

THE EFFICACY OF PEER REVIEW IN A
UNIVERSITY-LEVEL ESL
WRITING CLASS

by

SARA STRICKLAND BRATHWAITE

A THESIS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

PR Peer Review

\leq Less than or equal to

\geq Greater than or equal to

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ABSTRACT

Currently, there is a great debate concerning whether peer review is an effective activity in the university-level English-as-a-Second-Language writing classroom. Peer review offers the unique opportunity for second-language writers to share their writing, evaluate others' work, and discuss their observations and opinions about writing in an authentic environment. Despite these theoretical advantages, some studies indicate that peer review is not very effective in the ESL classroom because students doubt the accuracy and validity their peer's comments. Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic issues can further complicate the activity. Indeed, peer review in an ESL classroom can be pedagogically tricky.

This study investigated the interactional dynamics of peer review sessions in university-level ESL writing classrooms. Participants were recorded during one peer review session; after the session, they had the chance to make changes to their drafts. Participants turned in both rough and final drafts of their papers, and also offered feedback regarding how helpful and effective they found peer review to be. The spoken data were evaluated to determine the types of interactions that occurred and their functions. The written data were evaluated to determine the quantity and quality of the changes that the participants made. The two data sets were then compared to determine whether (and to what extent) the peer review interactions led to improvements on the drafts.

The data indicated that suggestions made during peer review correlated to positive

changes if the participants negotiated the suggestion, and if the suggestion pertained to global-level issues in the paper. While the data showed that participants preferred to make changes unilaterally, it also indicated that peer-reviewed suggestions correlated with a higher percentage of positive changes than writer-initiated suggestions. Further, the data indicated that peer review was particularly favored by those participants who had no previous experience with this activity. These results indicated that peer review is an effective activity, especially for students who are new to it. It is best framed as supplementary to the student's existing writing process. Future research should focus on triangulating the data with post-activity student interviews, in order to corroborate the results.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The purpose of this study was to investigate and offer a descriptive evaluation of the interactions that take place between non-native English speaking students in university-level, academic writing classrooms. Specifically, this study aimed determine whether or not peer review was a successful and effective activity for university-level ESL writing students in an academic context, and to what extent it was effective and successful. The foci of this study were the types interactions that occurred between these dyads, the frequencies of these interactions, and the extent to which the suggestions offered during these interactions led to changes and improvements on the succeeding student draft. In other words, this study sought to determine whether peer review in an academic, university-level ESL writing class was an effective and successful classroom activity, based on the notion that such activities facilitate the students' development processes as writers and speakers in the English language. Finally, the study sought to determine whether such activities should be recommended for classes of similar settings, purposes, and goals. Components such as student reaction to the process of peer review and student demographic data were also considered and analyzed as a part of this project.

What is Writing?

In order to define writing, it is first necessary to recognize that there are many purposes for writing, and with each purpose comes a unique set of demands. For some, the most important element of writing is the final product: the resulting work must meet the expectations of the

intended audience, and fulfill the intended purpose. In this view of writing, the writer must strive to meet the conventional demands of grammar, the expectations for content, and the principles of style. The writer is judged on the accuracy, fluidity, and appeal of the final product. However, the alternative view of writing is one in which writing is conceptualized as a process in which the writer can practice, improve, and refine his or her creative or academic expression. In this view, writers engage in the process with a purpose and audience in mind, and work to improve their writing skill and knowledge through a series of actions. These actions start with brainstorming for ideas. The student then starts to organize his or her ideas, and compiles an outline. Once completed, the outline offers the student a structure for later drafts. Drafts are written, reviewed (either by a peer, a teacher, or the writer himself) and revised as necessary. While the final draft is important, the development of the writing and the improvement of the writing process takes precedence in this view of writing.

For the purposes of the present study, writing was viewed as both a process and a product. Peer review has long been considered to be an element of the process approach. However, given the limitations of the current study, it would have been difficult to ascertain the development of a student's writing process as a result of peer review. Additionally, peer review is not limited to the confines of the process approach. Indeed, its emphasis on interaction and socio-cognitive development allow peer review to be used in a process-based or post-process based pedagogical approach. Further, since the student writing in this study was analyzed in terms of two draft, written just weeks apart, the purpose of researching peer review in this study was to determine its effect on the final product. For these reasons, writing is viewed as both a process- and product-based exercise. Additionally, the students in the current study were enrolled in college-level academic writing courses; thus, for these students, the goal of these courses was the

improvement of both the product and the process of writing in English. Thus, while improvements to the student's writing process were desired and encouraged, this study recognized the equal importance of the final product in the academic achievement of participants.

In other words, for the purposes of this product, 'writing' is conceptualized in a way that reflects the purposes of writing in the university-level, academic, ESL composition classroom. Writing is both a product and a process, and peer review can potentially improve both of these elements, as it offers opportunities for interaction based on the final product, and for the socio-cognitive development of the writer. While this study focused on the more tangible, product-based results, it is not to the exclusion of process-based, cognitive development.

Peer Review

Of course, the critical element to this study was the peer review session. For the purpose of this study, peer review is defined as an activity in which two students exchange first drafts of academic papers and evaluate each other's work, with the help of a set of heuristics. They then offered this commentary during an in-class, face-to-face session, and had the option of integrating their partner's comments into the final draft. For this study, the heuristics were adapted from those offered in L1 composition classes; they were altered only slightly in order to take into account the unique linguistic and educational needs of the L2 student writer. After reading and evaluating each other's drafts, participants reconvened and offered their commentary, positive and negative. Students were encouraged to offer the commentary that they felt would be most helpful to their classmate; they were not specifically told to focus on any particular type of error or problem. Also, students were encouraged to interact, discuss, and debate the issues that arose during their session. They were encouraged to ask each other questions and explain their thinking during the composing process. After the session, the students chose whether, and to

what extent, they wanted to implement their peers' suggestions into their paper. At the end of this process, students had the opportunity to reflect on the utility and effectiveness of the peer review exercise, through a follow-up questionnaire.

The Value of the Study

The purpose of implementing peer review into the L2 writing class is multifold. From a theoretical perspective, peer review can be successfully implemented into a process- or post-process classroom, as it constitutes part of the revision process, and promotes interactions that encourage socio-cognitive development. From a more practical perspective, peer review has the potential to improve students' language abilities and language knowledge in all four skill areas (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Not only do students write their own papers, and read and evaluate each other's work, but also they have the task of communicating their observations during the session, and comprehending and negotiating the comments of their peer. Further, students have the option of implementing these comments when they revise their paper. In this way, peer review sessions can create an authentic atmosphere for students to discuss their drafts; this is an important opportunity for engagement in the writing and learning process. In such an atmosphere students have the opportunity to learn from each other, despite the proficiency levels involved. Students who are at similar levels can help each other by reinforcing their shared knowledge and by offering a comfortable setting for feedback. Meanwhile, those students who are more advanced than their partners can provide valuable input, at a level that is closer to the lower proficiency student's existing level than that of teacher input. Students also derive individualized attention from their partner, and the intimacy of the situation can prompt students to offer more feedback than they might in a large classroom setting. Finally, peer review also

gives all students an opportunity to look at (L2) writing from a fresh perspective (that of the evaluator, instead of the evaluated) and with a critical eye.

Most of the participants in this study had taken part in a peer review session previously, and many of them had done peer review previously at this university. However, prior to the study, an informal survey of the students' attitudes towards peer review revealed that many students were perplexed by or dissatisfied with their previous peer review experiences and the effect they had on subsequent drafts. They doubted the accuracy of their peer's comments, they were not confident or motivated enough to offer insightful comments of their own, and they were beset by the multiple linguistic demands that such an activity places on a language learner. As a teacher, I have witnessed many of these unsuccessful sessions, and for this reason was motivated to investigate the interactions that occur during a peer review session, and the impact that these interactions have on student drafts. Indeed, it appeared that trying to negotiate (or maintain) an ongoing conversation about one of the drafts, while at the same time skimming (or reading) the draft in order to sustain this interaction, was overwhelming for the students. This situation led to student disengagement and little in the way of revisions on later drafts. Due to the heavy linguistic demands of peer review, and the students' doubts about their peers' comments, it is easy to see why students disengaged from the process, and why peer review gained such an unfavorable reputation. The literature also supports these intuitions and observations about the problematic nature of peer review in the L2 academic writing classroom.

However, this researcher felt that the potential benefits of peer review far outweighed the perceived negatives of this activity. Although current research is divided on the effectiveness of peer review in the L2 writing classroom, studies such as this one can add to this dialogue, and help classroom teachers choose appropriate activities for their L2 writers. By analyzing the

interactions that occur between dyads of ESL writers in this setting, and then comparing these interactions to the changes and revisions made on student drafts, one can determine the extent to which these interactions are helpful to students in terms of their writing process and product. Defining the relationship between peer review interactions and later revisions could also help to identify specific problems with this activity in this setting— problems that could be researched in subsequent studies and rectified through specific pedagogical techniques.

Questions and Expectations

In order to verify these purported benefits of peer review for this particular group of university-level ESL students, four research questions were crafted. First, what types of interaction occur between dyads of ESL students engaged in peer review? Secondly, how do these interactions affect the written drafts? Thirdly, do interactions between ESL dyads engaged in peer review create successful revisions? And finally, is peer review an effective classroom activity for ESL students in this type of context? Based on previous experience and anecdotal reports from students, this researcher anticipated that peer review would have limited benefits for the students.

Regarding the first question, it was hypothesized that ESL dyads would engage in limited interactions that would produce little in the way of revisions, and that these revisions would reflect superficial, local-level attention to the paper. Therefore, the success of these revisions would be limited. The limited success of peer review interaction on later drafts would be due, in part, to the second hypothesis: the dyads would not engage in a meaningful dialogue. The reason for this would not be that the students did not want to participate in the session (although this might be true for some), but rather that they would not know how to negotiate the multiple linguistic demands of the session, and that students would feel dubious about offering and

accepting advice. Instead, it was predicted that students would offer advice largely in monologue, without soliciting or waiting for their partners' reply, but still dutifully fulfilling the requirements of the assignment. In turn, it was expected that these interactions would have only a limited effect on the written drafts. It was hypothesized that the most motivated students would be inclined to make the most changes; however, students across the board would implement their peer's comments sparsely. Finally, based on the above hypotheses, it was predicted that peer review would be determined to be an unsuccessful activity, due to students' negative perception of the activity, and the overwhelming linguistic demands of a peer review session.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Classroom SLA

Method.

As an international language, English is now the medium in which millions of people communicate to accomplish a variety of tasks and goals everyday. Whether these speakers are in the highest echelons of international politics, vendors at popular tourist attractions around the world, or children watching English-language cartoons, they rely on the mutual intelligibility of English to interact with world around them. This diversity of purpose and audience makes applied linguistics one of the most malleable fields of academic study and professional employment in existence today. By definition, the field of applied linguistics is interdisciplinary: it draws from the fields of education, psychology, sociology, English studies, linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, and other fields to generate a comprehensive and adaptable view of teaching English to speakers of other languages. As the field of applied linguistics has grown and evolved, as have the principles, approaches, and methods guiding English language pedagogy.

According to Brown (2007), *method* refers to “a generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives...concerned primarily with teacher and student roles and behaviors and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing, and materials” (p. 17). Methods are guided by an *approach*, or a theory

on the nature of language, language learning, and language teaching. *Approaches*, in turn, are informed by theoretical and empirical foundations, which constitute a more general *methodology*.

Brown's (2007) historical overview of the popular methods of second language teaching shows how the field has evolved into its current interdisciplinary, "post-method" state. The first major method, commonly used to teach Latin in the West, was the Classical Method. This method, like its successor the Grammar Translation Method, was based on writing exercises, translating texts, learning grammatical rules, memorizing vocabulary items, and conjugating verbs. Little to no emphasis was placed on communicating in the foreign language, and accordingly, these methods produced very few competent speakers of the target tongue. Nineteenth century challenges to the Grammar Translation Method included the Series Method and the Direct Method. The Series Method, developed by Francois Gouin in the latter half of the century, is based on Gouin's personal experiences as a failed learner of German and the uncle of a child acquiring L1 French. In comparing these two experiences, Gouin discovered that "language learning is primarily a matter of transforming perceptions into conceptions" (Brown, 2007, p. 20) and that people use language to interpret the world. From this conclusion, Gouin developed a method in which instruction is given without the aide of translation or grammatical explanation. Instead, learners are exposed to series of simple sentences that easily related to the world around them, and must focus on connecting their perceptions of the sentences with the conceptions of the new language.

However, Gouin's Series Method was overshadowed by another new turn-of-the-century method: the Direct Method. Charles Berlitz's Direct Method attempted to simulate the naturalistic way in which children learn their primary languages. Like the Series Method, the Direct Method rejected the use of translation and grammatical explanation, substituting instead

oral interaction; exclusive use of the L2 during instruction; inductive grammar instruction; the pedagogical practices of modeling and practice; and the direct association of vocabulary words with objects, actions, pictures, or ideas. Most importantly, the Direct Method called for small, intensive classes, in which communication between teachers and students was emphasized. In Europe, the Direct Method was particularly popular in the early 20th century, and continues to be employed today in Berlitz language schools around the world.

However, in the US, where contact language contact was more limited and reading was emphasized over oral communication, the Direct Method did not flourish. US language teachers continued instructing according to the Grammar Translation Method until the beginning of World War II. In response to this military conflict and the need corresponding for proficient speakers of foreign languages, the Army developed its own method of instruction, which emphasized oral communication. By the 1950's, the Army Method was adopted by educational institutions, along with the psychological theories of behaviorism and the theories of structural linguistics. From these roots, the Audiolingual Method emerged.

The Audiolingual Method emphasized dialogue and context for presenting new information, contrastive analysis for determining sequence of structures, memorization and repetitive drills for instruction, emphasis on pronunciation and “error-free” utterances, little to no use of the L1 or explicit grammatical explanations, and positive reinforcement. After Noam Chomsky revolutionized linguistics in the 1960s, the Audiolingual Method blended with Grammar Translation to form the Cognitive Code Learning approach. This approach emphasized the rule-governed nature of language and a deductive approach to instruction. In the 1970s, a variety of methods came along which showcased the new and original research in the area of second language acquisition. These innovative new methods included Community Language

Learning, Suggestopedia, The Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and The Natural Approach. These methods tended to forefront the affective, emotional, and sociocultural factors that influenced learners and their learning processes. While none of these methods proved to be a comprehensive answer to the challenges of learning a second language, each offered unique insights into the processes behind second language acquisition, as well as stimulating activities that continue to inspire language teachers today.

As instructors increasingly began to recognize the importance the functions of language in the language classroom, the methods and approaches of the 70s evolved into the communicative language teaching of the 1980s. In Brown's (2007) conception of the postmethod era, postmethod pedagogy is an informed approach that builds on the lessons of past methods. For example, Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes the use of interaction and communication in the language classroom, through meaningful tasks and the use of functional language. Learners are also encouraged to meet linguistic objectives, and may do so through activities that involve sharing information and negotiating for meaning. The overall goals include development in all components of language learning and learner autonomy. The Task-Based Language Teaching also underscores the importance of meaning and communication over rote memorization and drills. In this approach, tasks focus on meaning, are realistic, and are geared toward communicative language use. Tasks are divided into those that are contained within the classroom (pedagogical tasks) and tasks that extend beyond the classroom (target tasks). Important elements of both of these approaches, which inform Brown's (2007) conception of postmethod pedagogy, include learner-centered instruction, cooperative learning, and interactive learning. Additionally, other popular notions throughout second language education that persist into postmethod pedagogy include whole language education and content-based instruction.

Today, educators and researchers in the field of second language teaching recognize that one particular method cannot possibly answer all of the questions of second language instruction, nor can it meet the needs of the diverse range of students that study second or foreign languages. Instead of attempting to apply particular methods of second language instruction to a wide variety of students and educational contexts, or swinging back and forth between reinvented versions of the same methods, SLA researchers and teachers now focus on adopting a unified approach to second language teaching and learning. This approach should be informed by principles of SLA, which are flexible and can accommodate a range of student needs, purpose and goals of instruction, educational context and available resources, and personal instructional styles. A teacher's unified approach should also incorporate methodologies which are appropriate for the language learning environment. Thus, by moving past the concerns of individual methods to the unifying aspects of principles, SLA has truly embraced a "postmethod" perspective: "Postmethod need not imply the end of methods but rather an understanding of the limitations of the notion of method and a desire to transcend those limitations" (Bell in Brown, 2007, p. 41). In other words, SLA has adopted a pedagogical perspective that truly reflects the diverse, interdisciplinary nature of the field: researchers and educators are no longer limited to the popular method of the moment, but rather they are informed by strong principles and the desire to address the needs of students in any language learning situation.

Postmethod

In his book Understanding Language Teaching, Kumaravadivelu (2006) presents a comprehensive description of the "postmethod condition" (p. 161) as he calls it, in language education. Kumaravadivelu (2006) defines a method as a construct developed from expert theories of language, language learning, and language teaching. Method then bridges the gap

between these theories and actual practice by informing syllabus design, textbook production, and classroom techniques. However, according to Kumaravadivelu (2006), the idea of method is predicated on five popular myths in the field of second language acquisition. These myths include the abovementioned assumptions that there is such a thing as a “best” method, method can be an “organizing principle for language learning and teaching” (p. 165), method transcends time and place, method is produced by theorists and implemented by teachers, and method is “neutral” in a sociopolitical, sociocultural, or economic way (p. 167).

Therefore, Kumaravadivelu (2006) rejects that method is a useful or well-contrived notion in language education. In its place, Kumaravadivelu (2006) offers a set of three interconnected pedagogic parameters which constitute the postmethod condition: the parameter of particularity, the parameter of practicality, and the parameter of possibility. The first parameter, particularity, emphasizes the sociocultural context of instruction in postmethod pedagogy. This parameter calls for researchers and teachers to have a thorough understanding of the instructional situation, and “emphasizes local exigencies and lived experiences” of students and teachers (p. 171). Teachers should be sensitive to the local culture, the needs and requirements of the institution, and the goals of the students when teaching. To this end, the parameter of practicality, the second dimension of postmethod pedagogy, attempts to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Kumaravadivelu (2006) sees the gap between researchers and teachers as a “harmful dichotomy” (p. 172) that leaves the teacher limited in his or her ability to theorize their own practice. According to the parameter of practicality, teachers are encouraged to inquire about and test their own theories in the classroom, in a process fed by reflective thinking and insightful, intuitive action. The final parameter is that of possibility. Like the parameter of particularity, this parameter emphasizes the importance of student experiences, as

well as their social, economic, and political backgrounds, during the learning process. However, this parameter also stresses the importance of identity, both of the learner and the teacher, and language ideology, in the classroom. Instead of seeing language instruction as neutral, this parameter prescribes that field recognize the sociocultural realities of language instruction, including the sense of identity that students and teachers have, and the sociopolitical role of the target language. Indeed, these factors significantly affect how classroom relationships are constructed and maintained.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) posits that these three parameters of postmethod pedagogy manifest themselves through “pedagogic indicators” (p. 176). In fact, Kumaravadivelu (2006) refers to these parameters as potential “operating principles” which play out in the roles of the learner, teacher, and teacher educator. For Kumaravadivelu (2006), postmethod pedagogy tries to develop an autonomous learner who plays a meaningful role in making pedagogical decisions (to the extent possible) for his or her learning process. During this process, the learner is encouraged to develop his or her capacity to learn as well as his or her capacity to become liberated from the “sociopolitical impediments” that hinder personal development and growth. The parameters of postmethod pedagogy also play out in role of the teacher. No longer is the teacher regarded as simply an instructor that implements expert theories. Rather, postmethod pedagogy calls for teachers to be autonomous as well, drawing from their academic and personal knowledge as well as their knowledge of their academic institution. Further, postmethod teachers are encouraged to be reflective, analytical, and evaluative of their own teaching, with a vested interest in self-development. Teachers should, under this banner, be sociopolitically aware and involved in teacher-research to maintain a connection with their learner’s lives and educational progress. Finally, Kumaravadivelu (2006) posits a third pedagogic indicator of the postmethod parameters:

the role of the teacher educator. According to postmethod pedagogy, the teacher educator should seek to build a dialogue with perspective teachers, one that encourages critical thinking and action. In so doing, teacher educators will help shape future teachers that are autonomous, authoritative, and have a strong sense of identity.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) continues by describing three postmethod frameworks that depart from the concept of method. These frameworks include Stern's three-dimensional framework, Allwright's Exploratory Practice Framework, and Kumaravadivelu's own macrostrategic framework. In his three-dimensional framework, Stern proposes a "strategy concept" (in Kurmaravadivelu, 2006, p. 186) that consists of policy-level strategies and procedural-level techniques. These strategies and techniques are flexible concepts that operate within the teachers and the learners, and are based on three dimensions: the interlingual-crosslingual dimension, the analytic-experiential dimension, and the explicit-implicit dimension. Allwright's exploratory practice framework replaces the concept of "method" with an emphasis on bringing research into the classroom, in a way that promotes theory-building throughout the profession. His framework is based on the philosophy that life inside the language classroom and within the institution should be harmonious, collaborative, on-going and based on all-around collegiality.

