject it in the rest of the paragraph.

(7) Maryam: “...and do not pay attention to their personality.”

(8) Mani: Yes, I wanna reject this idea as well.

(9) Maryam; [laughing] You could say THEY SHOULDN’T WORK OUT SINCE THEY ARE UNDER PAID. IT ISN’T WORTH WORKING OUT.

(10) Mani: It is not my idea. I have heard some people have this idea.

(11) Maryam: That is a very wrong belief.

In the above excerpt, Maryam and Mani have conflict over the sentence and Maryam stresses that women are not misbehaved in the companies and it is not written based on the realities of the society (turns 3, 5, and 11). Mani clarifies that it is not his view point and that’s the belief some people hold. In fact, he has presented the opposing opinion at the beginning of the paragraph in order to refute it in the rest of it (turns 6, 8, and 10).
Express frustration

Confusion and inability to fix the errors marked sometimes led to disappointment and frustration. In such cases, the students explicitly criticized the approach or the correction method utilised by the instructor. The following examples demonstrate such behaviour:

Extract 1 (Pair 1)

(1) Nasrin: “which you can remove all”
(2) Mina: “which you can remove all”
(3) Nasrin: I cannot understand [her tone is desperate].
(4) Mina: wrong word, “you can remove all”. You can, you can…
(5) Nasrin: Help me! Help me!
(6) Mina: Instead of remove we should use another word.
(7) Nasrin: Do you mean that remove is not ok?
(8) Mina: May be here [it] is not ok.
(9) Nasrin: Remove, for example, which you can…
(10) Mina: Remove all…
(11) Nasrin: What we can use here? What word can be used here? Why are you laughing?
(12) Mina: I’m not laughing. I am thinking.
(13) Nasrin: I will start to cry.
(14) Mina: “Therfor” [therefore], “Therfor” [therefore], what’s the problem with therefore?
(15) Nasrin: But you couldn’t help me about the previous [mistakes].
(16) Mina: No, no! Which one?
(17) Nasrin: This one, this one, this one [showing the mistakes which haven’t been corrected].
(18) Mina: But I have lots of questions about your problems. I cannot find any problem right now too after he made certain us [she means the instructor should explain why he has used those codes since that part of the essay doesn’t seem to be inaccurate].
(19) Nasrin: Ok!
(20) Mina: But some of them are not problem[s]. Some of them are not error or mistakes. I’m not sure.
Nasrin reads this portion and when she notices the term “remove” is marked as wrong word by the instructor, she hopelessly expresses her inability to understand its reason (turn 3) and asks for Mina’s assistance (turn 5). While Mina is trying to support her, she again expresses her disappointment by saying “I’d like to cry”. Her partner’s laughing intensifies such feeling (turn 11).

Extract 2 (Pair 4)

(1) Roya: Again this sentence is marked as ambiguous [SS: ambiguous]. Why? “the other reason have different characteristics”. It has different features [yawning].
(2) Afrouz: “the other reason have different characteristics”. The term characteristics, may be that’s because of…
(3) Roya: What should I say? features, qualities?
(4) Afrouz: Write, for example; FEATURE, hang on. “the other reason have different”, by other reason, do you want to say it has different feature?
(5) Roya: Yes! It has different features.
(6) Afrouz: “students should take an appropriate seat in class”. Do you know how you should write it? You should write it clearer. I can’t give you any suggestion right now.
(7) Roya: What should I use? FEATURE?
(8) Afrouz: Something that…
(9) Roya: This way of correction [indirect coded feedback] is useless. We should understand it[the feedback].
(10) Afrouz: [laughing, she probably indicates that their voices are being recorded and sends Roya a signal not to criticize and complain].

Roya’s unfamiliarity with indirect coded feedback along with her and her partner’s inability in comprehending and correcting the problems has made her desperate. Her partner, Afrouz, is very helpful in most of the cases; however, she cannot be of that much help in this special instance (turn 6). All these, has made Roya complain about the new method being utilized during the course and she openly calls the activity worthless (turn 9).

Writing reminder or correction

Writing the correct forms of the mistakes or reminders above or under the lines usually occurred in the sessions. The following extracts involve writing a reminder by the writer:
Extract 1 (Pair 4)

(1) Afrouz: Are and also used together?
(2) Roya: Don’t we use them together?
(3) Afrouz: I think we use them in conversation; and also. In writing…
(4) Roya: But I have seen them in the texts when, for example, we want to add something…
(5) Afrouz: I myself am not sure about it.
(6) Roya: Let’s ask it.
(7) Afrouz: So mark it with a pencil [Roya underlines the words].

In this example, both partners are not sure about the accuracy of a mechanical issue used in Roya’s paper. Therefore, both decide to ask it from the instructor later. Hence, Afrouz proposes marking the case and Roya underlines it to remember to ask if from their instructor later (turns 6 and 7).

Extract 2 (Pair 5)

(1) Azam: “Keep in mind all these information”. I think it should be THOSE. I’m really unsure.
(2) Azam: Not that does [Fariba writes Azam’s suggestion on her paper; however, Azam corrects her again saying those not does].
(3) Fariba: Those is pronounced differently. Please give me your eraser.
(4) Azam: I’ve got no eraser. I think. I’m not sure. All THIS information I think. Because information is …noun.
(5) Fariba: Do you know? I had used this in my first draft, but I thought you marked it as incorrect.
(6) Azam: I think THIS is correct. Yes! Draw asterisks next to those cases we are not sure about.

Azam first suggests using determiner “those” instead of “these”. However, she herself is uncertain about her advice and changes her suggestion recommending Fariba to use “this”. Finally, her uncertainty prompts Azam to recommend her partner to mark those errors which they are not sure about, so that they can come back to them again later (turn 6).
Reading

Reading occurred in a variety of forms. Sometimes the students read the whole essay from the top to the bottom. In cases they just read the portions of the text which were marked and required revision, and at times reading and correction were performed together. Reading was shared between the reviewer and the writer throughout the interaction; in other words, either partner read, sometimes taking turns in doing so, or both read together. However, in dyads which included a more advanced partner and a less competent one, it was usually the more proficient partner who initiated reading and took the lead no matter whose text they were dealing with.

Composing

This interactional strategy was also observed in few cases. It should be noted that composing was different from writing reminder or correction as it involved amending a whole sentence or a paragraph. That is, whereas writing reminder or correction mainly focused on word or phrase level, composing occurred above that level and included addition or substitution of a sentence, few sentences or even a paragraph. In such cases one of the partners dictated the corrections while the other wrote it down.

(4) Off-task Negotiations

Distraction

Distraction occurred when one of the participants interrupted the revision activity and talked about issues unrelated to the task. In the following example, one of the participants distracts the conversation during which the pairs are discussing a specific trouble-source:

Extract 1 (Pair 1)

(1) Nasrin: And “since you have passed the first step”, wrong word [they read this portion together]. What does it mean?
(2) Mina: I don’t know. “you have passed”. You WILL…
(3) Nasrin: NO! [in a very emphatic voice she interrupts Mina’s suggestion]
(4) Mina: “since you have passed the first step”
(5) Nasrin: May be the structure is not correct.
(6) Mina: But the word, he made certain the word [she does not agree and means the instructor has underlined just the term not the sentence].