Kumaravadivelu's (2006) own macrostrategic framework also represents a rejection of the idea of method. It is based on ten macrostrategies and various microstrategies, each of which correspond to multiple macrostrategies. These macrostrategies include the following notions: learning opportunities should be maximized (by teachers and learners), negotiated interaction is important, and perceptual mismatches should be minimized. Kumaravadivelu (2006) offers ten sources of potential perceptual mismatches, including cognitive mismatches, communicative

mismatches, and linguistic and pedagogic mismatches. A teacher's awareness of these mismatches, according to Kumaravadivelu (2006), is the first step towards intervention and prevention of problems. Another macrostrategy involves "activate[ing] intuitive heuristics" (p. 204) or exposing the learners to target language texts in order to allow them to inductively understand grammatical structures that may not be taught explicitly. The fifth macrostrategy emphasizes fostering language awareness through formal, explicit instruction of L2 concepts and structures. Other macrostrategies include "contextualizing linguistic input...[and] integrating language skills" (p. 205) to promote learning. Finally, Kumaravadivelu (2006) cites the importance of "promot[ing] learner autonomy" (p. 206), recognizing and integrating the sociocultural, political, and economic environment of instruction into class activities, and building a cross-cultural understanding between learners and the L2 culture. Through these macrostrategies and a variety of associated microstrategies, Kumaravadivelu (2006) proffers guiding principles and specific activities that promote his vision of autonomous and strategic teacher-researchers.

This view of postmethod pedagogy is more broad and complex than the view proposed by Brown (2001), as described in the previous section. Kumaravadivelu (2006) asserts that "the concept of method is beset with ambiguous meanings and multiple myths" (p. 184) which limit the field of language education. Thus, for Kumaravadivelu (2006), method "has lost much of its significance" (p. 184) and "should no longer be considered a valuable or viable construct for language learning and teaching" (p. 168). Instead, the field should follow the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility, in order to define more effectively the roles of the learner, teacher, and teacher educator, and their relationships to each other. However, Brown

(2007) defines postmethod pedagogy as driven by principles that enlighten and inform instruction, not by methods that ultimately limit its scope and potential.

Brown (2007) categorizes these principles according to their cognitive, socioaffective, and linguistic properties. Cognitive principles that shape Brown's view of postmethod pedagogy include those of automaticity, meaningful learning, anticipation of reward, intrinsic motivation, strategic investment, and autonomy. The socioaffective principles that define Brown's (2007) view of postmethod pedagogy include notions of a language ego, willingness to communicate, and the language-culture connection. Finally, the linguistic principles of this pedagogy include ideas about the effect of the native language, the role of interlanguage, and the importance of communicative competence. In general, Brown's (2007) principles encourage educators to consider carefully each of these factors, and to balance their instruction with these factors, as well as knowledge of their students, institutional context, and wider sociopolitical context. Brown (2007) avoids making specific recommendations for teachers; rather, he raises valid points regarding cognitive, socioaffective, and linguistic factors, for teachers to reflect on during practice.

Thus, while it may seem that Brown (2007) and Kumaravadivelu (2006) have entirely different and oppositional interpretations of "postmethod pedagogy," a closer look reveals that these two perspectives share many similarities. Brown (2007) comes from the perspective of the teacher educator, and focuses on shaping the perspective of the teacher into one that is cognizant of the many elements of language learning. The methods of the past inform Brown's (2007) position, due to the research that each generated and the knowledge that the field has accumulated based on these methods. For example, the connection between the language ego principle, which encourages teachers to be aware of the fragile new identity that second language

learners are building, and the designer methods of the 70s (including The Silent Way and Community Language Learning) are obvious. These designer methods emphasized the affective and sociocultural factors in language learning that previous methods ignored. Thus, in Brown's (2007) description of postmethod pedagogy, old methods are used to inform new principles, based the research and knowledge that these methods have produced. Further, this perspective on postmethod pedagogy is specific to the teacher, emphasizing the pedagogical choices that he or she might have to make in various instructional contexts. Brown's (2007) vision of postmethod pedagogy is seen as primarily as an instructional tool to inform teachers as they shape their own teaching identities.

Kumaravadivelu (2006), however, comes from a more critical perspective, and comments on the field as a whole. While his recommendations are largely aimed at educators, he offers a great deal of critique and advice for teacher-educators and researchers as well. The parameters of his postmethod pedagogy, which inform his macrostrategic framework, are based on philosophical beliefs about the field as a whole, and his rejection of method is based on its narrow, often limiting interpretation and implementation. Thus, while his terminology and perspective on method are clearly distinct from those of Brown (2007), the underlying principles and educational philosophies share important commonalities. Both theorists stress the importance of autonomy: Brown (2007) emphasizes that autonomy in learning drives a learner's success, and Kumaravadivelu (2006) stresses that both students and teachers need to be autonomous in the language classroom to promote an effective educational environment. Both recognize the importance of meaningful or contextualized learning: language input should occur in context, so that the learner has the opportunity to decipher and understand meaning. Further, both tout the significance of the sociocultural element in education: language education does not

happen in a vacuum, and both teachers and students are affected by their shared social, institutional, political, and economic environment. Therefore, these elements should be recognized and included in the activities of the language classroom. Thus, it is evident that although Brown (2007) and Kumaravadivelu (2006) take different perspectives on the meaning of postmethod pedagogy, these perspectives are informed by similar underlying principles.

The L2 Writing Classroom

Process

In their 2004 article, Silva and Leki state that L2 writing is “at the crossroads of composition studies and applied linguistics” (p. 1). These two fields, which evolved from their respective predecessors, rhetoric and linguistics, have exerted their influences on second language writing through a combination of theoretical offerings, pedagogical features, empirical methodology and findings, and professional development. The diverse roots of L2 writing have helped develop a truly interdisciplinary example of post-process pedagogy within the field.

Matsuda (2003), in his discursive history of the process and postprocess eras in L2 writing, offers a comprehensive description of the range of theoretical orientations that the process movement encapsulated. The early process movement in L2 writing, according to Matsuda (2003), incorporated a variety of perspectives on writing and writing instruction, which originated from a conglomerate of “rhetorical theory, religious reading instruction, and the study of classical languages” (p. 67-68). Silva and Leki (2004) support these assertions in their description of the evolution of L2 writing. L2 writing was first starting to emerge as a distinct subfield during the reign of structuralism and behavior psychology in applied linguistics. At this time, researchers and educators prescribed the methodology of controlled composition, which is based on the idea that language, as speech, is learned through habit formation. Thus, controlled

composition reinforced the oral habits learned and practiced during the majority of instruction, for the dual purposes of grammatical practice and avoiding errors (caused by L1 interference). These early foci led to later research-based emphasis on contrastive analysis and the modern pedagogical technique of error analysis. However, the idea of contrastive analysis intervened on another level as well: the rhetorical level. As composition studies increasingly influenced the emerging field of L2 writing, so did the reigning theories of that discipline. The current-traditional rhetoric paradigm, with its focus on product, discourse functions, and grammar, prompted researchers to study and theorize the rhetorical differences between languages, and how these differences interfere with language acquisition and production (Silva and Leki, 2004).

However, by the second half of the 20th century, criticism of the current-traditional rhetoric approach began to surface. In L2 writing, both the current-traditional approach and the controlled composition technique, with their prescriptivist approach to writing instruction, encountered criticism and dissatisfaction throughout the field. Thus, the process approach was implemented as a way to guide students towards effective writing strategies and towards the discovery of meaning in their text. According to Trimbur (1994), the process movement in the L1 classroom freed educators and researchers from the formal, oppressive nature of traditional schooling and the accompanying “current-traditional” rhetoric, which they saw as limiting their students’ abilities to express themselves authentically.

According to Matsuda (2003), “approaches to writing that resemble process pedagogy in composition studies had already begun to enter the discourse of second language studies in the early 1960s” (p. 76), long before scholar Zamel formally introduced the notion of process in a 1976 article. During the 60s, various scholars introduced the techniques of pre-writing, rapid writing, and free association to L2 writing studies. Arguments about the theoretical nature of

writing from a process perspective also began to surface in the late 60s and early 70s. Scholars emphasized the new view of writing as a learnable process, in which students learn organization inductively, and teachers raise meta-awareness of the writing task through discussion. Silva and Leki (2004) noted that the process theory emphasized expressivism and a belletristic bent in the classroom, while process theory research emphasized cognitive psychology, learner variables, and the writing process itself.

Matsuda (2003) stated that early proponents of process emphasized the use of student texts, writing conferences, and peer review techniques in the classroom, while the more contemporary process movement of the 70s and 80s emphasized “student choice in topics and forms; the necessity of authentic voice; writing as a messy, organic, recursive form of discovery, growth, and personal expression” (Tobin in Matsuda, 2003, p. 69). This version of process, while very successful and generally embraced by instructors, still faced resistance on the part of longstanding educational traditionalists, scholars, and theoreticians of the time.

For another point of view on L2 process theory, Badger and White (2000) present a succinct view of the process approach in the EFL classroom: process was primarily related to the linguistic skills of composition, including planning and drafting. Less important was linguistic knowledge related to grammatical and structural issues. For Badger and White (2000): “...a typical model (of process writing) identifies four stages: prewriting; composing/drafting, revising; and editing” (p. 154). The revising stage could include peer revisions, revisions from a teacher or tutor, or simply the author’s revision of his or her own work. While each of these stages may have a process as well, and one that is open to variation, these general steps are still the foundation of process pedagogy in many writing classrooms. However, Atkinson (2003) offered a less rigid definition of process pedagogy in L2 writing. Atkinson (2003) described the process

era in L2 writing as one in which the learner was considered individually, and writing was considered an abstract and internalized process, with the primary goal of self-development. As Matsuda (2003) pointed out, this view of process pedagogy in L2 writing was theoretically asocial and lacking in a specific set of organized practices. Such conclusions have been supported by other scholars, such as Hyland (2003), who cited that process movement was not a single approach. Rather, the era encompassed a variety of practices and orientations.

According to Silva and Leki (2004) as L1 composition studies began to evolve away from a focus on canonical works, the field moved towards the social and expressive functions of student writing. Increasingly, scholars and educators sought to incorporate “the notion of writing as a cognitive process” (p. 3) into composition-based research and instruction. Silva and Leki (2004) explain that the 1980s brought a focus on the sociocultural and political aspects of writing, in conjunction with increased professionalization in the field. The 1990s, in turn, saw a growing critique of “process” pedagogy and research, and a further foregrounding of issues related to linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as social constructivist theory (p. 3-4). Meanwhile, in the domain of applied linguistics, Silva and Leki (2004) also describe the modern trend towards an interdisciplinary approach to research and instruction. From its theoretical foundation in the structuralist and behaviorist approaches, applied linguistics began by focusing on the contrastive analysis of languages and operant conditioning of language learners. With the introduction of Chomsky’s generative grammar, applied linguistics experienced a theoretical shift, which fostered an increased focus on anthropological and sociological theories. By the 1970s, this shift produced more interest in language diversity, including “bi- and multilingualism, the rights of linguistic minorities, and language policy and planning” (Silva and Leki, 2004, p. 4) as well as an increased professionalism that complimented similar developments in composition studies.

By the 1980s, applied linguistics incorporated a range of academic disciplines, including psychology and education, and a focus on language use in a variety of settings including “academi[a]...translation, lexicography, language and technology, and corpus linguistics” (Silva and Leki, 2004 p. 4). During this time, theories in composition, rhetoric, and literature, and their relationships to second language learners, were also developing. By the 90s, applied linguistics expanded even further to address more specific pedagogical research and application, to accommodate for theoretical criticism, and to handle ethical concerns in the field.

The development that Silva and Leki (2004) described in applied linguistics parallels that of composition studies. Throughout the second half of the 20th century, both fields were maturing and adopting more interdisciplinary approaches that recognized the importance of cognitive, social, and political aspects of language use and writing. Thus, changes in the two parent fields of second language writing led to similar developments in that field, culminating in the adoption of process (and later post-process) theories in L2 writing pedagogy.

Scholars Faigley, Bizzell, and Berlin (in Matsuda, 2003) each have attempted to consolidate the principle theories of the process movement in the L2 classroom. Although each applied different terminology, their results were similar: they determined that process pedagogy in the L2 classroom stems from the theories of expressionism and personal style, cognitivism, and sociocultural orientations. In their subsequent critiques of L2 process theory, each scholar noted that process pedagogy was useful and valuable for writing instruction and assessment; however, the excessive focus on the cognitive and expressionistic elements of the writing came at the expense of a more comprehensive and dynamic view of writing. According to Faigley, a revamped view of process should broadly integrate the three abovementioned components, while

Bizzell emphasizes the need for more research and instruction regarding the social and political aspects of composing (in Matsuda, 2003).

Atkinson (2003) categorized concerns about the L2 process movement as concerns about the balance of power in the classroom, questions about “cultural mismatches” (p. 9) between the process approach and non-mainstream or ESL student groups, and concerns about the usefulness of certain process techniques and activities. In addition, Badger and White (2000) assert that L2 process approaches:

...often regard all writing as being produced by the same set of processes; that they give insufficient importance to the kind of texts writers produce and why such texts are produced; that they offer learners insufficient input, particularly in terms of linguistic knowledge, to write successfully (p. 157).

In the L1 sphere, Trimbur (1994) offers an evaluation and critique of process pedagogy in writing classrooms. In this review of three critical works about post-process writing, Trimbur (1994) asserted that the post-process works represent a

‘social turn’ of the 1980’s, a post-process, post-cognitivist theory and pedagogy that represent literacy as an ideological arena and composing as a cultural activity by which writers position and reposition themselves in relation to their own and others’ subjectivities, discourses, practices, and institutions (p. 109).

For Trimbur (1994), these revelations resulted from the increasing concern over the limitations and pressures of the process movement. The process approach in L1 pedagogy offered an overly simplified and theoretically weak view of writing instruction. Instead of teachers moving easily from the role of knowledgeable authority to facilitator of the students’ discovery process, teachers found that students were reconstructing teacher authority and seeking to master the new

process of writing “self-revelatory” and “decidedly non-academic” essays (p. 110). In other words, instead of liberating students from their old, limiting institutions, the process movement led students to simply recreate the old binds of current-traditional (or formalist) pedagogy. Further, and more importantly, Trimbur (1994) noted that “this approach neglected the whole domain of social conventionality—the highly complex, socially constructed, but taken-for-granted patterning of communication by which all human social groups enact efficient, solidarity-maintaining social action” (qtd. in Atkinson, 2003, p. 5-6).

This momentum led other researchers to consider the social situatedness of writing, propelling them to define further the new post-process movement in L2 writing. Matsuda (2003) sees Trimbur’s commentary about the process/post-process divide as highly indicative of the way in which process pedagogy is now defined. Trimbur’s correlation between post-process pedagogy and the “social turn” effectively, and retroactively, defines process as the cognitive and expressive view of writing pedagogy. Indeed, post-process pedagogy now emphasizes the social purpose and situatedness of writing. Although an exact framework of post-process pedagogy is not altogether agreed upon, such a specific framework would contradict the history and development of the post-process approach.

Post-process

As applied linguistics became more flexible and interdisciplinary, and L2 writing became more solidified as an independent field of research and instruction, problems with the process approach in L2 writing continued to surface. Further, as questions about process pedagogy in L1 composition studies arose, L2 theorists began to wonder about the applicability of process pedagogy to their field. However, as Matsuda (2003) points out, the process and post-process eras in both L1 and L2 writing are not always easily defined.

According to Matsuda's (2003) discursive history of L1 process and post-process pedagogies, each era largely defines the preceding era, with L1 post-process pedagogy as no exception. In fact, recent explications of the new L1 post-process pedagogy continue to define the parameters of process pedagogy, regardless of whether definitions offered are accurate to the true nature of process pedagogy. For example, Trimbur's distinction of post-process pedagogy as one that has taken a "social turn" away from process pedagogy and effectively "reduced process to expressive and cognitive theories and pedagogies" (Matsuda, 2003, p. 73). From this point of view, L1 post-process theories are popularly defined as those that encapsulate the social and public aspects of writing, and that emphasize the situatedness of the writer amongst his or her peers and teachers, and within his or her social, political, and educational world. However, as stated previously, some versions of process pedagogy also emphasized the social aspect of writing, especially later versions of process theory that were popular in the 80s and early 90s. As Silva and Leki (2004) pointed out, L1 composition studies evolved away from a focus on canonical works and towards the social and expressive functions of student writing under the banner of process pedagogy. Indeed, process pedagogy in the 1980s brought a focus on the sociocultural and political aspects of writing. Thus, the disagreement about the nature of process pedagogy has led to various definitions of post-process pedagogy in L1 composition studies.

Atkinson (2003) claimed that post-process theories resulted, at least in part, from the issue of power in the classroom, which process theories never adequately addressed. He cited Trimbur's estimation of the problems of process pedagogy in L1 composition studies, explaining that process pedagogy did not effectively redistribute power to the students that the product-oriented approach delegated strictly to teachers. While the process movement encouraged teachers to relinquish power to their students, in order promote their expressive capacities,

students often reconstructed the teachers' power by mechanically writing personal and informal texts. Thus, for Atkinson (2003) and others, post-process theories are offered as a possible answer to the problem of power in the classroom.

Matsuda (2003) cited several scholars who have attempted to define post-process theories through critiques of process pedagogy in L1 composition studies. For these scholars, the process approach encapsulates the theories of expressivism, cognitivism, and the social (or social-epistemic) nature of writing. Critics of this version of process theory do not wholly rejecting the idea of process pedagogy; however, they do suggest a broader approach to writing pedagogy that embraces a more comprehensive view of writing. The broadening of process pedagogy includes, for some, a greater emphasis on the sociopolitical aspects of writing and recognition of the way in which process pedagogy perpetuated the dominant ideology of capitalism. This version of the post-process approach does not exclude the use of the term *process*, nor does it exclude some of the elements of process pedagogy in L1 composition (Shilb, 1999; Faigley, 1986; Bizzell, 1986; in Matsuda, 2003). Rather that this approach should be considered an extension of earlier process theories (George, 2000). Specifically, Bizzell claimed that research on this approach has been useful in that it “suggested the need for smaller classes, improvement of writing assessments, and the inclusion of a variety of writing tasks” (in Matsuda, 2003, p. 72) and that a writing process does exist (contradicting the view of some post-process supporters). According to this view of process theory, a post-process approach would incorporate the positive contributions of process theory and research, deemphasize “the authority of cognitive research” (Bizzell in Matsuda, 2003, p. 72), and stress the importance of “the social and political effects on composing” (Bizzell in Matsuda, 2003, p. 72).

On the other hand, scholars such as Kent, who use the term ‘post-process’ as a more general term for the various critiques of the process approach, criticize and reject many aspect of the process approach. From this perspective on post-process, the process approach is considered to be largely rooted in cognitive and expressivist theories, not in the social-epistemic theories. Kent claimed that the process approach prescribes a generalizable writing process or a “Big Theory” of writing, and summarily rejects this notion by way of the post-process approach. Additionally, Kent defined post-process theories as those that emphasize the “public, interactive, and situated” (in Matsuda, 2003, p. 74) nature of writing. Thus, through this view of the process approach, post-process is defined as a rejection of the process approach, its cognitive and expressivist theoretical foundation, and its implication that a generalizable writing process actually exists.

Thus, for L1 composition studies, two strains of thought have developed over the definition of the post-process approach: one considers post-process to be an extension of process that emphasizes the sociopolitical aspects of writing, while the other rejects many of the basic tenets of process theory and (also) emphasizes the public and social aspects of writing. However, all sides agree that post-process theories represent the definite shift that has occurred in L1 composition studies, away from the limiting elements of process theory and towards the public and socially-situated elements of the post-process approach.

In L2 writing, the process and post-process eras can be equally hard to define and delineate, because, as in the L1 sphere, the latter plays a large role in defining the former. As described above, the process approach in the 1960s was first seen as an answer to the problems of the traditional, product-oriented approach borrowed from L1 composition studies.

Additionally, as Silva and Leki (2004) pointed out, the process approach in L2 writing reflected an increasingly interdisciplinary trend in applied linguistics.

As in L1 composition studies, there are competing definitions of the process approach in L2 writing; therefore, there are also differing conclusion on the post-process approach in this field. According to Matsuda (2003), while some versions of the process approach in L2 writing stressed rigid conformity to discrete steps, other versions emphasized students' intellectual engagement in the writing process, and teachers' positive attitude and "focus on improvement and development" (Lawerence in Matsuda, 2003, p. 77) of student writers. Atkinson (2003) observed that in his own experience as a process-oriented writing teacher, his instruction hardly reflected the asocial, individualistic tenets of the rigid process approach. Matsuda (2003) also noted that process pedagogy was never wholeheartedly accepted in the field of L2 writing in general. This was partially due to L2 instructors' resistance of process, especially in its most rigid form, and to the fact that L2 writing textbooks did not substantially incorporate the process approach into their prescribed methodologies. Some textbooks even ignored the approach altogether. Finally, Matsuda (2003) also pointed out that the process approach in L2 writing research faced significant competition from other research foci, including descriptive studies of L1 and L2 writing. However, Atkinson (2003) asserted that process pedagogy has continued in L2 writing instruction through concepts and practices such as peer review, voice, audience, and self-expression.

Thus it is clear that the process approach has been implemented in L2 writing classrooms to varying degrees, and that the manner in which the process approach is implemented is critical for defining a post-process approach. In light of this variation, Atkinson (2003) defined the post-process approach in L2 writing very generally, stating that it constitutes everything that came

after the focus on cognitively-based, teacher-centered writing instruction that relied on learning through induction and writing in stages. However, Atkinson (2003) still values the “usefulness and power of process writing” (p. 10), and therefore views the post-process approach “not as a paradigm shift, but rather expanding and broadening of the domain of L2 writing” (p. 11). Matsuda (2003) came to a related conclusion about the nature of post-process theory in L2 writing. Given that the process approach is not uniformly agreed upon or implemented in L2 writing pedagogy, Matsuda (2003) concluded that “the notion of process is best defined not as a complete theory or a pedagogical approach but as a set of pedagogical practices that can be adapted to any pedagogical approaches. Post-process, then, is ultimately a misnomer...” (p. 78). However, Matsuda (2003) recognized that the term ‘post-process’ does represent important and complex ideas for L2 writing; therefore, he recommended that “post-process might be more productively defined as the rejection of the dominance of process at the expense of other aspects of writing and writing instruction” (p. 78-79). In other words, just as in L1 composition studies, the notion of the post-process approach in L2 writing rejects the strict interpretation of the process approach, but it does not constitute a strict alternative framework to process. Rather, post-process theory in L2 writing pushes beyond the bounds of the process approach, into an interdisciplinary realm in which student writers can firmly situate themselves within their social, political, educational, and cultural worlds.

Defining Peer Review

There are many terms that describe collaborative, interactive learning in composition. Terminology that refers to the activity in which students evaluate each others’ work includes *peer review*, *peer evaluation*, *peer assessment*, *peer response*, *peer editing*, *peer assistance*, and *peer feedback*. These terms are found in a variety of contexts and are used for a range of

purposes. The terms *peer evaluation* and *peer assessment* typically refer to the practice of peers judging or grading the work of other peers, and may be found in classrooms across the curriculum and at all levels, or the professional sphere. According to Topping (1998) *peer appraisal, peer assessment, and peer review* (p. 250) are particularly common in the medical, business, and education fields, in which students of a profession and/or professionals themselves are continuously required to meet their peers' standards to ensure the maintenance and advancement of the field. *Peer review* is also common in fields which publish findings, reports, or research, as these articles and books are often peer-reviewed for content and quality. The term *peer assistance* generally entails a more collaborative effort in which peers work together to complete an activity, which could include reviewing each others' work, and generally applies to a classroom technique. Other terms, such as *peer response, peer editing, and "peer marking, peer correction, peer rating, and peer feedback"* (Topping, 1998, p. 250) refer to the more specific task of locating and correcting—or offering suggestions to improve—particular problem areas within a peer's work. These terms can also be used in a professional, semi-professional or educational setting. In general, the term *peer review* has the widest applicability, as it can be used to refer to evaluation in a variety of settings, at many levels of professionalism, and can involve a range of response specificity.

For the purposes of this research, the term *peer review* will be used. According to Hauptle (2006), peer review is a key element of process pedagogy, and is used to improve students' writing skills at the revision stage. However, as stated above, this claim is predicated on a relatively strict interpretation of process pedagogy, in which writing is taught as a series of discrete steps (revision being one of them). Post-process pedagogy can also incorporate peer review, for its emphasis on writing as a public and social activity. According to Althaus and

Darnall (2001), the peer teaching that occurs during peer review helps students grasp concepts and improve comprehension, and increases intrinsic motivation. Peer review also gives students a context and audience for writing that approximates real-world audiences, and offer students a chance to view others' writing and learn from students at a similar level. Nelson and Murphy (1993) describe peer review as a process-based technique in which students evaluate each others' working drafts for the purposes of exchanging feedback. This activity offers the students a "wider sense of audience" (p. 135) and opportunities for improvement on their drafts. Thus, peer review is not limited to a process approach, as it is intended to promote learning (Falchikov and Goldfinch, 2000, p. 288) and improve a student's ability both to write and revise effectively. Clearly, peer review can be incorporated into a post-process approach, especially given that "post-process" is often defined as an expansion of process, with an added emphasis on the social nature of writing. Further, the complex nature of peer review reflects the interdisciplinary nature of post-process pedagogy, a topic to be discussed further later.

Peer review sessions can be constructed in many ways. According to van den Berg, Admiraal, and Pilot (2006), there are important differences between beginner and advanced writers that affect a peer review session. Flower et al. found that beginning writers have not yet "internalize[ed] the standards for academic writing" (qtd. in van den Berg, Admiraal, and Pilot, 2006, p. 342) and struggle with identifying problems in their peers' texts. In this case, peer review can be used to promote the comprehension and internalization of these standards. In their review of peer review studies, van den Berg, Admiraal, and Pilot (2006) list clusters of variables related to peer review, including: the function of the review (objectives, focus, substitutional or supplementary purpose), the mode of interaction (with interaction being "one-way, reciprocal, mutual," and "anonymous/confidential/public" and "distance or face to face" [p. 343]). They also

include the organization of the peer group (in terms of year of study and ability level), the mode of feedback (individual feedback or group consensus) and external factors affecting participation (place, time, required/optional, and rewards) as variables within peer review. These factors should be considered and accounted for whenever peer review is implemented in the writing classroom, as they play important roles in determining the success of the peer review session.

Much debate has focused on the support materials given to students for peer review. In order to guide students and promote effective feedback, many instructors offer a list of specific criteria and/or a peer review worksheet. In their teacher research of an advanced sociology class, Althaus and Darnall (2001), implemented criteria-based peer reviews in order to elicit effective and specific criticism from their students. They based this decision on previous experience with students who gave non-specific or uncritical feedback, as well as on the theory that criteria provide standards encourage an evaluator to attempt self-analysis and meta-cognitive analysis. However, Hauptle (2006) noted that very specific peer review checklists have led students to a “fill in the blank” (p. 163) attitude towards peer review, limiting the very critical thinking that peer review is supposed to engender. To avoid this, Hauptle (2006) presents Elbow’s peer review options: two sets of questions, one reader-based and one criterion-based. The reader-based questions engender “emotional and intellectual reaction[s] to a written piece” (p. 164) while criterion-based questions (written by the teacher) encourage students to objectively assess the work. To encourage dialogue, peers can switch between questions sets during the review session. In this way, peer reviewers are encouraged to discuss their texts on a variety of levels, which may elicit more authentic, critical feedback.

Thus, there are a variety of ways to implement peer review in the writing classroom, as well as an extensive list of variables that may impact peer review sessions. Therefore, it is

critical that teachers are aware of these variables, so that they may tailor the peer review activity to fit the needs of their students. This is especially true for teachers of non-native English speakers in writing classes. As the previous discussions of method and process have shown, approaches and activities from L1 classrooms function very differently in L2 classrooms. Peer review is no exception: as the following section will show, the native language of the student is a critical variable that affects the implementation and outcome of peer review activities.

Peer Review in an L1 Context

Regardless of the particular methods and materials used for peer review, there is great theoretical and empirical support for its implementation in L1 classrooms. Much of the support for peer review is build upon on Bruffee's (1984) theory of collaborative learning as it is applied to the writing classroom. Bruffee's (1984) theory is based on the ideas of Vygotsky and Oakeshott, and claims an important correlation between conversation and thought. For Bruffee (1984), conversation and thought are related both "causally and functionally... We first experience and learn 'the skill and partnership of conversation' in the external area of direct social exchange" (Bruffee, 1984, p. 639). At that point, we are able to replace others with ourselves in conversation, creating "reflective thought [that] is public or social conversation internalized" (p. 639). Thought, as internalized conversation, is not constrained by the pragmatics of face-to-face interaction; however, it can be limited by "ethnocentrism, inexperience, personal anxiety, economic interest, and paradigmatic inflexibility" (p. 639). In other words, as Bruffee (1984) pointed out, "If my talk is narrow, superficial, biased, and confined to clichés, my thinking is likely to be so too" (p. 639). In sum, Bruffee (1984) stated that:

To think well as individuals we must learn to think well collectively—that is, we must learn to converse well. The first steps to learning to think better, therefore are learning to converse better and learning to establish and maintain the sorts of social context, the sorts of community life that foster the sorts of conversation members of the community value (p. 640).

Thus, social interaction and conversation produces the artifact called thought. In trying to understand thought, we must understand the nature of the social interaction that created it, and consequently, the nature of the community that produces this conversation. According to Bruffee (1984) and others, improving our thinking necessarily involves improving our ability to converse as well as our ability to maintain participation in the social context that engenders learned conversation.

According to Bruffee (1984), collaborative learning first surfaced as a pedagogical idea in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s. The technique was later adopted by American educators during the 1970s as a response to the perception that college freshmen were entering the university unprepared for the “‘normal’ conventions of the college classroom” (p. 637). Thus, alternatives to the traditional modes of instruction were developed: peer tutoring and classroom group work. These methods changed the social context of learning from a formal, lecture-based setting to one of peer influence and conversation.

This has important implications for modern writing pedagogy and writing teachers. As Bruffee (1984) argued, the internalized conversation that is thought is made public again through writing. This charges the writing teacher with the task of engaging the students in a level of conversation that approximates the level at which teachers wish them to write. Bruffee (1984) believed this conversation should occur throughout the reading and writing processes, providing

a continuous social context that develops academic thought. By conversing within and writing for a social group of knowledgeable peers, students enter into a “normal discourse” (Bruffee, 1984, p. 642) in which all participants agree on similar paradigms, assumptions, and conventions for that particular writing community. Such writing communities imitate the professional and academic communities that the students will enter into once they complete their studies. In other words, the collaborative learning community that creates a social context for academic thought, and it also allows students to practice the discourse in which they will participate in the future.

However, collaborative learning does more than just this. According to Bruffee (1984), collaborative learning also models the “process of socially justifying belief” (p. 646) which ultimately leads to the creation of new knowledge. Within “communities of knowledgeable peers” (p. 646), peers create and maintain knowledge by explaining, negotiating, challenging, and combining each others’ world views. Through collaborative learning, students practice and participate in the process of creating knowledge. For English teachers, this perspective is particularly important, because it can inform pedagogical approaches in the classroom. By encouraging students to work collaboratively, teachers are helping students build associations between “symbolic structures and ‘reality’” (p. 650), and in so doing, encouraging them to create knowledge and build a knowledgeable community. During this process, students are also undergoing a “cultural change...in which they loosen ties to the knowledge community they currently belong to and join another” (p. 651). For writing classrooms in particular, this cultural change entails the requirement that students demonstrate their knowledge in written form to the satisfaction of their new knowledge community.

Thus, for Bruffee (1984), conversation in the L1 English classroom is crucial for connecting teaching, writing, and thought. Not only does collaborative learning offer

opportunities for students to develop and practice academic thought, but also it gives students a chance to build new knowledge and explain or defend this knowledge, through writing, to their peers. As the quality of conversation improves, the qualities of internalized conversation (thought) and publicized thought (writing) also improve (Hauptle, 2006, p. 166). Thus, the ongoing task of teachers is to encourage rich, academic conversation amongst students.

Soviet psychologist and theorist Lev Vygotsky's theories also offer theoretical support for peer review as a useful and potentially effective tool for learning. Indeed, Vygotsky's work informs much of Bruffee's (1984) theory. In Vygotsky's view of childhood psychology and cognitive development, children move through "zones of proximal development" (ZPD) as they learn, which produces developmental change (Reiber and Robinson, 2004, p. 352). In Vygotsky's words, a ZPD constitutes:

the distance between the actual developmental level determined by individual problem solving and the level of development as determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (qtd. in Reiber and Robinson, 2004, p. 352).

Since Vygotsky, like Bruffee, considers language and thought to have social origins, he believed that childhood cognitive development depends on collaboration and/or interaction with adults or more skilled peers. Through this interaction, adults or other peers lead the child through the task, assisting and supporting them with an ongoing dialogue. This type of guidance, termed "other-regulation" (p. 484), serves as an intermediate stage between "object-regulation" (p. 484), in which children are fixated on objects, and self-regulation. As children improve their higher psychological operations, through social interaction and language, they are able to progress towards self-regulation. They move from one ZPD to the next, continuously improving their

ability to problem-solve, with the help of adults or peers (Guerrero and Villamil, 1994, p. 484-485).

Teaching, therefore, also provides a context of social interaction that allows a learner to move through his or her ZPDs towards a more autonomous understanding of the skills or materials presented in a class (Althausser and Darnall, 2001, p. 25). For Vygotsky, teaching is “the assisted performance of apprentices in joint activity with experts” (qtd. in Althausser and Darnall, 2001, p. 25). For Althausser and Darnall (2001), the expert that contributes to a learner’s development may be the teacher or a peer. In a class setting, students move across zones of proximal development as they move from simple to more challenging tasks, and successfully complete them. By working with more advanced peers or with a teacher, the student is able to internalize the problem-solving strategies of the “expert,” thereby improving their ability to complete tasks (Donato, 1994).

Wood, Bruner and Ross developed Vygotsky’s idea of zones of proximal development by expanding on the role of the mediating expert. According to Donato’s (1994) analysis of their work, scaffolding is the means by which the expert participant supports the novice and extends his or her knowledge to the novice. Scaffolding, according to Wood, Bruner, and Ross, consists of six steps:

1. recruiting interest in the task,
2. simplifying the task,
3. maintaining pursuit of the goal,
4. marking critical features and discrepancies between what has been produced and the ideal solution, and
5. controlling frustration during problem solving, and
6. demonstrating an idealized version of the act to be performed (qtd. in Donato, 1994, p. 41).

As the learner becomes more proficient and the knowledge and/or skills are internalized, the expert should reduce the amount of scaffolded intervention, until the learner is able to act independently.

In summation, peer review as a pedagogical tool used in the L1 context is subject to variation in terms of form and function; however, the theoretical backing for peer review is solid and compelling. First, peer review—and collaborative learning in general—facilitates the “conversation of mankind” (Bruffee, 1984), by allowing students to participate in knowledgeable communities of their peers, practice academic thought, and build and defend the knowledge they accrue. In doing so, students prepare themselves for their future endeavors, whether they seek to continue on in academic or enter the professional world. In a similar fashion, the social context that peer review promotes the development of the student learner by encouraging them to move through zones of proximal development, towards the internalization of problem-solving strategies.

Thus, peer review, an activity usually associated with process-oriented pedagogy, actually promotes learning and writing improvement through the social interaction that many versions of post-process pedagogy triumph. While some versions of process pedagogy also clearly incorporate the social element of writing, peer review from a post-process approach also emphasizes the “public” and “situated” aspects of writing. Not only do students gain from social interaction regarding their work, they are able to situate themselves within the larger context of their peers and their institution through activities like peer review.

Pros and Cons

The theoretical claims of scholars like Bruffee (1984), Vygotsky, and Donato (1994) have been put to the test recently in the field of L1 composition studies. While the findings for

peer review in the L1 classroom have been mostly positive, important problems and considerations have also been identified.

In their meta-analysis of studies of peer assessment, Falchikov and Goldfinch (2000) found that peer assessments are valid to a significant degree, meaning that the evaluations, markings, and grades that peers offered each other, on average, agree with the teachers' evaluations. More specifically, these researchers found that global peer assessments (assessments based on an explicit criteria) are more valid than assessments based on several discrete dimensions. Further, Falchikov and Goldfinch (2000) found that several peers are just as accurate as one peer in judging another's work, and that peer assessment is just as valid at beginner levels as at more advanced levels within a field. The highest level of validity between peers and faculty was found in high quality studies, which rated academic tasks and elicited global evaluations of a work by both the peers and the teacher. Thus, according to the research cited by Falchikov and Goldfinch (2000), peer review can lead to valid evaluations amongst students in many academic situations.

In a Roberts' (in Topping, 1998) study of written work, the researcher found greater improvement on student papers from peer review sessions that implemented grammar review than from staff editing that did not focus on grammar problems. Richer's (in Topping, 1998) study also points to greater proficiency gains in writing for students that participated in a peer review session than for students that received only teacher feedback. In the context of writing for business courses, Rieber (2006) found that students that had their papers peer reviewed earned higher grades than students that did not participate in peer review. This teacher researcher theorizes four reasons for which peer reviewed works: 1. students complete and turn in their papers in advance of the due date; 2. students are more conscientious of the guidelines of the

assignment; 3. students are motivated to perform better knowing that their peers will read their work, and 4. students respond better to peer feedback than to teacher feedback. These reasons are generally supported by the theoretical rationales for peer review.

Althausser and Darnall (2001) also offered support for peer review, especially in combination with strict scaffolded learning techniques. In their study, students used online conferencing to access and review each others' work. At the outset, they were able to access examples of good peer reviews, which demonstrated critical feedback and followed a criterion. Over the course of four cycles of peer review, students had decreasing access to such examples. However, these teacher researchers found that throughout the four cycles, higher quality peer review lead to higher quality essays, proving the positive effects of peer review, as well as of scaffolded instruction.

Topping (1998) also studied the effects of peer assessment in a variety of contexts on student achievement and attitude, and compared them to the effects of teacher assessment. Based on the aforementioned clusters of variation in peer review, Topping (2000) asserted that peer review can come in many shapes and sizes, and that not all of these combinations produce positive results for the students. In his meta-analysis of peer review studies, Topping (2000) found that "peer assessment on writing and peer assessment using marks, grades, and tests" (p. 249) have positive impacts on students. However, not all of the results were necessarily positive. In his meta-analysis, Topping (2000) also pointed to several studies that do not support the use of peer review for writing classes. Among them, Birkeland's (1986) study found no difference between self-, peer and teacher review on the ability to write strong paragraphs for 76 technicians. Hughes' (1995) study compared the same types of feedback on pharmacological students and also observes no special benefit for students who underwent peer review (p. 261).

Finally, in their comparison of several peer review group combinations to individual student writers, van den Berg, Admiraal, and Pilot (2006) noted that while students who participated in peer review often considered their papers to have improved, their grades were not necessarily higher than those of individual students (without peer review). These researchers also find that students only used one-third of the suggestions they received, primarily when these suggestions related to style, but rarely used suggestions related to content.

Hauptle (2006) described many of the problems with peer review in her analysis of the Critical Response Process (pedagogy for peer review). In this article, Hauptle (2006) listed the all-too-familiar problems of low student motivation and uncritical commentary during peer review. She also expounded upon the issues of authorship and ownership in the face of peer review, as these elements of writing are complicated when an outsider (a peer) comments on another's work. In conjunction with the "fill-in-the-blank"-style checklists, peer review that also impinges on ownership becomes a charade that diminishes the roles of each participant (p. 164-165). To rectify these problems, Hauptle (2006) recommended that teachers implement the Critical Response Process, which attempts a return to Bruffee's idea of peer review as a conversation. In so doing, students are encouraged to engage in "meaningful discourse" (p. 176), "to differentiate between opinion and inquiry" (p. 176) as well as to generate academic thought, conversation, and (hopefully) writing.

A major problem with implementing peer review is the students' concerns about the reliability of peer feedback. As Brammer and Rees (2007) pointed out in their study of peer review from the students' perspective, many students are suspicious of their peers' ability to give accurate and effective feedback, just as many doubt their own ability to judge another's work (p. 80). More importantly, Brammer and Rees' (2007) study added to the evidence that many

students are not aware of “what peer review is (collaborative learning) and...what peer review is not (proofreading)” (p. 79). The researchers also cited several other problems with peer review, including the fact that it is time-consuming and that there are a multitude of variables that affect the activity. Hence, Brammer and Rees (2007) suggested that teachers re-create their idea of peer review, framing it not as an obligatory exercise in correction and editing, but rather as a collaborative exercise in thinking.

Therefore, it is evident that scholars like Bruffee and Vygotsky accurately theorized the benefits of peer review. Through peer review, students are encouraged to enter into an academic discourse, develop academic thought, and defend their work and ideas. As the abovementioned studies have shown, this activity results in accurate evaluations of peer work amongst students, can result in significant improvements on student papers and in student writing, and is an effective example of scaffolded instruction. Further, and more importantly, those researchers that found problems with peer review do not recommend disregarding or radically changing the activity; rather, they recommend a return to the theories of Bruffee and Vygotsky to solve the problems of peer review in the L1 classroom.

Peer Review in an L2 Context

According to the above research, peer review can be a useful, effective activity for L1 students in a writing class. Not only do student writers participate in an important part of the writing process, the revision stage, but also they are encouraged to consider the socially-situated, public nature of their writing. Further, they enter into an academic discourse in which they read, learn from, and critique others' writings, while at the same time explaining or defending their own work. This type of interaction promotes academic thinking and the creation of new knowledge for L1 students, as well as the internalization of problem-solving techniques. Indeed,

scholars and researchers who have studied peer review in an L2 context often draw on peer review theory from an L1 context to validate the use of this activity for ESL students.

According to Min (2005), learning theories inform much of the use of peer collaboration activities in the ESL classroom. From the learning prospective, peer review is often implemented in L2 classrooms based on Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory. Mahn (2008) described how Vygotskian theories of psychological development and meaning-making apply to English language learners who are learning to write. Vygotsky was interested in the way in which consciousness arises from the brain, which he conceptualized as “a complex [set] of interconnected systems of meaning, systems that reflect different mental processes...through which humans perceive and experience their environments” (Mahn, 2008, p. 118). He believed that as children acquire language, they are uniting the processes of thinking and speaking to create verbal thinking. As they interact socially, they begin to construct and generalize meaning. From this point, systems of meaning and cognition can develop, allowing children to learn skills like writing. Learners of a second language, however, construct meaning through their first language, while incorporating the new language. In order to write in English, learners must “connect their conceptual thinking to composing processes” (Mahn, 2008, p. 120). Additionally, they must develop new senses and meanings for the new language. These senses and meanings include individual words and phrases, as well as “broader concepts and theories that develop through everyday interactions...and interactions in formal academic settings” (Mahn, 2008, p. 120). For Mahn (2008), the expression of these new senses and meanings in writing is best developed through dialogic journals, in which students write and teachers respond to the meaning of the student’s work in writing. This process encourages the student to write on a

deeper level, using their conceptual thinking, and connecting them with their thoughts and system of meaning.

According to Mahn's (2008) research, the interaction that encourages L2 language and writing development occurs between L2 students and their teachers via written journal entries and comments. However, Vygotskian theory also supports the more direct intervention, or *mediation*, of an expert into a novice's learning process. For Vygotsky, childhood learning occurs when a learner works with an adult or more advanced peer, because the child appropriates knowledge and skills from the adult or expert (Fernandez et al., 2001). As the child works with the adult or older peer, he or she moves through developmental phases, slowly taking more and more control over his or her learning process. These phases are called zones of proximal development. Vygotsky describes zones of proximal development as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential problem solving as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more able peers" (qtd. in Fernandez et al., 2001, p. 1). Wertsch (in de Guerrero and Villamil, 2000), offered a more detailed explanation of how learning occurs across ZPDs: during the transition from interpsychological to intrapsychological functioning, the child learner moves from being other-regulated (regulated by things outside of him or herself) to being self-regulated. At this point, the child is able to solve problems independently, as he or she has internalized the knowledge or problem-solving technique that the expert offers (although not in the exact same form). Thus, the idea that one of the two participants is more advanced than the other is crucial for learning through ZPDs.

It is evident that the cognitive and linguistic development that occurs within a learner is very important in explaining how ZPDs function. However, equally important is the interaction

that occurs between the two participants during task completion. In order for one or both parties to learn during a collaborative activity (in childhood learning or L2 learning), participants must work together and one or both sides must make knowledge available. This process is referred to as scaffolding. For Bruner, scaffolding entails cognitive support that teachers give to students, to help them achieve what they cannot do on their own. Wood, Bruner and Ross studied scaffolding during tutorial interactions, noting the six major features of scaffolding: 1. getting the learner's attention, 2. making the task manageable, 3. staying on track, 4. "marking critical features, [5.] controlling frustration, and [6.] modeling solutions" (qtd. in de Guerrero and Villamil, 2000, p. 52). Thus, scaffolding plays a critical role in determining whether and how a learner moves through ZPDs to the point of independent problem-solving.

However, in the current application of sociocultural theory in SLA and L2 writing, learning through ZPDs and scaffolding is not limited to instances in which an expert and a novice come together. For Lantolf (2000) and others (Lundstrom and Baker, 2008; Fernandez et al., 2001) who have considered Sociocultural theory in the context of SLA, learning through ZPDs and scaffolding often occurs through "collaborative construction of opportunities" (p. 17). In other words, language development can occur when any two language learners unite to complete a task. The mediation that one participant provides another helps both to "co-construct contexts in which expertise emerges as a feature of the group" (p. 17). Min (2005) noted that L2 writing, as a learning activity, can improve through interaction in the same way that general learning, a cognitive activity, can occur through interaction. According to Lundstrom and Baker (2008), as L2 learners move through zones of proximal development, they slowly become autonomous and capable of completing the task on their own. Through a process of joint scaffolding, even novice learners can help each other learn. Findings from de Guerrero and

Villamil (2000) corroborated the claim that both participants in a peer review session can learn through joint scaffolding.

Zhang (1995), however, questioned many studies that simply transplanted peer review from the L1 into the L2 writing classroom, without regard for the important differences between the groups. Based on the idea that L1 and L2 writing development entails basically the same processes, many researchers have claimed that the technique is equally valid in both contexts. However, Zhang (1995) noted that these claims have largely gone unverified. Indeed, early L2 writing practitioners warned about the “assumed advantages” (qtd. in Zhang, 1995, p. 211) of peer review, and subsequent studies have noted considerably higher concerns amongst L2 students about the usefulness and effectiveness of this activity than amongst L1 students. In the next section, the advantages and disadvantages of peer review in the L2 writing classroom will be discussed.

Pros and Cons

As the previous section shows, theoretical background alone cannot support the use of peer review in L2 writing classrooms; empirical evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of peer review for L2 writers is needed. A cursory look at current research reveals that while peer review may be an effective strategy for many L1 classes, the important differences between L1 and L2 students complicate the situation in the L2 sphere. Research suggests that while peer review is not always an appropriate or effective activity for L2 English students, when framed correctly, it can offer a multitude of advantages for the L2 student in many areas of language acquisition.

In order for peer review to be successful in this or any context, students must first believe that their peers’ comments are valid. Rollinson (2004) presented a plethora of evidence for the

benefits of peer review in the L2 writing classroom, in his review of studies on the topic. He cited his own (1998) study, in which he found a high number of valid comments amongst peers during peer review, as well as Caulk's (1994) study of peer commentary, which produced similar results. Valid peer comments, in these cases, indicates a high degree of agreement between peer and teacher comments. In other words, the comments peers give each other are often the same or similar to those that teachers offer students. Storch (2007) corroborated these findings, and determined that learners "reach grammatically correct decisions when working with peers" (p. 156). Further, other studies also supported the use of peer review, based on findings that peer comments can be more specific than teacher comments (Caulk, 1994; Berg, 1999; Chaudron, 1984). Thus, it seems that peer review can be effective in an L2 setting, in the sense that peers produce valid comments when reviewing each other's work.

However accurate or valid these comments may be, they are of no benefit to the student unless he or she implements them. To this end, other researchers have attempted to determine if L2 peers actually use each other's comments in their writing, and whether this leads to an improved written product. Rollinson (2004) found that peers uptake much of their partner's comments during peer review, in his (1998) study. Nelson and Murphy (1993) stated that L2 writers use some of their peers' suggestions; however, they also exposed great variation in terms of the extent that students participated in and used peer review. They noted that students were more likely incorporate their peers' ideas when pairs they worked cooperatively. Soares (1998) supported these findings in her teacher-researcher study of peer review methods. By researching peer review method that she developed over six years, Soares (1998) found positive evidence that peer review training can help students improve on their own (and their peer's) written work. Based on his review of many relevant studies, Rollinson (2004) corroborated this finding,

recommending that any peer review activity should involve pre-training activities, in which students learn about the objectives of peer review, the guidelines for interacting productively, and the ways to offer effective feedback. For Rollinson (2004), peer review should also involve intervention training, during which the teacher addresses problems in interaction or feedback that arise in the pairs or groups.

Finally, Tsui and Ng (2000) offered evidence to show that peer review offers general benefits to L2 writers in high school. While the study found that students preferred teacher comments to those of their peers, and that students benefited more from reading their peer work over peer comments, the researchers found that peer comments supplemented teacher comments nicely. In four areas (audience, awareness of strengths and weaknesses, collaborative learning, and ownership of text) peer comments encouraged improvement in the writing process.

However, not all studies attempt to demonstrate the benefits of peer review in terms of an improved written product; some focus on the linguistic benefits of the interaction that occurs during peer review. In her study of ESL classes in Melbourne, Australia, Storch (2007) compared texts edited by pairs to those edited by individual students. Although she found no statistically significant difference between accuracy on the two tasks, an analysis of the pair talk indicates that a high number of the problematic language-related episodes (LREs) were resolved interactively. This interaction allowed the participants a lot of opportunities for language use, allows them to focus on form, and allowed students to reaffirm their knowledge by explaining it to others. Further, the interaction encouraged students to repeat knowledge, serving the socio-cognitive functions of indicating to the advise-giver that feedback was noticed, and helping the learner internalize new forms (p. 155). Thus, while her study did not prove the quantifiable

benefits of peer work, Storch (2007) surmised that peer review offers linguistic benefits for students.

In terms of interaction, Villamil and de Guerrero (1994) found “an extremely complex and productive interactive revision process among the participants” in their study of 54 intermediate-level ESL students at a large university in Puerto Rico. These researchers studied interaction during peer review from a Vygotskian perspective in order to determine the kinds of interactions and social relationships that developed during the revision process. The researchers found this process beneficial because it “allowed for the interchangeability of roles” (p. 493), meaning that learners were able to switch between being self-regulated and other-regulated during the activity. Such interchangeability allows the learner to move through ZPDs and towards the internalization of problem-solving techniques in their writing.

As these studies elucidate, there are various benefits for L2 students who participate in peer review. First, L2 students working together are often successful at resolving grammatical problems, and peer comments, as some studies have found that they are more specific than teacher comments, can serve as effective platforms for such revisions. More importantly, these studies have found peer comments to be quite valid, meaning they correspond to teacher’s comments in general. Secondly, L2 students benefit cognitively from peer review, as they repeat information, which leads to internalization. Also, often peers are able to point out each others’ strengths and weaknesses, benefiting the writer, who reaffirms his or her knowledge, and the peer reviewer, who may acquire new language items. Finally, L2 students benefit from the increased interaction that peer review provides: they have more opportunities to practice language forms and they serve as realistic audiences for the other student writer.

However, despite the many purported benefits of peer review for L2 writers, many researchers and educators find the practice inconsequential or even problematic for these students. As noted in the treatment of peer review in the L1 classroom, the practice can be difficult for students and teachers alike. Teachers complain that the task is time-consuming, hard to execute, and that it engenders little motivation from students. Indeed, L1 student comments are often superficial and uncritical. Students themselves cite concerns over the ability of their peers to accurately assess their work, and complain that they lose a sense of ownership or authorship of their work when a peer comments upon it and changes it. Additionally, considering all of the possible variables affecting peer review, success can be limited and difficult to verify.

Many of these factors also affect peer review in the L2 classroom. As the students are nonnative speakers of English and from various countries, issues of language, cross-cultural communication, and “power distance” (Nelson and Carson, 1998, p. 129) often arise. As Tsui and Ng (2000) pointed out, L2 students seem to comment on surface-level errors, and they doubt that their fellow ESL peers offer valid suggestions. In fact, Tsui and Ng (2000) referred to evidence that indicates that these problems could be more common in L2 students than L1. Additionally, Tsui and Ng (2000) identified the cultural issues that L2 students face which may also interfere with the success of peer review. As many students are from cultures that consider the teacher “as the only source of authority” (p. 149), they may hesitate to incorporate peer feedback into their writing. Further, Tsui and Ng’s (2000) study verified that L2 students prefer teacher comments to peer comments, probably due to the perception that teacher input is more reliable than peer opinion. These results are confirmed by Zhang’s (1995) study of L2 student perceptions of the three types of feedback (self-, peer, and teacher): teacher feedback is

overwhelmingly preferred by ESL students in this study as compared to peer feedback and self-feedback.

Soares (1998) noted many of the same problems with peer review in the L2 writing classroom, and added that the multicultural setting of an L2 classroom impedes the success of peer review, as students have significant sociolinguistic differences. These differences include “different expectations for the group work, for what a good paper should be, as well a different communication styles” (p. 4). Indeed, students from countries in which a teacher-centered approach, drilling and memorization techniques, and an emphasis on the collective good over the individual are preferred may feel out of place and unequipped to respond in a group setting at a US institution. Due to these cross-cultural differences, and doubt about their fellow peers’ ability to give accurate feedback, several studies have noted the limited extent to which L2 writers use peer comments. In fact, Topping (1998) cited many studies that find that L2 students use their peers’ comments only “critically and selectively” (p. 261): a symptom of the practice in general.

In order to rectify these problems, several researchers have developed and tested training techniques for L2 writing students, so that they may more effectively participate in the peer review process. Using the same strategies that Rollinson (2004) recommended, Min (2005) developed a multi-step training process that taught students how to make effective comments on peer essays. The training involved four hours of class time during which students saw demonstrations of peer review, practiced it themselves, and participated in follow-up teacher-student conferences. During the 30-minute conferences, the researcher checked the students’ comments to ensure comprehension of the directions and quality feedback. Additionally, the researcher sought to provide the students with guidance and assistance so that they may complete the task accurately. Students were also supplied a guidance sheet to use during their actual peer

review session. The researcher found that, as a result of the training, students offered more comments to their peers, based on “relevant and specific” (p. 303) issues in the essays, and in accordance with the scaffolded model. Further, peer review training benefited the student in terms of their ability to identify higher-order concerns in peer work, their ability to identify their own errors, and their confidence in performing the task. Thus, training students for peer review has proven effective in mitigating the practical concerns of ESL teachers and students regarding peer review.

In conclusion, there is significant disagreement within the field over whether peer review is an appropriate activity for L2 students in writing classes. Indeed, many studies show that these students doubt the quality and accuracy of their peer’s comments and greatly prefer teacher’s comments. Further, these students often come from sociocultural backgrounds that place primacy on the teacher as the authority and interaction for the collective good, making this type of student-centered, individualistic activity problematic. Further, studies have found that students utilize little of their peer’s comments, rendering an already time-consuming process pointless. However, it is important to note that many studies have found opposite conclusions: peer review can encourage valid feedback that students will incorporate. More importantly, many studies indicated that peer review had a positive impact on students’ interaction, a topic addressed in the next section.

Peer Review Interactions

The importance of interaction in second language acquisition has long been recognized by scholars and teachers alike; however, until the 1970s, interaction was cast as simply a reinforcement of classroom instruction, and not as an opportunity to learn new language items. In 1975, Hatch and Wagner-Gough changed this perception when they published a study that

indicated that L2 syntax could develop from conversational interaction, by giving learners a chance to hear and practice L2 forms. Krashen's studies and theories, particularly the Input Hypothesis, furthered the notion that conversational interaction provides opportunities for learners to acquire language, as he pointed out that, learners attain comprehensible input through conversation, and they are able to focus on the meaning of that input in context (Gass, Mackey, and Pica, 1998, p. 300). Through his Interaction Hypothesis, Long furthered Krashen's claims that comprehensible input is necessary for language acquisition. Additionally, Long argued that conversational modifications are the most common and important tools for making input comprehensible. In her follow-up empirical studies, Pica tested and expanded the interactional hypothesis, interjecting the social aspect of the interaction as a crucial element in determining the types of conversational modifications that occur during interaction. Swain later pointed out the importance of comprehensible output, as a complement to comprehensible input and a way to push the learner to restructure their perceptions of L2 syntax productively (Ellis, 1991).

These developments culminated in Long's updated Interaction Hypothesis, which stated that "negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments made by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (qtd. in Gass, 2003, p. 234). According to Gass (2003), Long emphasizes the importance of negotiation for meaning in regulating a learner's selective attention and developing the learner's L2 processing capacity. Through negotiation, or through other types of interaction, learners receive negative feedback. This feedback develops L2 proficiency "at least for vocabulary, morphology, and language-specific syntax, and [is] essential for learning certain specifiable L1-L2 contrasts" (p. 235). In other words, negotiation facilitates language acquisition

in several ways: it may draw a learner's attention to problems with a particular language element, and/or it may expose the learner to new language forms, thereby priming the learner for further development.

Many studies have attempted to verify the link between interaction and language learning, and the results are increasingly indicative of this relationship. In his review of interaction-based studies, Long (2002) noted a number of findings in this area. Swain and Lapkin found that for adolescent French immersion students, interaction and collaborative work on building a story helped students notice and reflect on language, which lead to reformulation of their writing. Kuiken and Vedder concluded that, for their group of Dutch EFL learners studying the passive voice, negotiation improved the students' ability to notice forms (although it did not result in higher test scores). Soler found that EFL students' demonstration of pragmatic knowledge improved as a result of peer-peer and teacher-student collaborative dialogue. Additionally, Gass, Mackey, and Pica (1998) noted studies that found that negotiation of meaning has a positive impact on learner production (from Halliday, 1995; Linnell, 1995; and Pica, 1994 and 1996). Further, Gass and Varonis found that, for L2 students working with NS partners on a task, "negotiation and modified input positively affected comprehension" (qtd. in Gass, Mackey, and Pica, 1998, p. 302).

However, other studies have questioned the relationship between interaction and language learning. Sato (in Gass, Mackey, and Pica, 1998) is noted for an important, longitudinal study of this relationship. It involved two Vietnamese boys, ESL students, who made little progress in English over 10 months, during which time most of their input came from conversational interaction. Sato focused on the boys' acquisition of past-tense inflectional morphemes, and found little development in this area, although she noted that such inflections

are not critical for discourse (nor are they very perceptible). Additionally, several studies have indicated immediate or temporary changes to a learner's interlanguage as a result of interaction, negotiation, and pushed output (Nobuyoshi and Ellis, 1993; Donato, 1994; and Mackey, 1999); however, these studies did not indicate whether learners retain these new features and changes for the long term. Further, studies such as that of Foster and Ohta (2005) have shown that the incidences of negotiation for meaning are lower than originally perceived. Upon deeper analysis, these researchers have found that interactions that used to be considered negotiation for meaning are often, in actuality, instances of a learner offering unprompted assistance (without communication breakdown), or expressing interest and encouragement to their peer.

Thus, interaction and negotiation for meaning can play important facilitative roles in language development and acquisition. Interaction can help learners notice the difference between their linguistic hypotheses and output, and the true nature of the target language. By negotiating for meaning during conversation, learners can also be exposed to new language forms, test known language forms, and receive feedback on their utterances. While a plethora of studies indicate the benefits of negotiation and interaction, the relationship between this activity and long-term, permanent IL restructuring has not been solidified, and there are some doubts as to the accurate identification of negotiation for meaning sequences. However, in a peer review context, studies show that interaction can have a positive effect on students' problem-solving ability (Storch, 2007). Furthermore, studies show that peer review interaction offers many opportunities for language use with a focus on form (Storch, 2007), as well as opportunities to repeat knowledge (Storch, 2007) and switch between various sociocultural roles as they move through their ZPDs (Villamil and de Guerrero, 1994).

Villamil and de Guerrero (1994, 1996, 2000) have conducted extensive research on interaction during peer review. They have studied the general social-cognitive dimensions of peer review, and have analyzed interactions through the lens of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, while also taking into account more modern appraisals of peer review interactions. Specifically, Villamil and de Guerrero (1994, 1996, 2000) have researched the types of interactions that occur between students engaged in peer review (1994), the resulting social behaviors (1996) and relationships that emerge during a session (1994), the strategies that students use to facilitate interaction (1996), and the nature of the "interpsychological space" (2000, p. 51) that these strategies produce within learners' ZPDs. In general, these studies were designed to characterize the discourse that occurs during peer review in an L2 writing classroom, and explain how this discourse demonstrates the learners' cognitive development.

In their (1994) study, de Guerrero and Villamil investigated interaction during peer review in an L2 writing class by applying socio-cognitive theory. They sought to determine what types of language episodes occurred between participants, how the students' cognitive stages of regulation manifested during the session, and what types of social relationships resulted from these interactions. The researchers used several frameworks to codify the various language episodes, cognitive stages, and social relationships that occurred during the session. Language episodes were first coded as either on-task, about-task (in which the learners discuss the task procedures or instructions), or off-task. The on-task episodes were then labeled as one of the following: "reader/writer interactive revisions, reader non-interactive revisions, writer non-interactive revisions, reader/teacher interactive revisions, writer/teacher interactive revisions, and writer's self-response during initial reading aloud" (p. 486).

Next, de Guerrero and Villamil (1994) coded each language episode according to the learner's cognitive stage of regulation, as revealed in the language episode. The first stage was that of object-regulation, in which the learner was unaware of the problems within the text, did not understand the purpose of peer review (and is therefore easily distracted), had a limited linguistic ability to complete the revision task, did not contribute meaningfully to the session, and fixated on one or two trouble sources. In the next stage, 'other-regulation,' the learner "lets himself/herself be guided by a peer during the revision task" (p. 487), and that this guidance entailed scaffolded instruction. At this stage, the learner is in between object-regulation and self-regulation; thus, he or she will often follow the advice of the peer, collaborating only to a certain extent. Further, while the learner accepts guidance in understanding and completing the task, and may be able to identify some problem areas independently, his or her limited understanding of the task or limited language ability may cause miscommunication during the session. Finally, learners exhibit self-regulation in the last cognitive stage, meaning that he or she can manage the task demands independently, has internalized the requirements and goals, is confident during the session, offers scaffolded help to the other learner, and can quickly evaluate and manage the other learner's suggestions.

De Guerrero and Villamil (1994) also coded the peer review sessions according to the social relationships that arose during the sessions. During the sessions, peers could have exhibited a symmetrical relationship in which each peer was regulated by the object, the other peer, and themselves, creating a "symmetrical peer interaction" (p. 487). Within symmetrical peer interactions, peers could have exhibited self-regulated behavior, other-regulated behavior, or object-regulated behavior. Alternatively, when peers entered the session at different levels of regulation, they produced an "asymmetrical peer interaction" (p. 488). Within asymmetrical peer

interactions, the following combinations of peer regulation were found: “other- v. self-regulation, other- v. object-regulation, and object- v. self-regulation” (p. 488).

De Guerrero and Villamil (1994) carried out quantitative and qualitative analyses of the resulting data. They calculated frequencies and percentages for each level of categorization (type of language episode, cognitive stage, and social relationship), and performed a “chi square test...to determine significant differences between expected and observed frequencies” (p. 488). The researchers found that students stayed on-task; however, the nature of the on-task episodes varied greatly. Students revised their work with their peers, as well as with the teacher and independently. De Guerrero and Villamil (1994) found that students paid particular attention to form, especially during episodes of writer self-response revisions. In terms of the cognitive stages of development, the researchers found that students continuously moved between stages; however, the “self-regulation stage...was dominant” (p. 491). De Guerrero and Villamil (1994) believed that this was due to the many weeks of peer review training, as well as their use of their common L1.

Finally, in terms of the social relationships that developed, the researchers found that the various stages of cognitive regulation led to “different patterns of social relationships” (p. 491). In other words, when partners were at the same stage of regulation, they manifested symmetrical relationships. Alternatively, when partners were at different stages of regulation, they experienced asymmetrical relationships, the dominant social pattern. In these instances, one partner was able to scaffold or guide the learning of the other partner, support Vygotskian theories of zones of proximal development. Indeed, de Guerrero and Villamil (1994) concluded that these complex language episodes and social relationships benefited the students, because the

students were able to shift between roles and levels of regulation, potentially allowing for each partner to lead the other through their individual ZPDs.

In a 1996 study, de Guerrero and Villamil furthered their study of interactions between peers during a revision session in an L2 writing classroom. While still based on Vygotskian theory, the researchers use a new framework to study peer review interactions. After providing a four-week training period, the researchers paired the participants and gave them revisions sheets for the peer review session. 17 dyads wrote essays in narrative style and 23 wrote persuasively. The dyads were recorded during peer review, and their interactions were coded. Only on-task language episodes were considered in this study. Interactions were coded in the following ways: according to the socio-cognitive activity taking place, according to the strategies used to facilitate the interaction, and according to the social behaviors that the participants manifested. De Guerrero and Villamil (1996) identified seven socio-cognitive activities, including “reading, assessing, dealing with trouble sources, composing, writing comments, copying, and discussing task procedures” (p. 57), and five facilitative strategies, including “employing symbols and external resources, using the L1, providing scaffolding, resorting to interlanguage knowledge, and vocalizing private speech” (p. 61). Finally, the social behaviors that the participants manifested during the session were identified and coded according to how the participants negotiated control during the session, the nature of their collaboration, their mutual affectivity (or lack thereof), and the extent to which the participants adopted reader/writer roles during the session.

After analysis, de Guerrero and Villamil (1996) found that their results supported much of Vygotsky’s theory of learning (and its application to language development). First, de Guerrero and Villamil (1996) found that “each socio-cognitive activity had a critical role in the

overall peer revision process” (p. 66), in that each activity indicated problems with, or competence in, different parts of the peer review process. This allowed the partners to work together effectively, and allowed the researchers to see how the students negotiated this partnership. By identifying the five specific strategies that students used to facilitate the peer review process, the researchers rendered an even more detailed understanding of how the students worked together. Interestingly, the researchers found that the use of the common L1 was a particularly important and powerful tool for facilitating this task. Finally, the researchers found that the students were able to perform mutual scaffolding; they were able to help each other improve their written drafts through interaction, by back and forth between the roles of reader and writer. Thus, for de Guerrero and Villamil (1996), these results prove the power of peer review as a “total communicative experience” (p. 66), one that promotes a “complex process involving a myriad of recursive behaviors” (p. 66). However, the researchers are left to wonder about the extent to which these interactions produce changes or improvements in the learners’ final drafts.

Mendonca and Johnson (1994) address this very question in their study of peer review negotiations during revision activities in ESL writing classes. They studied a group of 12 international students in a university-level L2 writing class. The students were from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and were pursuing various fields of study. Through transcriptions of peer review sessions, student drafts, and post-interviews, the researchers sought to determine whether or not peer negotiations result in changes to the students’ drafts, as well as how the students perceive this activity. The researchers used “analytic induction procedures” to code the transcriptions, meaning that they generated their own descriptive categories for the types of negotiations that occurred during the peer review sessions. Next, they coded each

instance of negotiation as either writer-generated or reader-generated, and later compared the types of negotiations across dyads (specifically investigating if those students who shared an academic field produced the same negotiations as those of diverging academic interests). The second drafts were then analyzed and labeled as revised or not-revised, peer reviewed or not peer reviewed. Thus, the labeling matrix included the following categories: “(a)Revised/Peer Review (R/PR), (b)Not Revised/Peer Review (NR/PR), and (c) Revised/Not in Peer Review (R/NPR)” (p. 751).

Mendonca and Johnson (1994) made a variety of findings. First, they identified five types of negotiations, with various subtypes. These five types included questions (requests for explanation and comprehension checks), explanations (on unclear points, of opinions, and regarding content), restatements, suggestions, and grammatical corrections. Not surprisingly, they found that students from different academic fields of interest had more requests for explanations than those of the same academic field. In general, the researchers found that students were able to focus on both local and global issues; however, they tended to focus on ideas over grammatical corrections, likely due to the teacher’s instruction. Further, as the “reviewers tended to initiate all types of negotiation except explanations of content” (p. 756), which were initiated by the writer, the reviewer and writer tended to fall into the roles of teacher and student, respectively.

Regarding the extent to which these negotiated instances resulted in changes to the students’ final drafts, Mendonca and Johnson (1994) found three patterns: either (a) students used the peer review input, or (b) students disregarded the peer review input, or (c) students changed their draft without peer review input. Students used peer input for 53% of revisions, and these revisions often resulted in greater explanation of a term or idea in student drafts. However,

10% of potential revisions were ignored; in these instances, students did not revise their drafts despite their peer's comments. This is likely due to students' distrust of their peers' opinions, or disagreement with those opinions. Finally, the researchers noted that students made 37% of their revisions without having discussed these instances during the peer review session. In these cases, the writers tended to realize their own mistakes, and made the appropriate changes.

Post-interviews revealed that all of the study participants found the peer review activity to be beneficial to a certain degree; however, two of the twelve students that had partners of a different academic field found the session unhelpful. In general, the students stated that peer review was an interesting opportunity to see their peer's written work, to gain ideas about writing, and to supplement their teachers' feedback. Mendonca and Johnson (1994) concluded that "peer review enhance[s] students' communicative power by encouraging students to express and negotiate their ideas, which...is essential to SLA" (p. 766). Further, the study lent further support to the claim that peer review is a useful tool to help L2 students take a different perspective on their writing, and make more informed decisions about their audience and their audience's comments.

In conclusion, the preceding studies validate interaction as an important tool for facilitating language acquisition in all four skill areas: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Researchers have long recognized that conversational interaction helps learners notice new language forms, and notice the difference between their language hypotheses and the true nature of the language. Additionally, conversational interaction provides the feedback necessary for learners to make these connections, and gives learners and opportunity for pushed output, which also facilitates language acquisition. Despite initial doubt over the link between interaction and language acquisition, a variety of studies show that this connection does exist, at least in the

short term. Further, studies in peer review interactions now demonstrate the value of this activity in several ways. First, it is an opportunity to use language forms, interact, and negotiate meaning in a meaningful context. Second, peer review offers students the opportunity to develop cognitively, in that it allows students to switch between roles and cognitive stages, and incorporate problem-solving skills at their own pace. Additionally, this complex interaction leads to various types of negotiations, which often produce positive changes in student drafts. The purpose of the current study is to marry these various analytical frameworks, in order to verify the purported benefits of peer review for L2 writers on the linguistic level and on the level of the written product.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of the study was to determine whether or not peer review is a successful and effective activity for university-level ESL writing students in an academic context, and to what extent it is effective and successful. The terms “successful” and “effective” were defined in terms of the type and quality of the interactions that occur during these sessions, and to what extent these interactions affected and benefited the final drafts. Peer review sessions that exhibited mainly on-task interactions, in which students worked together to improve each other’s papers, and which led to changes in the draft that improved the quality of the work, were considered successful and effective.

As described in the above review of literature, peer review has great potential for helping ESL students in a variety of ways. First, students can participate in interaction and a negotiation process which allows them access to comprehensible input, hear (negative) feedback, produce new language forms, and create pushed output. This process can prime a student for, and facilitate the process of, language acquisition. Further, peer review provides an opportunity for the students to move through their zones of proximal development, by participating in a process of scaffolded learning in which students help each other learn. Additionally, peer review allows learners to repeat information, and identify strengths and weaknesses of writing, leading to affirmation of knowledge and increased automatization of skills. Peer review can also help

students improve their problem-solving skills and their ability to manage the psychological space between themselves and the other participant. Finally, since students generally arrive at accurate language forms when working together, peer review can help students improve the quality of their work on a grammatical or semantic level.

In order to verify these purported benefits for this particular group of university-level ESL students, four research questions were crafted. The research questions of interest were:

1. Do interactions between ESL dyads engaged in peer review create successful revisions?
2. What types of interaction occur between dyads of ESL students engaged in peer review?
3. How do these interactions affect the written drafts?
4. Is peer review an effective classroom activity for ESL students in this type of context?

Hypotheses

Prior to carrying out the study, several hypotheses were formed. Regarding the first question of whether interactions would create successful revisions, this researcher felt rather skeptical: as many ESL students doubt the accuracy of their peer's comments, and do not truly engage with someone who is not their teacher (i.e., another student), this researcher doubted whether students would actually interact during their sessions (or whether the students would simply talk *at* each other). Further, this researcher was dubious as to whether these interactions would produce substantive commentary and criticisms. Indeed, these concerns were echoed in the review of literature, as many researchers have noted problems with language barriers, cross-cultural issues (including classroom expectations), power distance, the depth of peer analysis, and doubt about the value of peer commentary (Nelson and Carson, 1998; Tsui and Ng, 2000; Zhang, 1995; Soares, 1998) as stumbling blocks for effective peer review.

Regarding the more specific questions of what types of interactions would occur during these sessions and whether these interactions would affect the later draft, this researcher made modest predictions on both counts. First, this researcher felt, based on previous experience implementing peer review into an ESL academic writing classroom, that the interactions, while on-task, would be few in number and surface-based. As the students were being recorded during the session, this researcher predicted that students would remain on task for the majority of the session. However, instead of sessions in which students actively entered into a spirited dialogue about their papers, this researcher predicted that students would be more reserved and cautious, rarely challenging or analyzing their peer's contributions during the session. This was largely hypothesized due to the high numbers of Asian students, who are accustomed to politely agreeing with or accepting other's suggestions, in order to maintain harmony with their fellow classmates. The review of literature supports this deduction, as a study by Soares (1998) indicated that "different expectations for...group work" (p. 4) often impedes the success of peer review. This researcher also predicted that these interactions would lead to low numbers of (primarily) surface-level changes on the drafts. Since it was predicted that students would not fully engage in the peer review process, it was also predicted that the suggestions made as a result of this process would be taken into consideration only marginally. This would be especially true for students who doubt the reliability of their peer's comments, and for those who prefer teacher comments. These are all problems noted in literature (Tsui and Ng, 2000; Zhang, 1995; Soares, 1998; Topping, 1998).

Furthermore, regarding the question of whether peer review would be an effective activity for academic ESL students in a university-level English writing class, this teacher-researcher felt that peer review would offer some benefits to students, on four levels. First, it was

predicted that students would benefit from peer review, in that this type of interaction creates an authentic space in which students can put to work their accumulated tools and knowledge about writing in English. An important caveat here is that this benefit may be limited to the most motivated students, who might seize this opportunity as a chance to exhibit and refine their knowledge and skills. Secondly, this teacher-researcher felt that peer review would benefit students on an interactional level, allowing them to connect with classmates who are at comparable levels of writing in English, and allowing them to gain a fresh perspective on their own writing. In conjunction with this prediction was the anticipated benefit that students would be able to improve their linguistic ability to offer, comprehend, and negotiate commentary about written work (either their work or their partner's). For example, through peer review, students would have the chance to practice and develop their sociolinguistic skills by giving politely negative feedback or disagreeing with their peer's stance.

Finally, it was anticipated that students would benefit from peer review by discussing particular, local-level language items that were confusing or problematic. For example, it was predicted that students would focus on problems with word choice or certain grammatical structures, since these items are more tangible and verifiable than global problems (like organization). This was predicted based on the fact that most of these students, who had been studying English as a foreign language in Asian countries, would be well versed in grammar and vocabulary, and would be able to check problematic language forms easily with a dictionary, translator, or website. This fourth benefit was predicted to be the most effectual in terms of changes and revisions that students made to their drafts as a result of peer review.

Participants

Participants were solicited from English Composition for Non-Native Speakers, levels 120 and 121, during the fall semester of 2008 and the spring of 2009. From these classes, 38 students agreed to participate, creating 19 dyads for the peer review session. Of this original set, there were 18 male students and 20 female students. However, for a variety of reasons, some of the data from these dyads had to be discarded. For some dyads, the recordings were not audible; for another, one of the participants was caught plagiarizing, and for other sets, one or both of the students failed to turn in the data necessary to participate in the study.

The remaining 30 students constituted 15 sets of usable data. Of these sets, 26 were complete and both students participated in all parts of the study and turned in all of the necessary data. Four data sets were incomplete although still usable in this study. Of the eligible participants, there were 13 males and 17 females. Four participants (two dyads, 13% of the total number of students) were students in the English 120 class (the first level of composition) during the fall of 2008; 12 participants (40%) attended English 120 in the spring of 2008. Four participants (13%) attended section one of English 121 (the second level of English composition) in the spring of 2009, while the remaining 10 participants (31%) attended section two of this class in the spring of 2009. This teacher-researcher taught the fall section of English 120 and section one of the spring English 121 class. Eight participants, or 27%, attended one of these classes.

The participants in this study were primarily Asian: 16 participants were Chinese (53%), one was Taiwanese (3%), one was Japanese (3%), four were Korean (13%), and one was Indian (3%). The Middle East was the second most common region represented. With four participants from this area, Middle Eastern students made up 13% of the participants. Three of these students (10%) were from Saudi Arabia and one was from Kuwait (3%). There were two South American

students (approximately 7%): one from Peru and one from Venezuela. Finally, there was one student from France (3%).

The students also varied in terms of the number of college semesters that they had completed up to this point. Five students (16%) were in their first semester of college and thus had not yet completed any semesters. 16 participants (53%) had completed one semester of college, and six participants (20%) had completed two semesters and were in their third. Two participants (.7%) had completed three or more semesters of college, and for one participant, this information was unknown.

There were also a wide range of majors within this group of participants. In total, these participants represented nine different majors. One participant was double majoring in Business and Theatre, and for one participant this information was unknown. Of the 30 participants, 8 were majoring in Accounting, 6 in Business or Finance, 7 in various Engineering fields, and two were majoring in Computer Science/Management Information Systems. Two participants were majoring in English Literature, one in Journalism, one in Physics, one in Biology, and one in Theatre.

The participants were also very diverse in terms of time spent in the US, years studying English, and prior experience with peer review. At the time of the study, the participants had spent an average of 1.4 years in the US, with a range of one month to five years. More striking, the participants exhibited a wide range of years studying English. Some had studied English for just one year, while one participant had studied the language for 25 years. The average number of years studying English for these participants was 8.2. During that time, most participants went through the peer review process: 25 of the 30 participants had participated in peer review either at this University or at another. 19 of the 25 experienced participants (76%) had participated in

peer review previously at this University, and 14 of those 19 students had participated in peer review only at this University (and not at another). Six of the ‘experienced’ participants (24%) had participated in the process at another University. Five of the participants had no prior experience with the process of peer review.

At this point it is important to note that, despite the apparent diversity of backgrounds (cultural, linguistic, and educational) within the participant set, all of these students either entered into or were tested into the same level of English composition. At this University, all freshmen students are required to take two sequential levels of English composition. Although students do not have to complete the classes in immediate succession, they must complete these classes in order to graduate. For international students, this entails the completion of English 120 and 121.

International students that take these classes come from a variety of educational backgrounds, and they study at this University for a variety of reasons. Many first come to the University in order to study English at the English Language Institute, an entity that is separate from the regular university. The students that complete the course of studies at the ELI—through Level 6, the highest level—do so in order to enroll in this or another American university as a regular student. However, the student may also decide to try to transition into regular-student status before completing Level 6 at the ELI. To do so, they may take the English Proficiency Placement Test in order to determine whether they can take regular-university English classes. They may take this test at any time, but they may only do so once. Students that enter English 120 from the ELI have placed into the class through this test, or they have completed Level 6 at the ELI. International students that have transferred from another University, whether it is within or outside of the US, must also take this placement test for English classes, as do “alternative”

non-native English speakers who are returning to school. Finally, non-native English speaking students that have completed some, or all, of their high school classes in the US must also take this test. Thus, while the participants in this study are diverse in terms of their cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds, they, like all students who are in EN 120/121 classes, have placed into this position through a placement test or through completion of the highest level of classes at the English Language Institute.

Data Collection

The data collection phase of this study lasted for approximately three weeks, spread out over two semesters. During this time, each class participated in a variety of tasks over four class periods. During the first class, the students were introduced, or reintroduced, to the concept of peer review and to the study at hand. This introduction followed the script found in Appendix A. Students were given the detailed procedures that participants would follow, in order to determine if they wanted to participate in the study. Students were also informed of the measures for maintaining confidentiality, the way in which to request a copy of the findings, and their option not to participate. Then the students were given a copy of the consent form (see Appendix A), at which time it was briefly reviewed. Students had time to ask questions during this and the following session, and were encourage to read the consent form at home and sign it if they desired to participate.

During the following class period, the forms were collected and any remaining questions were answered. Students who chose not to participate in the study declined the option of being recorded during their peer review exercise in the next class period, but still had to participate in the exercise as part of their course grade. At this time, all students were given guidelines for peer review, in order to help them identify and address potential problems in their peers' papers. (See

Appendix B for a copy of the guidelines.) These guidelines were adapted from a version used in native English-speaking composition classrooms, and changed slightly in order to meet the relative linguistic and academic needs of L2 writers. All students were expected to bring the first draft of their paper to this class period. Students who agreed to participate in the study were randomly paired; they exchanged papers. Students who chose not to participate in the study were also paired and also exchanged papers at this time.

During the third class period, students who agreed to participate in the study and had signed the consent forms were randomly paired and recorded for 20 minutes while reviewing each other's papers. They were able to choose the extent to which they wanted to refer to the guideline sheet during the recorded session. There was no teacher intervention during these sessions, nor did participants talk to students in other dyads. However, the participants were allowed to use dictionaries and translators throughout this process, and occasionally they chose to do so. After 20 minutes, the recorder was stopped and students were permitted to ask any remaining questions about the study or the activity. The students were assigned to bring a final draft of the paper the following class period. The students were discouraged from going to the Writing Center or soliciting any other forms of assistance on the paper.

Finally, on the fourth day of the treatment, students brought their final drafts to class. During this class period, participants were asked to reflect on the experience of peer review by filling out a follow-up questionnaire, the purpose of which was to gauge the participants' evaluations of the activity in a quantifiable way, as well as to gather demographic data. The questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes to complete. (See Appendix B for a copy of the questionnaire.) On this final day, participants were also asked to turn in the guideline sheet that their peer completed. Thus, during the course of data collection, each participant turned in five

types of data for analysis: a digital recording of the peer review session, a first draft of their paper, a second (and final) draft of their paper, a completed guideline sheet, and a follow-up questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Once collected, all of the data went through extensive analyses and comparisons. Demographic data were simply recorded, tabulated, and represented in statistical format. Many data analyses were performed using SPSS version 10.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL). Data analysis focused on the recorded peer review sessions, and each participant's two written drafts. The first step in the process of data analysis was to transcribe the recorded data: the first fifteen minutes of each peer review session were transcribed. The spoken data were then coded, based on the sociocognitive dimensions of interaction, as developed by de Guerrero and Villamil (1994). With Vygotskian sociocultural theory in mind, de Guerrero and Villamil (1994) applied several frameworks their data, for the following purposes: to codify the various language episodes that occurred during peer review, to identify the cognitive stages that were manifested, and to define the social relationships that developed during the session. In that study, language episodes were first coded as on-task, about-task, or off-task. The on-task episodes were then labeled as one of the following: "reader/writer interactive revisions, reader non-interactive revisions, writer non-interactive revisions" (p. 486).

In the present study, the language episodes were also coded as on-task, about-task, or off-task. On-task episodes were those during which the dyad discussed elements of the drafts before them by offering positive feedback or constructive criticism. Instances of reading the student draft aloud were also considered to be on-task episodes. About-task episodes were defined as those episodes in which the students discussed something related to the draft, but not directly

pertaining to the draft itself. This included discussion of the peer review task, the objectives or rules for the task or for the class, the demands of the task or class, the grammatical rules of English, or the meta-text that a participant analyzed in his or her paper. Episodes that were labeled as about-task were not subject to any further analysis. Finally, off-task episodes were defined as any language episodes in which the participants strayed away from the activity at hand and discussed other, unrelated matters. These episodes were not subjected to any further analysis.

All “on-task” episodes were subject to further coding, in order to gain a more comprehensive picture of the interactions that occurred during the sessions. First, on-task episodes were coded according to whether the participants were discussing global or local issues. Global issues were defined as organization, content, or recurring lexico-syntactic problems, while local issues were defined as word-level problems (either semantic or syntactic), punctuation, some sentence-level problems (including starting a new sentence or combining two sentence into one) and problems with writing conventions (including punctuation, spacing, titles, etc.). Although these episodes could have constituted either positive or constructive commentary, the present study focused on the constructive criticism, including specific revisions, general critiques, and suggestions for improvement.

All on-task suggestions were then coded according to their degree of interaction, in order to understand whether the participants were simply doling out suggestions and instructions, or whether they were actually negotiating their suggestions. In order to gain an accurate and detailed understanding of the quantity and quality of interactions that occurred during these sessions, each on-task suggestion was labeled as one of the following: reader non-interactive, basic interactive, or negotiated. Reader non-interactive episodes were those in which one party

gave their comments or critiques without input from their partner, the writer. Basically, the reader offered his or her opinion in monologue format. On-task suggestions that were labeled ‘basic interactive’ were those in which the reader offered his or her comments or suggestions, and the writer responded with simple backchanneling cues (‘uh-huh,’ ‘yea’ or ‘yah,’ and ‘mhm’), immediate agreement, or laughter. In these episodes, the reader did most of the talking, and the writer responded in an immediate or superficial way. While there is interaction, there is no negotiation of meaning between the two participants. Finally, on-task suggestions could also be labeled as ‘negotiated’; this label reflects a situation in which the two participants were actively seeking to build or clarify meaning (regarding either the text or the conversation). The negotiations did not necessarily have to be successful in order to be labeled as such; indeed, this determination would have been speculative at best. Instead, episodes that contain negotiation represent an *opportunity* for one or both participants to come to a deeper or more tangible understanding of a problematic language element.

In order to analyze the written data, the first and second drafts from each participant were compared, and Mendonca and Johnson’s (1994) labeling matrix was applied to the second draft from each participant. In their study, Mendonca and Johnson (1994) classified each element of the participants’ final drafts as either “(a)Revised/Peer Review (R/PR), (b)Not Revised/Peer Review (NR/PR), and (c) Revised/Not in Peer Review (R/NPR)” (p. 751).

For the written data, changes made to the draft were evaluated in terms of how well the changes conformed to the standards and expectations of written English in a university-level ESL classroom. The changes were first identified and noted on the final draft. The changes were then categorized in one of three ways: positive, neutral, or negative. Local-level, grammatical changes were fairly self-evident in terms of whether they reflected improvement on the final

draft. Those revisions that changed word, phrase, or sentence from non-native to native-like grammatical usage were considered positive, while those that changed already native-like grammatical usage to another form of native-like usage (for example, 'the author uses' v. 'the author is using') or from one non-native-like grammatical usage to another, were considered neutral. Finally, those revisions that changed native-like grammatical forms to non-native like forms, or further confused a non-native-like grammatical form, were considered negative.

Global changes were evaluated in the same way: changes were identified and evaluated as positive, neutral, or negative. Again, the evaluation depended on whether (and to what extent) the revision neared the draft to the standards and expectations of the college-level academic writing classroom. However, it should be noted that evaluating changes to organization, content, and analysis is a more subjective process than simple grammatical evaluations. For this reason, raters were consulted to verify the coding of global-level revisions. Raters were also consulted to resolve problems with the coding, and to act as tie-breakers in the event that two raters found certain codifications particularly difficult to determine.

At this point, it is important to define the 'standards and expectations' of college-level academic writing classrooms such as those used in the present study. Although such standards and expectations may vary from school to school, and teacher to teacher, it is possible to generalize in the case of the four classes presented here. Two of the classes involved in this study were English 120: the first in a two-part series of ESL composition classes. In this class, students are taught how to write a variety of essays, in an effort to prepare them for the types of writing they might encounter in their later academic and professional careers. These essays may be persuasive, informative, evaluative, descriptive, argumentative, research-oriented, or analytical. Students were taught to organize their ideas and present them in the standard format of American

academic essays: introduction (including a thesis), body paragraphs (offering support for the thesis) and a conclusion. At the paragraph level, students are taught to introduce their essays with attention-getting openings, effective transitions and topic sentences, and thoughtful conclusions that reiterate their main point. Finally, at the sentence-, phrase- and word-level, the students' grammatical problems are evaluated through error analysis, and major problems are addressed through classroom instruction. Thus, grammar instruction varies greatly from teacher to teacher and class to class; it depends on the needs of the students. However, in general, the goal of grammatical instruction is to help the students identify, understand, and produce native-sounding words, phrases, and sentences. Problems that are common to the ESL population, including subject-verb agreement, the use of prepositions, the use of articles, and the use of academic language, are common topics for grammar-based instruction in these classes.

After being identified and codified, the spoken and written data were then compared, in order to gauge the extent to which the participants used the suggestions from the spoken data in making revisions to their written drafts, and the extent to which they used this advice effectively. First, changes to the written drafts were correlated to suggestions made during the peer review session. It is critical to note here that changes made to the drafts and suggestions offered during the peer review session were simply *correlated*. From the data available in this study, one cannot determine definitively whether the participant intentionally used his or her partner's suggestion to make changes to his or her draft. This data alone cannot determine causation; rather it can simply reveal correlations between the sets of data, the frequencies of these correlations, and the situations in which these correlations arise.

That being said, if the participant made changes to his or her draft that correlated to suggestions made during the session, and the change was coded as "positive," then it was

determined that that particular suggestion was effective and beneficial to the final draft. If the change was correlated to a suggestion made during the session, but was coded as “neutral,” then the suggestion was considered “neutral” as well. If the change correlated to a suggestion but was coded as “negative,” the suggestion was considered ineffective or not beneficial. If the change did not correlate to a suggestion, it was considered “writer-initiated” and thus categorized separately. “Writer-initiated” changes were later evaluated as positive, neutral, or negative, and the results were tabulated. If suggestions during the peer review session were ignored, they were noted as such, and no further analysis was done on them. While the relationships between the written data and the spoken data are correlative at best, the types of changes that participants made after peer review, and the frequency of these changes, indicate that the two sets of data are indeed closely related.

For both sets of data, extensive coding was involved to determine how the dyads interacted, how participants changed their drafts, and how the interactions influenced the changes. In order to verify the codifications of the spoken data, random samples were shown to a total of five graduate students: three in the TESOL program, and two non-TESOL English majors. The five raters were given specific directions regarding how to code the data (both spoken and written). (See Appendix C for the directions and copies of the transcripts.) In order to rate the spoken data, each rater received an example transcript that was already coded, and three transcripts to code. (Also see Appendix C for these directions.) The transcripts that the raters coded were then compared to the existing data. Each rater also received an example set of student drafts that were already annotated for changes and evaluated in terms of the effectiveness of the change (i.e., the positivity rating). The raters then had to use the directions and example to evaluate three additional sets of student drafts. Their evaluations were later compared to existing

evaluations in order to determine the agreement to the first evaluations. A high level of agreement likely indicated that the first rating was accurate. The raters had one week to complete their analyses.

Each participant also reflected on their experience in peer review through a follow-up questionnaire, given during the class period after the peer review session occurred. The participants then answered a variety of questions about the benefits, ease, and effectiveness of peer review. For each question, participants answered on a graded scale. For example, the participants were first asked how beneficial they thought the exercise was for their current paper. A brief definition of 'beneficial' was offered. ('By 'beneficial,' I mean, do you think you can use your partner's suggestions and comments to improve your paper? To what extent do you think these comments and suggestions will be beneficial?') Participants chose one of the following answers: 'not beneficial,' 'somewhat beneficial,' 'pretty beneficial,' or 'very beneficial.' Other questions included those about how effectively participants felt they expressed themselves, understood their partner, and conversed with their partner. Each of the answers was coded with a number, from 1-4, with 1 correlating to 'not beneficial.' During statistical analysis, each question was converted into a category, and the scores for each category were averaged. The scores were also averaged for each participant.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

General

The following section presents the analyses of the spoken and written data from each participant, as well as a comparison between the two sets of data, in order to determine whether interactions during peer review correlate to positive changes on later drafts. These results are presented quantitatively and qualitatively, in order to gain a clear and comprehensive picture of the substance and effect of peer review. Additionally, results from student feedback will be presented in quantitative form, and compared to the findings from the spoken and written data, in order to determine how student attitude correlated to peer review interactions and to subsequent changes on written drafts. The purpose of this analysis was to determine answers to the following research questions:

1. What types of interaction occur between dyads of ESL students engaged in peer review?
2. How do these interactions affect the written drafts?
3. Do interactions between ESL dyads engaged in peer review create successful revisions (changes)?
4. Is peer review an effective classroom activity for ESL students in this type of context?

Spoken Data

During the peer review activity, each dyad had the opportunity to interact and discuss the participants' papers for 20 minutes of class time. During this time, the participants were recorded,

and the teacher did not intervene in these sessions. The first 15 minutes of each recording was transcribed and coded in various ways.

Quantitative Results

First, each language episode (each topic or suggestion) was coded as on-task, about-task, or off-task. As the Table 1 shows, the participants produced 341 total language episodes, which is equivalent to roughly 23 language episodes per dyad or 11 language episodes per participant. Of these language episodes, a significant percent were on-task (264 episodes, or 77% of all episodes). This signifies that the students mainly discussed strengths, weaknesses, and possible changes regarding the written drafts (either their draft or their partner's draft).

During approximately 22% of the language episodes (74 episodes total), students discussed matters related to, but not directly affecting, the written drafts. In these about-task episodes, students discussed the requirements of the peer review activity, the requirements of the assignment, or matters relating to the class or the teacher. In some cases, students were discussing a meta-text on which their draft was based. For students in the English 121 classes (in which argument and argument analysis is taught), meta-texts activity included the essay "Mother Tongue" by Amy Tan, and/or the movie The Butterfly Effect (2004). A paired samples test indicated a significant difference between the on-task episodes and the about-task episodes, with a p value of .000.

During the remaining 3 episodes (.08% of the total episodes), students discussed off-task matters. Paired samples tests comparing off-task episodes with on-task episodes, and off-task episodes with about-task episodes, indicated that in both cases there were significant differences between the off-task episodes and the other two types. In each comparison, $p = .000$. For this set of data, the outside raters agreed with the original codifications in 87% of cases.

Table 1

Episode Types

Task Type	Episode	% of Total	Avg. # Per Dyad
On-task	264	77	18
About-task	74	22	5
Off-task	3	.08	.2
Total	341		23

The following analysis pertains specifically to the on-task episodes. Of 265 total episodes, the dyads discussed various topics and each partner offered various suggestions for revision. For the purposes of this study, ‘topics’ were defined as discussion and/or evaluation in which one participant offered positive feedback to the other. At the outset of the study, participants were told that both positive and negative commentary were acceptable forms of feedback during peer review. This was done in order to make some students less apprehensive about the exercise, and to show all students that peer review does not have to be entirely negative or critical in order to be helpful. Instead, students were free to offer any type of feedback, and were encouraged to offer the type of feedback that they felt would be most helpful to their partner. However, as the research questions in this study indicate, the scope of this investigation is limited to interactions that could potentially produce revisions: criticism and suggestions. While the content and effect of positive feedback would be interesting for future research, it is outside of the bounds of the current study.

Thus, the current study focused on on-task language episodes that consisted of criticism and/or suggestions for revision. Of 264 on-task language episodes, 188 of these episodes (71% of on-task episodes or 55% of total episodes) produced criticisms or suggestions. Thus, more than

half of the total episodes, and more than two-thirds of the on-task episodes, were on-task suggestions for revision. These results indicate that this type of feedback very important in peer review. The number of on-task suggestions averaged to approximately 12.5 suggestions per dyad, or 6.3 suggestions per participant. Table 2 summarizes these results.

Table 2

On-task Suggestions

Language Data	Per Dyad	Total
# On-task Suggestions	188	12.5
% On-task Suggestions	71	
# On-task Episodes	18	264

Further analysis of the on-task suggestion episodes was also carried out, in order to understand the content of these episodes. First, the on-task episodes involving suggestions for revision were analyzed in terms of the level of suggestion. As previously described, participants suggested changes at one of two levels: local or global. (Global issues were defined as organization, content, or recurring lexico-syntactic problems. Local issues were defined as word-level problems—either semantic or syntactic—punctuation, some sentence-level problems—including starting a new sentence or combining two sentence into one—and problems with writing conventions, including punctuation, spacing, titles, etc.) The other raters coded 65% of the following data in an identical way.

Table 3

Level of Revision for On-task Suggestions

Level of Revision	Per Dyad	Total
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Table 3

Level of Revision for On-task Suggestions

Level of Revision	Per Dyad	Total
Global	6.1	92
Local	6.4	96
# On-task Suggestions	12.5	188

As the table indicates, there was a slightly higher number of local-level suggestions than global-level suggestions for participants in this study. Indeed, of the total episodes, 28% were local-level suggestions, while 27% were global-level suggestions. In terms of all of the on-task episodes, 36% were local-level suggestions, while 35% were at the global-level. Finally, in terms of the on-task suggestions, 51% (slightly more than half) were local-level, while 49% were at the global level. However, these differences were not statistically significant.

The on-task suggestions were also analyzed in terms of the extent of interactions that the suggestions manifested. Interactions were conceptualized in three ways: as reader non-interactive suggestions (in which the reader simply instructed the writer as to which changes to make), as basic interactions (in which one person offered suggestions and the other replied with backchanneling cues, immediate agreement, laughter, etc.) or as negotiations of meaning. Table 4 presents the interaction data for the on-task suggestions. As the data show, the dyads had the highest rate of negotiated suggestions, followed by basic interactive suggestions, and then reader non-interactive suggestions.

Table 4

Level of Interaction for On-task Suggestions

Table 4

Level of Interaction for On-task Suggestions

Interaction Type	# Per Dyad	Total #
Reader Non-Interactive	1.9	28
Basic Interactive	4.7	70
Negotiated	5.7	86
# On-task Suggestions	12.5	188

From this table it is evident that suggestions that were negotiated (and therefore interactive as well) were most frequent, at 46% of all on-task suggestions, 33% of all on-task episodes, and 25% of all episodes. The second most frequent type of suggestion was the basic interactive suggestion, which constituted 37% of all on-task suggestions, 27% of all on-task episodes, and 21% of all episodes. There was a statistically significant difference between the number of reader non-interactive suggestions and negotiated suggestions ($p=.002$), as well as the number of reader non-interactive suggestions and basic interactive suggestions ($p=.008$). Furthermore, by combining the basic interactive and negotiated suggestions, it is evident that these types of suggestions are far more common than reader non-interactive suggestions. There are almost six times as many suggestions that are basic interactive or negotiated as there are reader non-interactive. Indeed, with 156 total on-task interactive suggestions (to any degree), these types of suggestions constitute 83% of all on-task suggestions, 59% of all on-task episodes, and 46% of all episodes. Outside rater coded 74% of the random samples of spoken data (as reader non-interactive, basic interactive, or negotiated) in a way that was identical to the original codifications.

From these data, several conclusions can be drawn. First, participants in this study largely stayed on-task, and had very few instances of off-task discussion. Of these on-task episodes,

more than two-thirds were suggestions, meaning that participants made a generous number of suggestions, while still incorporating positive feedback. It also appears that these suggestions were split evenly between local-level and global-level types of feedback, with a slightly greater number of suggestions at the local level. Finally, we can deduce that these suggestions were largely interactive to some degree, with the highest percentage of suggestions being negotiated. In other words, as participants made suggestions and discussed problems at both the local and global levels, they did so through ongoing engagement and interaction. They sought to build meaning and clarify misunderstandings during peer review. (The other raters coded 75% of the random samples of spoken data in a way identical to the original codifications, indicating a high level of agreement amongst the raters..)

Qualitative Results.

The following examples of these conversations offer an insight into the types of exchanges that the dyads manifested during the peer review session. In the first example, two students in an English 120 class have an on-task exchange:

Raul: Of course, perfect. Cause, a lot of problems to him that...blackouts...eh (pause)
We use...it's anything, as we said, there are different kind of tesis statements...or main themes...and, remember, then we were talking about last papers that we did: don't say the same sentence, main sentence again. 'Is another major factor,' or... 'the first problem is this one,' 'the second' ahhh... 'another reason because of'...blah blah blah. Don't say that—try to...to say something a little... 'mailbox explosion...well...as one of the factors...that...Evan...that affect Evan during his childhood...comma cause stress to him'—I—what I tell you, don't use—don't use these words, 'another,' 'is another factor' because could be—uhh that—that you say, well, 'one, two, three,' and—I don't know—what I'm trying to say—not try to...uh, let me figure out what I try to tell you—

Aban: --ah, like, what I am—what—

Raul: --you say here, 'one main factor'—that's pretty good, but that's a—this is a good main sentence, see, because uh, this part of the first topic that you are talking about—that is the blackouts that Evan has—exits—then, try to figure out another sentence here, a main sentence here, but not—not—don't say, 'another factor' or 'the second factor' or...you know what I say?

As the example shows, this on-task exchange centered on topic sentences, and the ways in which to make the vocabulary in specific topic sentences more varied. This dyad was highly interactive, with 17 suggestions and, of those, 11 suggestions that involved interaction (either basic interaction or, in 6 instances, negotiation). The next dyad exhibited the highest number of about-task episodes (10 episodes). In the following example, the dyad discusses sentence-level organization in an about-task episode:

Wen: And your audience has to be the last sentence?

Saad: Not your audience, that's the thesis—

Wen: --but I mean—yea, your thesis have to be the last sentence of your passage?

Saad: Ahh should be the last sentence, or the first sentence.

Wen: I mean, like, last semester I was in this—ah English course, and the teacher says, 'It's not necessary to be'—

Saad: It's not necessary, but it's better. Like you—here, in this situation, that's right.

Wh—you put, you put the ah the audience before the thesis, which is not good. The audience should be before your thesis, before you explain what you're gonna talk about. That's the only reason why I say you have to put at the end, in your situation here.

Wen: Yea, that's definitely better.

Although the pair exhibited many about-task episodes, they also had a much higher number of total episodes (28) than the average (22.7). During these episodes, 15 suggestions were made, which is also slightly above the average of 12.5 per dyad. As mentioned earlier, off-task episodes constituted those episodes in which the dyads discussed matters unrelated to the paper or activity at hand. With only three such episodes in the entire study, the effects of such interactions are negligible.

During 71% of the on-task episodes, participants offered criticisms or made suggestions about elements of their partner's paper. These suggestions pertained to either local-level problems or global-level problems. In the following example, Min offered her partner Bao three local-level suggestions:

Min: Ah, okay... you do have some uh words spelt uh wrongly, such as, this—I think this should be used in uh, singular. Maybe like is a common...uh...like a phrase? Yea, so, I think you don't need to uhh write it in plural, yea. And this one, "...language is a mirror..."—I think 'of' is right—this too—mirror—uh, uh—"...language is a mirror of people day to day life." But, probably it is right...that's uh, my—my opinion. So if—if—if you don't think I put...right, you don't need to put...
Bao: I don't which one is right [laughs]
Min: Cuz I think 'of' is better, and there—here—"one of them"—
Bao: --"happened"—oh, okay.

Later analysis revealed that Min ignored or forgot the first suggestion in this dialogue, and left the word in question in singular form. However, Min made two changes that correlated to the other two suggestions, and did so to the benefit of her paper. Other students seemed to benefit greatly from global-level suggestions, such as the one that the following dyad discussed:

Chun: ...and your sentence structure is also m pretty...umm...m here's your changed sentence pattern, always, but uhh in my opinion, I guess um, the sentences is kind of lock—locker? Mmmm...
Xia: Too longer?
Chun: Ah, yea, kind of longer. Uhhh, I guess if you put it shorter, will try to put it much more...clearly. It can make your essay much...stronger—I'm not sure, but just my opinion....

In this example, Chun advised her partner Xia to vary her sentence structures throughout the paper. This suggestion correlated to successful changes on the final draft. Interestingly, this example also shows negotiation of meaning during the conversation; Chun had difficulty either remembering or pronouncing 'long' or 'longer,' and Xia supplied the phrase that they could both understand. This type of interaction was also common as it related to issues or problems in the student drafts.

However, not all of the dyads offered interactive or negotiated episodes. Indeed, some peer review sessions were almost devoid of interaction, despite the fact that one or both sides

offered extensive feedback. Such cases typify the category of “reader non-interactive” suggestions, as in the following example:

Yasir: ...Ummm...um, in your first draft, I found right here, in this sentence—I don’t know, it seems like could be a true sentence, I mean a correct sentence, but I think it would be better if you had added, um, a verb, between that word from the end, “lay.” Uh, as I told you, thought about. I think the same—the same thing with the uhhh the second paragraph—I think you have started with the topic sentence, but, exactly almost the same words are in the thesis statement. So I found this—eh, it’s not a mistake, but I found it uh—repeated in every paragraph, I have found, also that—that thing in the third paragraph. Ah you—you uh, just put the uh, third statement that—that topic sentence, so I think, it’s better for you but change it, just to give it like um, beautiful picture or more interesting...

These types of episodes were rare in the data; there were only 28 total instances of reader non-interactive suggestions. (This constituted 15% of the total on-task suggestions, 11% of the on-task episodes, and only 8% of the total episodes.) Interestingly, this interaction produced seven positive changes in Chin’s—Yasir’s partner’s—final paper, zero neutral changes and two negative changes. This is very close to the average for all of the participants.

However, most sessions exhibited few reader non-interactive episodes. Many peer review sessions were interactive on a basic level. The following dyad offered an example of basic interaction as Ling expressed her concern about Ann’s transitions:

Ling: Between four and—one, two, three—between four and five, this two paragraph, there’s no tra—transition word—

Ann: --okay—

Ling: --there’s no um, transition sen—sentence. So I—I think uhhh—maybe you can write some like—this is just uh...umm...here.

A simple response of ‘okay’ was common throughout all of the data, and thus necessitated a closer look at the interactions involved in peer review. In the following example, the pair discussed a suggestion more interactively; in fact, they negotiated the local-level suggestion:

Lin: I think here we can choose another one...another...[pause]...Uh, here...spelling?
Kwan: [unclear]
Lin: Oh, no—the “chose,” “chose Korea.” I think it’s ‘c-h-o-o-s-e.’
Kwan: It’s past tense though—it’s past, when I chose the past I chose the Korean language.
Lin: Ohh.

As the example obviates, it is not always clear when these negotiations are resolved or whether the suggestions will be implemented into the draft. Indeed, an analysis of Kwan’s draft revealed that, in context, he used the correct tense of the verb and the correct spelling in the first draft, and that he did not change the second draft in this regard. However, such instances can be important for raising the writer’s consciousness to potential problems, including problems with spelling or verb tenses.

As these statistics and examples show, there were a wide variety of types of language episodes during the peer review interactions in this study. Participants stayed mostly on-task; however, they also used about-task episodes to clarify their understanding of the assignment, the peer review activity, or the class. Of the on-task episodes, most were suggestions that addressed both local and global-level problems at almost the same rate. Finally, most of these suggestions were basic interactive and/or negotiated, as participants sought to explain their choices or understand the suggestion that their partner offered.

Written Data

After discussing each other’s drafts during peer review, students had the opportunity to incorporate their partner’s suggestions (and make their own changes) on their final drafts. Each participant had approximately five days to revise their drafts. They were asked not to go to the Writing Center nor ask other people to read their papers during that time.

Prior to explicating the written data, it should be noted that these data exhibited a few anomalies. First, one set of drafts (‘Raul’s’) was lost during data collection. In order to keep his

partner's drafts in the study, all of the other data that this participant produced was kept in the study (i.e., his demographic data, the recording of their session, and his response to the peer review activity). Secondly, one participant ('Chun') rewrote her entire draft completely, complicating the matter of how to quantify the changes. The data from her drafts were also left out of the written data analysis. Finally, it should be noted that two of the participants received no suggestions or input from their partner (because the peer review sessions were one-sided, and the partner did not have an opportunity to offer his or her suggestions). However, the peer review sessions varied widely in terms of time spent on each participant's draft, and the type and level of the interactions. No participant received input that fulfilled all of the various categorizations; in fact, as the spoken data indicate, most of the suggestions tended to be interactive to some degree, and few were non-interactive. Therefore, because of the great variation in the type of input received by the participants, the written data from the participants who did not receive any suggestions or input remained in the study.

Thus, out of 30 participants, the written data from 28 participants were evaluated for the quantity and quality of changes made to their drafts as a result of peer review. Each participant turned in a rough and a final draft. The changes on the final draft were identified and coded in three ways: as peer-reviewed or writer-initiated, as positive, neutral, or negative, and according to level (local or global). For the purposes of this study, 'writer-initiated' changes were defined as those not discussed in the peer review activity. Although it is possible that the participant incorporated suggested changes that their partner *wrote* on the rough draft but that were not discussed during the peer review, such delineations were impossible to determine. Further, as these potential changes were not discussed, they would not have reflected the effects of interaction, and as such were considered to be outside the bounds of the study.

Quantitative Results

In total, the 28 final drafts exhibited 628 changes. Table 5 presents the number of changes according to whether they correlated to suggestions made during the peer review session or whether they appeared to be writer-initiated:

Table 5

Changes from Rough to Final Drafts

Type of Change	Total #	% of Total Changes
Writer-Initiated Changes	483	77
Peer-Reviewed Changes	145	23

Thus, it is evident from this table that a great majority of the changes to the rough drafts were most likely writer-initiated. In this study, 77% of the total changes were writer-initiated, and 23% correlated with peer-reviewed suggestions. These percentages were statistically significant ($p=.047$).

However, the number of writer-initiated or peer-reviewed changes alone does not indicate the quality of such changes. Changes were rated as ‘positive,’ ‘neutral,’ or ‘negative,’ according to the affect that they had on the resulting draft, and whether or not the change advanced the paper towards the standards and expectations of the assignment. (See Chapter 3 for a discussion of this rating system.) Table 6 offers a breakdown of the quality of the changes in relation to their likely origin (writer-initiated or peer-reviewed). For example, row 1 shows that of the total number of writer-initiated changes, 69% were positive, and of the total number of peer-reviewed changes, 87% were positive.

Table 6

Positivity Rating of Changes

Table 6

Positivity Rating of Changes

Positivity Rating	Writer-Initiated Changes	Peer-Reviewed Changes
% Positive	69	87
% Neutral	19	10
% Negative	12	3

According to SPSS, there was a statistically significant difference between each of these categories. Comparisons of the positive and neutral categories, and the positive and negative categories both resulted in $p = .000$. Comparisons of the neutral and negative categories resulted $p = .034$. The outside raters evaluated 69% of these data in a way identical to the original codifications, indicating a high level of agreement amongst the raters about these data.

Table 7 shows the positivity ratings in relationship to the total number of changes made (628). Thus, for example, row 1 shows that of the total number of changes made (both writer-initiated and peer-reviewed), 53% were writer-initiated, positive changes.

Table 7

Percentages of Total Changes by Type

Positivity Rating	% of Total Changes	
	Writer-Initiated Changes	Peer-Reviewed Changes
Positive	53	20
Neutral	15	2
Negative	9	.06

Thus, it is evident from these data that not only are writer-initiated changes far more common than those that correlate to peer-reviewed suggestions, there is a greater percentage of writer-initiated positive changes than of positive changes that correlate to peer-review

suggestions (as shown in Table 7). However, it is important to note that when the two categories are compared (as in Table 6), there is a greater percentage of positive peer-reviewed changes than positive writer-initiated changes, and there are greater percentages of neutral and negative changes that are linked to writer-initiation. Thus, while initiating their own changes appeared to be more popular for and more common amongst these participants, discussing changes during peer review correlated to a higher percentage of positive changes, and lower percentages of neutral and negative changes.

Another element to the changes made to the rough drafts is the level of change. As previously indicated in Table 3, the average numbers of local and global-level suggestions are approximately the same for the two categories. These suggestions resulted in 145 changes (as shown in Table 5). Table 8 shows the number of changes that correlated to suggestions of each level:

Table 8

Changes by Level

Level	# of Suggestions	# of Correlated Changes
Local	96	35
Global	92	110

In terms of the number of changes that correlated to peer-reviewed suggestions, these data indicates that 24% appeared to be at the local level and 76% appeared to be at the global level. This means that although the number of suggestions was approximately the same between the two levels, the participants either implemented more global suggestions than local suggestions, or these global suggestions led to a greater number of changes than did local

suggestions. Most likely, global suggestions correlated to more changes than did local suggestions because one global suggestion could correlate to multiple changes.

It is also important to consider the quality of the changes at these levels. Table 9 displays the number of positive, neutral, and negative changes as they correlate to the local- and global-level suggestions.

Table 9

Positivity Rating by Level

Level	# Positive Changes	# Neutral Changes	# Negative Changes
Local	27	7	1
Global	99	7	4

In terms of percentages, it appears that the category for global-level changes correlated the highest percent of positive changes (both within the category and for all changes produced). Positive global-level changes resulted in 90% of the total global changes and 68% of the total changes. Local-level changes were positive 77% of the time; however, these positive changes constituted only 19% of the total changes produced. It is important to note that changes to both the local and global levels correlated to mostly positive changes, and that the local level correlated to a much higher percentage of neutral changes (20%) than did the global level (6%). The two levels correlated to the same percentage of negative changes (approximately 3% of the total changes produced).

Indeed, positive changes constituted 73% of the total changes, or 458 changes. Further, positive changes constituted 87% of the number of peer-reviewed changes (145). (As noted earlier, this is greater than the 69% of positive, writer-initiated changes.) It sum, it appears that most changes made to the drafts were positive, and that the changes were more likely to be positive if they correlated with peer-review interaction. Further, 29% of positive changes were

correlated with local-level changes, while 71% of positive changes were correlated with global-level changes. Thus, it appears that global level suggestions correlated to a higher number of positive changes than did local level suggestions, even though the number of suggestions was approximately the same between the two levels.

Qualitative Results

Examples of such changes can serve to elucidate these differences. Much of the time, writers appeared to initiate their own changes, and these changes occurred at various levels. In the following example, Aban, an English 120 student, was analyzing the movie The Butterfly Effect (2004). He made several effective changes:

Version 1: Killing Evan's dog is also a significant factor that Evan faces during his childhood. Tommy sees Evan when he kisses his sister Kaylee. Therefore, it leads Tommy to put Evan's dog in a bag and burns the dog as a way to keep Evan away from his sister.

Version 2: *The death of* Evan's dog is also a significant factor that Evan faces during his childhood *that causes his blackouts. When they were about twelve,* Tommy sees Evan *kissing* his sister Kaylee. Therefore, it leads Tommy to put Evan's dog in a bag and *burn* the dog as a way to keep Evan away from his sister.

These various changes improve the quality of the paragraph. By changing 'killing' to 'the death of,' and by changing 'when he kisses' to 'kissing,' the author approaches more idiomatic language that is also more accurate to the movie. By inserting an adverbial of time ('When they were about twelve'), the author makes the information more specific. Finally, the grammatical change of 'burns' to 'burn' reflects subject-verb agreement.

While these changes are positive, a higher percentage of writer-initiated changes are neutral and negative, compared to changes that correlate to peer-reviewed suggestions. In the following example, Ling appears to be using peer suggestions to improve her thesis statement in her analysis of the movie The Butterfly Effect (2004):

Version 1: In the movie he protected his girlfriend Kaylee and helped her to be a normal girl, he became a disabled person by saving the woman and the baby and changed destiny when the first time he and his girlfriend met each other, because he chose to go back and give himself and his friends a better life.

Version 2: In the movie, *because he chose to go back and give himself and his friends a better life*, he protected his girlfriend Kaylee and helped her to be a normal girl, he became a disabled person by saving the woman and the baby, and changed destiny when the first time he and his girlfriend met each other,

Although not perfect, this example represents an improvement in the structure of the thesis statement. By putting a list of three scenarios end of the sentence (instead of in the middle), the reader has a better idea of what Ling is going to analyze in the rest of the paper.

Writers can improve their papers on both the global and local levels, and it seems that the participants in this study produce a greater number of changes due to global suggestions, and that a higher percentage of these changes are positive than those correlating to local level suggestions. In the following example, Wei has rewritten the beginning of his introduction paragraph, according to the global suggestions of his partner Saad. In this paper, he was analyzing the argument in the essay “Mother Tongue,” by Amy Tan:

Version 1: Growing up with her mother’s input of “imperfect English,” Tan still end up becoming a writer, instead. In some way this mother tongue has become their language of intimacy, and it is vivid, direct, and full of observation and imagery that helped they way she views things, expresses herself, and finally helped her to become one of the beloved writers.

Version 2: *In the essay “Mother Tongue,” Tan argued she used all the language she grew up with. And her mother’s “limited” or “imperfect” English has not prevented her from pursuing a career as a writer, instead in some way this mother tongue has become their language of intimacy. And it is vivid, direct, and full of observation and imagery that helped the way she views things, expresses her, and finally helped her to become one of the accomplished writers.*

In accordance with his partner’s suggestions to identify the argument in Tan’s essay, and to put the argument at the beginning of his paper, Wei has made positive changes to his

introductory paragraph. He also heeded his partner's more abstract advice of clarifying his introduction, and his partner's suggestion to make the neutral change of 'beloved' to 'accomplished'.

Finally, local-level suggestions can result in positive changes, but for this group of participants, this is not as true as it is for global suggestions. However, in the following example, Hua followed the suggestions of his partner and made positive, local-level changes to his process analysis of cooking a certain dish:

Version 1: Then slice them using your knife. You should also cut the green onions and ginger root into small slices and eventually put all the green onions and ginger root on your knife preparing for the frying. When it comes to the lettuce, just pick the leaves out of it separately.

Version 2: Then slice them *with* your knife. You should also cut the green onions and ginger root into small slices and *eventually prepare for frying*. When it comes to *the head of* the lettuce, just pick the leaves *off it* separately.

While some of the changes that Hua's partner suggested resulted in neutral outcomes ('with' instead of 'using,' and the addition of 'the head of' to lettuce), other local suggestions resulted in positive outcomes. This includes the simplification of 'eventually put all the green onions and ginger root on your knife' to 'eventually prepare' and dropping the definite article 'the' before 'frying'.

Comparison of Spoken and Written Data

As noted above, each language episode was coded in terms of whether it was on-task, about-task, or off-task. The subsequent analysis focused on on-task episodes that constituted suggestions. Additionally, the written data were coded in terms of whether the changes evidenced on the final draft had a positive, neutral, or negative impact on that draft. For both spoken and written data, the outside raters gave ratings identical to the original ratings 72% of

the time. This indicates a high level of agreement amongst the raters regarding how the data should have been coded. In the following analysis, the sets of data are compared to determine which levels of suggestion and which types of interaction correlated to the which types of changes to the rough drafts.

Quantitative Results

The written and spoken data were first compared in order to determine which level of suggestion correlated with more positive results. Of 341 episodes, 264 were on-task (77%) and 188 of those on-task episodes were suggestions (71% of on-task episodes, 55% of all episodes). The suggestions were divided evenly between global and local foci. Table 10 presents the positivity ratings for changes that correlated to the local and global levels:

Table 10

Positivity Ratings by Level of Change

Rating	Total # of Changes	# Local Changes	% Local Changes	# Global Changes	% Global Changes
Positive	126	27	21	99	79
Neutral	14	7	50	7	50
Negative	5	1	20	4	80
Total	145	35	24	84	58

Thus, of 628 total changes, 145 correlated with peer-review suggestions, and of these, 126 were positive (87%), 14 were neutral (10%), and 5 were negative (3%). Global changes were associated with more positive and more negative results, and the two levels (global and local) produced the same number of neutral results. Global changes led to 99 positive changes (79% of all positive changes and half of all changes), while local changes produced only 27 positive changes (21% of all positive changes and 19% of all changes). Although global changes produced 80% of the negative results as well, the number of negative changes that resulted from

global changes was only four (of five total negative changes). These data show that global changes produced more positive results than local changes.

Additionally, as was determined earlier, global suggestions correlated to a greater number of changes than did local suggestions, even though there were the same numbers of global- and local-level suggestions. Thus, it is logical to determine that global *suggestions* correlated to a greater number of positive changes than did local suggestions; however, given that some suggestions could produce multiple changes, it is difficult to determine the exact percentage of each type of suggestions that correlated with positive changes. These data simply indicate that there were more global-level changes than local-level, and that the global-level changes were more often evaluated as positive compared to those changes at the local-level.

The written and spoken data were then compared to determine which level of interaction (reader non-interactive, basic interactive, or negotiated) produced more positive results. It is important to remember that the majority of the suggestions were interactive to some extent. Of 188 on-task suggestions, 159 suggestions (85%) were either basic interactive or negotiated. Of the 159 basic interactive or negotiated suggestions, 54% were negotiated and 46% were interactive at a more basic level. Of the total number of on-task suggestions, very few were reader non-interactive (only 29, or 15% of the on-task suggestions). Table 11 offers a synopsis of this information relative to the number of dyads and the number of participants in the study:

Table 11

Frequency of Types of Interactions (Suggestions)

Type of Suggestion	Per Dyad	Total
Reader Non-Interactive	1.9	29
Basic Interactive	4.7	73
Negotiated	5.7	86

Table 11

Frequency of Types of Interactions (Suggestions)

Type of Suggestion	Per Dyad	Total
Total # On-task	12.5	188

Table 12 offers these results relative to the total number of suggestions and the total number of episodes in all of the interactions:

Table 12

Frequency of Interactions (Suggestions) Relative to Totals

Type of Suggestion	# of Suggestions	% of Total Suggestions	% of Total Episodes
Reader Non-Interactive	29	15	9
Basic Interactive	73	39	21
Negotiated	86	46	25

A comparison of the two sets of data indicated that, as Table 13 shows, the negotiated category exhibited the greatest number of positive changes (which correlated with on-task, peer-reviewed suggestions). The basic interactive category exhibits the second highest number of positive changes, while the reader non-interactive category exhibits the lowest number of positive changes.

Table 13

Positive Changes by Interaction Type

Type of Suggestion	# Positive Changes	% of PR Changes	% of Total Changes
Reader Non-Interactive	28	19	4
Basic Interactive	46	32	7

Table 13

Positive Changes by Interaction Type

Type of Suggestion	# Positive Changes	% of PR Changes	% of Total Changes
Negotiated	52	36	8
Total	126	87	20

Regarding neutral changes, Table 14 shows that negotiated suggestions during peer review also correlated with the highest number of such changes; however, these suggestions are linked to a very low percentage of neutral changes within the total number of peer reviewed changes.

Table 14

Neutral Changes by Interaction Type

Type of Suggestion	# Neutral Changes	% of PR Changes	% of Total Changes
Reader Non-Interactive	0	0	0
Basic Interactive	5	3	.07
Negotiated	9	6	1
Total	14	9	2

Finally, Table 15 shows that there was a very low percentage of negative changes overall, and that each category correlated with just one or two such changes.

Table 15

Negative Changes by Interaction Type

Type of Suggestion	# Negative Changes	% of PR Changes	% of Total Changes
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Table 15

Negative Changes by Interaction Type

Type of Suggestion	# Negative Changes	% of PR Changes	% of Total Changes
Reader Non-Interactive	2	1	.03
Basic Interactive	2	1	.03
Negotiated	1	.06	.001
Total	5	3	.07

Thus, it is evident from the above tables that negotiated suggestions correlated with the highest percentage of positive, peer-reviewed changes, although these types of changes constituted a small percentage of the total changes. Significantly, peer-reviewed interactions and negotiations correlated with very few neutral and negative changes. When considering suggestions from both types of interaction together, the positive effects of any type of interaction are even more apparent: together, the two types of interactions correlated with 98 positive changes, or 68% of peer-reviewed changes, and 16% of the total changes. Reader non-interactive suggestions correlated to 28 positive changes, or 19% of peer-reviewed changes and only 4% of the total number of changes.

As noted earlier, the percentage of positive changes linked to the peer review is higher than that of the writer-initiated category. However, due to the fact that there are more writer-initiated changes than peer-reviewed changes, the writers produced a greater number of positive changes overall (in terms of the total number of changes) than did peer reviewers through suggestions. Despite this, it is important to note that global suggestions, while almost equal in number to local suggestions, produced far more changes, and a greater number of positive changes, than local suggestions. Further, positive changes were extremely common in this study:

of the total changes, positive changes constituted 73%, and of the peer-reviewed changes, positive changes constituted 87%.

Thus, the preceding quantitative data indicate that the types of on-task, globally-focused, negotiated suggestions produced the greatest number of positive changes on participant drafts. However, given that a large majority of the total number of changes were writer-initiated (and not peer-reviewed), those global/interactive suggestions correlated to a relatively low percentage of *total* changes. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that peer review interactions should be encouraged, as they correspond to a higher percentage of *positive* changes (87%), and lower percentages of neutral and negative changes, than do writer-initiated changes.

Qualitative Results

Further verification of these points came from a comparison of the spoken data to the written drafts. In the following example, the participants discuss a global suggestion during an on-task episode. The dyad is negotiating this suggestion:

Ann: --maybe, just to... try the oh—uh, a conclusion—

Ling: --just to—

Ann: --a more definite—you can—you can argue—

Ling: --just like con—uh—I mean, summarize the—th—Evan's feeling to the
general...feeling—

Ann: --yea, to the general—a general—

Ling: --yah—the general way--

Ann: --that's what—yes. Because, you know, you do it quite well for Evan—

Ling: --mhmm—

Ann: --so, you can just--it's, you—you just have three—three items, so you can add and
you say—

Ling: --ah hah—

Here, Ann is trying to suggest to Ling that she make her conclusion more definite, and that she draw a connection between the main character's feelings and more general feelings. As a result of this episode, Ling changes her conclusion in the following way:

Version 1: Sometimes the things you did would affect a lot of people around you. Just like Evan, he tries to redo all of the bad parts of his and his friends' life. However, some of the results about the changing are not satisfying. No matter which life he chooses, nothing is perfect including our life.

Version 2: Sometimes the things that you did that affect a lot of people around you. Evan tried to redo all of the bad parts of his and his friends' life. However, some of the results about the changing are not satisfying. *In my opinion, there is no method to find a perfect way to repair the things happened in the past. Evan's story is the best example to show this. He tried many times and wanted to make his and his friends' life better, but life always cannot be controlled. When the bad things appeared, the only thing you can do is make it better not perfect. I can feel that when Evan chose not to meet her, he felt regret but happiness. By the way, no matter which life he chooses, nothing is flawless and perfect including our life.*

While not perfect, the revised version of this paragraph demonstrates the author's conscientious effort to create a more substantial conclusion that incorporates her own reflection and opinion. Not only did the author add more content to her paper, but also she added a layer of critical thinking that constituted an important part of the assignment. Thus, this revision represents one positive change that resulted from an on-task, global-level, negotiated suggestion.