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(7) Nasrin: They [their classmates] have question [laughing]
(8) Mina: I have questions [regarding] in my essay too.
(9) Nasrin: Ok!
(10) Mina: For example; why about? Why those [Mina refers to the mistakes in her second draft in the middle of discussing and revising Nasrin’s paper].
(11) Nasrin: Ok! We can keep it. We can keep it.
(12) Mina: Let me make [put] a question [mark]; here, and this one, and this one [on her paper].
(13) Nasrin: Question mark, shame on you! It’s my turn.
(14) Mina: I don’t want very impolite partner. Can you understand it? [joking]
(15) Nasrin: You should thank God because of having me as your partner [joking].
(16) Mina: Never [joking].
(17) Nasrin: I will see [meet] you after the class [jokingly threatens her partner].
(18) Mina: Ok! “you have passed the first step”, why passed? I can’t understand.
(19) Nasrin: Ok!
(20) Mina: We should ask him [the instructor].
(21) Nasrin: After finishing, after finishing [reading all the paper].
(22) Mina: After finishing what? Right now. “since you have passed the first step”.

In the above example while the pair is discussing a trouble-source, Mina remembers some unresolved errors in her second draft. Therefore, she returns to her paper, locates them, and wants to ask them from the instructor (turns 8, 10, and 12). Her behaviour is not tolerated by Nasrin and she expresses her dissatisfaction by reminding Mina that they are not discussing her paper and Mina should leave her questions for later (turns 11 and 13).

**Reject the blame**

In some occasions the participants blamed their partners for their invalid or misleading comment or advice claiming their original choice was accurate. In such cases, the accused partners did not take the blame and denied their inappropriate suggestion. The following example contains this reaction:

**Extract 1 (Pair 4)**

(1) Roya: You have written and here, you needed ..., that’s a full stop. Isn’t it?
(2) Afrouz: “To sum up, to gain success in every field; you must break barriers. And”,
the construction is not complete. I should have used semicolon.
(3) Roya: Yes! That’s what I say.
(4) Afrouz: You are in charge of this mistake. Hang on! [she turns to her first draft to
check it].
(5) Roya: Tell me what. You certainly had put it between two commas.
(6) Afrouz: Yes most of them corresponded to comma.
(7) Roya: That’s your own mistake.
(8) Afrouz: All of them were correct. [after checking her first draft] I didn’t use and in
the first draft.
(9) Roya: Thanks God [you can’t blame me for this mistake].

Here Afrouz realises that the meaning of the sentence is incomplete, she shouldn’t have
used a period and should have used “and” in small letter (turn 2). She blames Roya for her
misleading comment during peer review session (turn 4). Roya rejects her claim (turns 5
and 7). Then, they both check the first draft and notice that she hadn’t used “and” at all.
This is a relief for Roya showing she is right (turn 9).

**Pronunciation correction**

In addition to providing advice on grammar, mechanics, content, and organisation of their
peers’ papers, participants occasionally corrected their partners’ incorrect pronunciation too.
The following extracts include examples of this interactional strategy:

**Extract 1 (Pair 5)**

(1) Azam: “Keep in mind all these information.” I think it should be **THOSE** [as Azam
pronounces the word wrongly /daz/, Fariba writes the word **does** above the line as a
reminder]
(2) Azam: **THOSE** not **DOES**
(3) Fariba: I think it is pronounced as /d̪oz/.

Azam pronounces the term “those” as “does” and she misleads her partner. As she
observes her wrong pronunciation has misled her partner, she repeats the alternative (turn
2). This time Fariba gets what she means and produces the accurate pronunciation of the
term (turn 3).
Extract 2 (Pair 1)

(1) Nasrin: And **colleagues**, punctuation, you missed to use **U** after **e**
(2) Mina: **Colleges** no; **colleagues**
(3) Nasrin: **COLLEAGUES**

In the above example, Nasrin inaccurately pronounces the misspelled term “colleagues”. Mina notices her wrong pronunciation and while accepting her comments, corrects Nasrin’s wrong pronunciation (turn 2).

Extract 3 (Pair 5)

(1) Fariba: “direct contact”, why is it wrong word?
(2) Azam: “direct contact”
(3) Fariba: **direct**

In this piece Fariba pronounces the word in American way /dIrekt/ and when her partner pronounces it in British style /daIrekt/, she tries to correct her (turn 3).

**Laughing**

Laughing was another activity which was performed during peer review and collaborative revision sessions. At times partners laughed at each other because of the mistakes they had made or the advice they had received, laughed together for not being able to solve the mistakes, or did it in order to make the atmosphere friendlier.

**5) Procedural Negotiations**

**Discussing task procedures**

Discussing task procedures did not involve revising the papers. In these negotiation episodes, participants discussed task procedures, talked about their responsibilities, clarified instructions, and made decisions about how to carry on with the task. Both reviewers and writers participated in this type of discussion. This is illustrated in the following extract where the reviewer and writer were discussing their responsibilities in the peer review activity:

Extract 1 (Pair 5)

(1) Fariba: Should you keep the peer review instruction sheet? Should you keep it? Or you should give it to me?
Azam: I think I should give that to you. Then you should attach it to your drafts and submit both of them to the instructor.

In this example, Fariba was not sure about the next step they should take during peer review session. Therefore, she asks Azam what she should do with the papers – first draft and peer review sheet – and Azam briefs her.

**Refuse to provide advice**

In very rare cases the partners refused to provide their peers with suggestion. It could have several reasons; they were unsure about their responsibilities, were bored and wished to complete the task as soon as possible, or were worried not to finish reviewing and revising both papers in the allocated time. The extract below contains an example of such behaviour:

**Extract 1 (Pair 5)**

1. Azam: “The first sentence of the first step is not clear. What are you trying to express? I can’t understand. Also, you should say what the small group do every day, how they can help each other to get a good mark. Elaborate more on that” [They are reading the instructor’s comment together]. I don’t know the meaning of elaborate. [Returning to the paragraph] He is right. Last session I told you that the sentence is not clear. You should say; first of all **DECIDE** you want to study…
2. Fariba: Look! Here I intended to stress that the students should decide whether you want to study alone…
3. Azam: That’s it. They should **DECIDE**. You haven’t written the main verb. Here, the sentence is very unclear. You have expressed it in declarative form. You should say the first step would be to decide whether you’d like to study alone or in group. So, you need a term here.
4. Fariba: You mean I need a verb here?
5. Azam: Yes! “What are you trying to express”, I think [reading a portion of the comment and as it is sometimes illegible, she finds it difficult to read]. “I can’t understand. Also, you should say what the small group do every day, how they can help each other to get a good mark”. Ok! You should write it in imperative form: **FIRST OF ALL, DECIDE, FIRST OF ALL, DECIDE…**
6. Fariba: you want, I think it just needs a **DECIDE**.
(7) Azam: DECIDE THAT YOU WANT TO STUDY ALONE OR, ok. Let’s put asterisks here. A word is missing here.

(8) Azam: Did you check elaborate?

(9) Fariba: It means daily schedule/plan [she has checked it from her dictionary, but the equivalent she has found is not proper].

(10) Azam: Aha! It perhaps means you should be more organized. “your next step is trying to”, what does that mean?

(11) Fariba: It means designing.

(12) Azam: Aha! Design a plan for each day. Here the instructor has advised you to specify the daily plans in detail. For example; what sort of plan during the day should be performed. If you wanna work in group, you should have a plan.

(13) Fariba: You mean I haven’t explained it in detail.

(14) Azam: Yes! “For each day”, what should be done?

(15) Fariba: You mean I have just briefly stated what should be done, but haven’t supported it enough.

(16) Azam: Yes! Should we write it now? We should develop the third draft based on the instructor’s comments. You can say for example… Think about it. You yourself have cited it, and you yourself should sort it out [laughing].

In the above excerpt, both of the partners read the comment written by the instructor. In fact, the instructor has required Fariba to explain more on different studying methods and their potential effects on gaining good mark. Azam, her partner tries to help her expand the issue but is unable to do it. Apparently after several times of reading and re-reading, she fails to offer any idea to develop the paragraph (turns 1-15); therefore, she laughingly says her partner should develop this bit herself (turn 16).