Another such example can be found in the peer review session between Fen and Yun, two English 120 students discussing their process analysis papers. In the following suggestion, Fen and Yun negotiate the use of a phrase in Fen's paper:

Yun: So I just uh follow the questions, yea. So, maybe in the first paragraph, you have—

Fen: --too many "need to"?

Yun: Yea, too many "need to"—

Fen: --yea, okay, okay—

As a result, Fen changes the phrase "need to" to other phrases throughout her paper.

These changes include the following:

Version 1: Furthermore, you need tell you audience how the historical, religious influences affect differently on the cultures. Therefore, you need to do as much research as you can to fill your speech. The other things you need to prepare before a speech is yourself.

Version 2: Furthermore, *your audience may want to know* how the historical, religious influences affect differently on the cultures. Therefore, you *should* do as much research as you can to fill your speech. The other thing *need be prepared* before a speech is yourself.

Most of the instances in which Fen changes “need to” to an alternative word or structure result in positive changes to the draft. Indeed, the instances above represent two positive changes that resulted from one global level, negotiated suggestion.

Another instance of global-level, negotiated suggestions occurred in the dialogue between Lien and Ila, two advanced students in an English 121 class. As the students struggled to analyze the essay “Mother Tongue,” they debated the overall organization of ideas in Lien’s paper:

Ila: --the best thing is focus on that part of ethos, pathos, and logos that *is* supporting the specified claim of yours—right?—in each paragraph. Rather than just coming, ‘these are the ethos, and these are the pathos, and these are the logos’ confusing, maybe it’s best that you could just say, ‘she used this sort of ethos to specify, you know, informing her belief.’ That—that’s what her suggest you should.

Lien: Right.

Ila: So, maybe you don’t have to change the thesis statement, but maybe you should change the end of each paragraph—

Lien: --right—

Ila: --the *topic* sentence of each paragraph, you could change those.

Lien: Yea, I’m thinking about...I don’t know—it’s either way. I have to change my thesis *or* my paragraphs—they don’t match, right now. I don’t—I don’t know...

After this discussion, Lien made extensive changes to her draft. Some of these changes included changes to the argument she makes in the thesis, changes to the topic sentence of the analysis of pathos, and the addition of a section of the paper in which she analyzes the logical appeal of Tan’s essay. She changed the thesis in the following way:

Version 1: Through ethos, pathos, and logos, she informs her belief that although speaking imperfect English can be troublesome sometimes, but this does not always indicates that it is a bad thing.

Version 2: Through *the usage of ethos, pathos, and logo*, Tan reveals the intent and passion in her mother's language has affected her great deal in life.

The second version of the thesis, though grammatically flawed, reflected Lien's argument more accurately than the first version, and for this reason, constituted a positive change to the draft.

Global-level suggestions that caused interaction (but not negotiation) are also major sources of positive changes on later drafts. As in the following example, this type of interaction occurred between two English 120 students discussing Kwan's analysis of the process of getting a driver's license in the US:

Lin: May—maybe you can make it more clear uh about the uh—the documents.

Kwan: Cuz I mention you're going to—here, again—

Lin: --but in...like you ummm, because here you have 'they' and 'them'—like think
[unclear]

Kwan: Alright.

As a result of this suggestion, Kwan made the following changes to his draft:

Version 1: Before they take a driving test, an officer requires them. If they don't have them, they can not take the driving test until they have them.

Version 1: Before they take a driving test, an officer requires *the documents*. If *international students* don't have *the documents*, they can not take the driving test until they have *the documents*.

These changes represented a positive step for this paper; instead of having vague or ambiguous pronouns, Kwan changed these terms to their specific references throughout the paper. Another example of this type was found in the conversation between Jun and Ji. Ji explained to Jun that he needed more proof, or quotes, in his paper:

Ji: ...register, it's better than other. [pause] I think your paper you need put more quotation in your paper, and uh, so explain—

Jun: --right—

Ji: --it will be better for you understand the paper [laughs]

Jun: it's really [unclear]

Ji: It's because really difficult—

Jun: --yea—

In his second draft of his analysis of the essay “Mother Tongue,” Jun increased the length of some of his quotes, and added more examples from the text to support his argument. This is one such change:

Version 1: ...Writers usually make less grammar mistakes than even professor because they write a lot. She said, “she spend a great deal of her time thinking about the power of language.” The purpose of this sentence is to let audience trust her and make her more authority.

Version 2: ...Writers usually make less grammar mistakes than even professor because they write a lot. She said, “She spends a great deal of her time thinking about the power of language—the way it can evoke an emotion, a visual image, a complex idea, or a simple truth. Language is the tool of my trade. And I use them all—all the Englishes I grew up with.” The purpose of this sentence is to let audience trust her *English level* and make her more authority.

By lengthening the quote as his partner suggested, and by inserting the phrase “English level” where he did in the concluding sentence, Jun has created a stronger, more coherent argument about how the author establishes ethos in the article. Additionally, having to revise and add to this quote made Jun aware of some mistakes that he made in his original version (including the lower-case *s* at the beginning of the sentence, and the subject-verb disagreement in “she spend”). Thus, this positive change at the global level has also manifested positive changes at the local level.

Another such change resulted from an on-task, global suggestion made by Fen to Yun, regarding Yun’s tone in her paper about how international students prepare to go home:

Fen: --so, your—your essay’s really clear, it’s very umm—yea, you go—so how’d you do that? Um, I think the problem, there’s no big process, just—I think, to me, I’m not a reading person, so—to me it’s a little bit boring, when I read the—when I read through the paragraph. I think maybe you can add some like, interesting tone like like uhh like ummm—I cannot think about right now—

Yun: --yea, it’s hard—

Fen: -- like, Asian thing—

Yun: --yea, it's hard to make this essay into--

Fen: --interesting—but I mean, you can improve your essay before like the tone is honest... maybe a little bit, funny—all in—examples, a little examples, and like, for example—here you say something about the door, honest—maybe you can give you a—give honest examples, like... someone is doing something wrong—their, their house is... something wrong with them, when they come back—and maybe more of them, put more examples uhhh, real life examples maybe more a—attractive the—the people. The audience. Honest—and I notice this, no uh totally conclusion in your—

Yun: --yea—

Fen: --it—I don't—it's okay to me, but I don't know if that's okay to get the captive writing.

As a result of this exchange, Yun made the following change to her draft:

Version 1: On the other hand, if you live in an apartment off-campus, I think it's good for you to cancel the supplement of water, power and internet before you go back home. You don't have to use them when you are in your home countries, so you will prevent yourself from wasting money.

Version 2: On the other hand, if you live in an apartment off-campus, I think it's good for you to cancel the supplement of water, power and internet before you go back home. You don't have to use them when you are in your home countries, so you will prevent yourself from wasting money. *I'm pretty sure no one wants to see his or her apartment filled with water or burned out when he or she comes back.*

By adding this sentence, Yun adds personality and a unique tone to an otherwise dry paper. While the level of discourse may not yet be appropriate for college, the attempt at making the analysis more original and interesting proved to have a positive effect on the paper.

Positive changes also result from negotiated suggestions at the local level. In the following examples, the dyads have negotiated local-level suggestions, and these suggestions have produced positive changes. The first of these examples comes from two students in an English 121 class as they discussed the wording and specificity of one student's analysis of "Mother Tongue."

Saad: That's, number two. I didn't find the right term—'didn't [unclear] either'—that's the right term. That's just a little bit more information about the right term. It's not—it's unnecessary, I agree with you—

Wen: --yea—

Saad: --it's really unnecessary—
 Wen: --or you can just put—
 Saad: --it's just more information about it—
 Wen: Like, 'and instead she became a writer'—
 Saad: Where?
 Wen: Like, add something like this, like 'instead'—'instead'—
 Saad: Like, 'instead she became a writer.'
 Wen: If you wanna talk about her—
 Saad: --yea, I didn't—
 Wen: --talk about that's why, reader—
 Saad:--I didn't say—
 Wen: --errr, became a writer—
 Saad: I say, say, "Amy failed to make her mother's dreams for her to become a doctor,"
 but—let's say, 'but' in here—"doctor, but...she became a writer."
 Wen: Yea.
 Saad: 'but she'—what, what is this?
 Wen: 'Instead'
 Saad: 'but she become a'...
 Wen: 'instead...she'—so, so—so sorry...
 Saad: ...I think this...ohh...that's great. Okay, what else?

As a result of this extensive negotiation, Saad made the following change to his paper:

Version 1: Amy failed to make her mother's dream of her to become a doctor come true.

Version 2: Amy failed to make her mother's dream of her to become a doctor come true,
but instead she became a very successful writer.

The second version of the sentence includes all of the information that the student needs to explain Tan's background as a foundation of his rhetorical analysis of her work. By including the new information and using the "but instead" transition, Saad effectively improves his paragraph in terms of both content and structure.

Several such examples can be found in the peer review session between Ai and Hua. In the first example of a local-level, negotiated suggestion, Ai and Hua debate Hua's use of the phrase "last but not least" in his process analysis of how to cook a certain dish:

Ai: So um...yea and um here, I think "last but not least--

Hua: [laughs]

Ai: --is a place," I think the phrase—the phrase is good, but the phrase is too big for the

uhhh cooking staff here.
 Hua: Okay.
 Ai: You know what I mean, we of--often use the “last but uhh—but not least,” but maybe uhhh to aim to emphasize the—a big thing.
 Hua: A big thing? Oh, okay...
 Ai: Some more...uhh comp—comprehensive thing, not uh—I think the—did...you, you put just “a place” after the phrase so it’s [laughs]
 Hua: Okay, okay, so I put, of all—of what.
 Ai: The phrase is thing. It’s not very proper. It’s not very prop...
 Hua: Okay.

Thus, in this instance, Ai recommended that Hua choose an alternative transition for “last but not least” because she feels that the phrase requires something more momentous than “a plate” to follow it. As a result, Hua makes the following change to his draft:

Version 1: The necessary tools for the cooking are a saucepan which has a lid on it, and a turner. The last but not least is a plate, or you will have no places to try your “masterpiece.”

Version 2: The necessary tools for the cooking are a saucepan which has a lid on it, and a turner. *Don't forget to prepare a clean plate for the cooking*, or you will have no places to try your “masterpiece.”

By making the indicated change, Hua has changed an awkward, context-inappropriate sentence into one that is more didactic and appropriate for cooking instructions. In so doing, Hua has made a positive change to his draft.

Similar benefits were found for local-level suggestions during which the participants interacted, even if they did not negotiate meaning. For example, Saad and Wen discuss appropriate word choice in Wen’s paper (an analysis of “Mother Tongue”):

Saad: --just about organization—okay, you weren’t too good with this because pathos is the first thing you have to talk about—that’s a good thing. But I don’t like this way, like ‘pathos’ and ‘emotion’—pathos and emotional appeal are the same thing—
 Wen: --yea...
 Saad: You have to choose one, ya—you have to say two—
 Wen: --that’s right—
 Saad: --like you say like a car and uhhh a...[clear]!

Wen: [unclear] [laughing]

Saad: You're saying like a car and an Altima, dude—it's the same thing.

Wen: [laughs]

Saad: Right? It's the same, same thing, different words.

Wen: Horrible [laughs]

Saad: Basically, you want to say emotional appeal is more like pathos...

As a result, Wen took out redundant terms and simply used the phrase “emotional appeals” to refer to the author’s use of pathos in the argument. This constituted one positive change on his final draft.

Thus, the preceding examples support the conclusion derived from the quantitative analysis: the types of on-task suggestions that produced the greatest number of positive changes on participant drafts were global and interactive to some degree. Although many of these participants made a greater number of changes to their drafts without input from their peers, these data indicate that peer interaction and especially negotiation can be a powerful tools to help the ESL student writer meet the standards and expectations of the university-level, academic writing classroom.

Student Feedback

An analysis of the effectiveness of peer review would be incomplete without an evaluation of the participants’ responses to the activity. (See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds of the participants.) After completing the peer review session, but before turning in their final papers, the students were asked five questions about the experience. (See Appendix B for the questionnaire.) The students were asked to rate how beneficial they felt the experience would be for their current paper, how effectively they expressed themselves during the session, how well they understood their partner, how easily they were able to converse with their partner, and how effective peer review is for improving essays

in general. Answers ranged from “not beneficial” or “not effective” to “very beneficial/effective,” and each answer was assigned a number from 1-4 (1 being a low score or an evaluation of “not beneficial/effective”).

On average, students rated the experience as “pretty beneficial” to their current paper (a numerical score of 2.9). In terms of being able to express themselves during peer review, the participants felt that they did so “pretty effectively” (also a 2.9). Participants also felt that they were able to understand their partner’s comments, suggestions and ideas “pretty effectively” (at a score of 3.1), and that the two “understood each other pretty well” (3.2). Overall, the participants believed peer review to be a “pretty effective” method for improving an essay, and they rated this particular peer review experience at a 3. Table 16 presents these average reactions.

Table 16

Average Feedback from Participants on a 1-4 Scale

Questionnaire Category	Total Satisfaction Ratings (Averages)
Beneficence of PR for the Current Paper	2.9
Writer’s Ability to Express Self	2.9
Writer’s Ability to Understand Partner	3.1
Ease of Conversation	3.2
Overall Effectiveness of PR	3.0

It must be noted that these conclusion reflect findings for participants that are mostly from Asian backgrounds (particularly Chinese); thus, the results for students of primarily (for example) Spanish-speaking Latin American backgrounds may differ from those offered in the study. However, the participants in the study did reflect a wide variety of backgrounds: in total,

10 countries were represented. Equally important to note is the wide distribution in terms of years spent studying English and time spent in the US. On average, students had lived in the US for 1.4 years, and had studied English for 8.2 years, as shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Average Time in US and Studying English

Time	Living in US	Studying English
Avg. (in years)	1.4	8.2

However, as Table 18 shows, some students (six) had lived in the US for six months or fewer at that point, while others (three students) had lived here for three or more years. This disparity indicates that students could potentially exhibit a wide range of language proficiencies, as well as differing classroom and task expectations, all of which could possibly complicate the peer review session and/or cause misunderstandings between the students.

Table 18

Outliers of the Demographics: Time in US

Time Living in the US	# Participants
≅ 6 Mos.	6
≅ 3 Years	3

Additionally, six students had spent less than two years studying English at that point, while eight students had been studying the language for over 12 years (as seen in Table 19 below). While the average number of years spent studying English was 8.2, this wide distribution also indicates great potential for pairings of random dyads with two very different language backgrounds and proficiency levels.

Table 19

Table 19

Outliers of the Demographics: Time Spent Studying English

Time Spent Studying English	# Participants
≤ 2 Years	6
≥ 12 Years	8

Finally, it is important to note a great majority of participants had experienced peer review before in some context (either at this university or at another). The participants' experience with peer review indicated that they (potentially) already had an understanding of the goals and expectations of the activity. Thus, for a group of students with no experience in peer review, the results might be different.

The differences between the group with the fewest number of years spent studying English (two years or fewer), and the group with the most years studying English (12+) are negligible in terms of their reaction to the activity. While the group with more years of study rated the level of benefit at a 3.1, slightly better than the average (a 2.9), the beginner group rated their level of benefit at an average of 2.7, slightly less than the overall average level of perceived benefit. The same is true for these groups in terms of how well they felt they expressed themselves and how well they understood their partners. The group that had studied the English language longer gave higher ratings in these categories than average, as well as higher ratings compared to the beginner group. Interestingly, the beginner group rated the "ease of conversation" higher than did the advanced group, and closer to the overall average. Apparently, this group felt that the peer review conversation was easier than did the more advanced group. However, the two groups rated the effectiveness of peer review in general and their overall satisfaction the same; both groups rated each category at a three, the average rating for each category. Table 20 presents a comparison of the average ratings of the two groups' reactions to peer review.

Table 20

Time Studying English as a Predictor of Reaction

Questionnaire Categories	≤ 2 Years Studying English (6 Participants)	≥ 12 Years Studying English (8 Participants)	Average (29 Participants)
Beneficence of PR for the Current Paper	2.7	3.1	2.9
Writer's Ability to Express Self	2.5	3.3	2.8
Writer's Ability to Understand Partner	2.8	3.3	3.1
Ease of Conversation	3.3	3.0	3.2
Overall Effectiveness of PR	3.0	3.0	3.0

In terms of the amount of time spent in the US, the group with six or fewer months in the US rated all of the elements of this activity higher than average, especially the extent to which they understood their partner. This group rated their ability to understand their partner at an average score of 3.7, much higher than the overall average in this category of 3.1. It seems that the group with the least amount of time spent in the US felt very positive about peer review. More importantly, the group with the most amount of time spent in the US gave the highest ratings to the experience across the board (even higher than the group with the least amount of time in the US). In fact, this group rated their ability to express themselves at a perfect 4.0, the general perception of the effectiveness of peer review at a 3.6, and the overall experience at a 3.6 as well. These ratings indicated that the group with the most experience in the US found peer review to be smoother, more beneficial, and more effective than did any other group, while the group with little time spent in the US also found the activity to be very beneficial. Table 21 presents this information.

Table 21

Time Lived in the US as a Predictor of Reaction

Questionnaire Categories	≤ 6 mos Living in US (6 Participants)	≥ 3 Years Living in US (3 Participants)	Average (29 Participants)
Beneficence of PR for the Current Paper	3.3	3.6	2.9
Writer's Ability to Express Self	3.0	4.0	2.8
Writer's Ability to Understand Partner	3.7	3.3	3.1
Ease of Conversation	3.4	3.3	3.2
Overall Effectiveness of PR	3.4	3.6	3.0

It is important to note here that there was not extensive overlap between the participants in the various groups. In other words, it was *not* the case that those students who had spent the least amount of time studying English were also those with the fewest number of years spent in the US. In fact, there was no overlap of students between these two categories. Furthermore, only one student who had spent three or more years in the US was also in the “most time studying English” category.

An analysis of participant perceptions in terms of their experience with peer review produced further, highly revealing results. The ratings for those participants who had participated in peer review previously (the majority, 21 participants) were approximately the same as the averages for all of the participants; however, those students who had no background in peer review rated all of the elements of the experience as above average. This was particularly true for the “ease of conversation” category. Table 22 shows the striking differences between the reactions of the two groups, one with experience in peer review and the other novice peer-reviewers, as well as the average reactions.

Table 22

Experience with Peer Review as a Predictor of Reaction

Questionnaire Categories	Experience with PR (21 Participants)	No Experience with PR (8 Participants)	Average Reactions
Beneficence of PR for the Current Paper	2.8	3.2	2.9
Writer's Ability to Express Self	2.7	3.1	2.8
Writer's Ability to Understand Partner	3.0	3.4	3.1
Ease of Conversation	3.0	3.8	3.2
Overall Effectiveness of PR	2.9	3.3	3.0

As Table 22 shows, the group with no peer review experience rated the ease of their conversations at a 3.8, well above the average of 3.2. Within this group, two participants had spent less than two years studying English, and another four participants had spent less than six months in the US. Thus, the group that experienced peer review for the first time was largely comprised of participants with more limited experience studying English and living in the US. Their rating of peer review as above average in all categories indicated that they felt the new experience was beneficial and effective.

Thus, there are various ways to categorize the participants in this study. The most revealing categorizations indicated that the groups with more experience studying English and more time spent in the US rated the activity overall as more beneficial or more effective than did the less experienced groups. The one major exception was seen in a comparison of participants with experience in peer review to those who were new to peer review: those participants who were new to peer review rated the activity as more beneficial and effective than did those

participants who had engaged in peer review before. Overall, all of the participants rated the elements of peer review as “pretty beneficial” and “pretty effective.”

In sum, these findings indicate that this activity might be especially satisfying (from the students’ perspective) for those students who have a strong background studying English, at least a few years in an immersion environment, yet who have not previously done peer review before. For this particular study, these students were generally those who had lived in the US for more than two years, and who had completed and/or tested out of the higher levels of the English Language Institute, but who had not yet completed the highest level, of which peer review is a part.

An analysis of the positive changes in terms of the various groupings of participants yields further interesting results. As stated previously, changes made as a result of peer review were more likely positive than writer-initiated changes, although the greatly participants preferred to make their own changes. Of the total number of changes made to drafts, 78% were writer-initiated, while 22% were peer-reviewed. Of these peer-reviewed changes, 86% were positive, while 69% of the writer-initiated changes were positive. Thus, on average, each student made 22 changes to his or her draft; 5 of these changes were peer-reviewed, and 17 of these changes were writer-initiated. Of the 5 peer-reviewed changes, 4.3 changes were positive, and of the 17 writer-initiated changes, almost 12 were positive.

In terms of how these results compare to perceptions of peer review, the data indicate that, in terms of the number of episodes per student, those students who rated their satisfaction with the activity between 3.0 and 4.0 produced the greatest number of episodes during the activity. (This was true for 19 participants.) Those three participants who rated the activity at a 4.0 (the highest rating) produced approximately the same number of episodes per person as those who

gave a rating between 3.0 and 3.9 (10.7 episodes per participant). The group that rated the activity at a 4.0 exhibited slightly fewer on-task episodes per person (6.3). However, on average, participants in this group produced more globally-based comments (4 per person) than local comments (2.3 per person). For those participants (16 total) who rated their satisfaction level between 3.0 and 3.9, there were 10.4 episodes per participant, with an average of 7.