**Ask for reading**

This activity happened when one of the interlocutors explicitly asked her partner to initiate reading. As illustrated in the following extract, the reviewer asked the writer to read her paper aloud:

**Extract 1 (Pair 4)**

(1) Afrouz: Here; “should not talk with his/her friends and also”. Read the sentence yourself.
(2) Roya: “the other should not talk with his/her friends and also should just regard to lecturer’s speech”, ok! It means they shouldn’t talk to their friends and also…

(3) Afrouz: What does this refer to? Again to characteristics?

(4) Roya: Yes! The first example was finished. Ok?

(5) Afrouz: Ok!

(6) Roya: Then, I have stated that the students shouldn’t talk to each other and just pay attention to their instructor.

(7) Afrouz: Pay attention, does this regard mean pay attention?

(8) Roya: Yes, it means pay attention, “regard to lecturer’s speech and don’t let things”.

In this example, Afrouz asks Roya to read the sentence. She deliberately wants to draw her attention to what she has already written (turn 1). Then, after Roya reads this chunk and is apparently ready to respond to her question, she asks for clarification. By using this strategy not only does the reviewer want to create a collaborative atmosphere, but she tries to prepare the writer to answer her follow-up questions concerning the written text.

**Give directives**

It happened when one of the participants made the decisions about the actions which should be taken, and instructed his/her partner what to do during the task. The following extracts contain two samples of this behaviour:

**Extract 1 (Pair 4)**

(1) Roya: Ok! Read the next comment.

(2) Afrouz: “In the first body paragraph, ....”, it [the comment] says your first body paragraph contains several ambiguous sentences.

(3) Roya: What is this?

(4) Afrouz: “what you are”

(5) Roya: “intending to” what?

(6) Afrouz: “express”

(7) Roya: We should have asked the instructor to come and read his comments. “Make sure to use error-free and structurally correct sentences in that paragraph”.

(8) Afrouz: Ok! In this case, we will improve the sentences. There was no need to read the comments.
(9) Roya: You suggested reading them.
(10) Afrouz: “In your second paragraph you can’t use next and the other, both”.
(11) Roya: We got it.
(12) Afrouz: That’s it. There is nothing else to read.
(13) Roya: Shouldn’t we read the rest [of comments]?
(14) Afrouz: Shall we read it?
(15) Roya: Let’s skim it.

The instructor has provided the feedback in two different forms; one indirect coded feedback which includes using codes to address language and mechanics errors, and comments which refer to content and organisation issues. As some of the points which are marked in students’ papers are repeated in the instructor’s comments, this dyad believes that it is unnecessary to read and respond to all of the comments. Therefore, Afrouz suggests skipping them (turns 8 and 12) while Roya recommends going through them quickly. Turns 1 and 15 contain examples of giving directives.

Extract 2 (Pair 1)

(1) Mina: “You can start by reading newspaper’s [newspapers]”, unnecessary word.
(2) Nasrin: Why not, Why?
(3) Mina: “articals [articles], and magazin’s [magazines]”
(4) Nasrin: “by reading newspaper’s [newspapers], articals [articles]”…
(5) Mina: “newspaper’s [newspapers], articals [articles], and magazin’s [magazines]”
(6) Nasrin: Articles refer to newspapers
(7) Mina: [I] Got it.
(8) Nasrin: So, I think it is true [correct].
(9) Nasrin: Ok, let’s go to the next one. What about this one?

In this example, the peers do not understand the source of mistake and are confused. Nasrin believes her choice is correct and nothing looks wrong in this sentence. After a long pause - more than 10 seconds - Nasrin seems bored and suggests moving to the next trouble-source (turn 9).
Appendix 18

Participants’ Performance Over Drafts in Process Essay

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KEY TO TABLE: IR: IRRELEVANT  
LD: LACKING DETAIL  
NA: NOT APPLICABLE
## Appendix 19

### Participants’ Performance Over Drafts in Argumentative Essay

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502


http://www.britishcouncil.org/iran-discover-iran-education-in-iran-education-system.hmt

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran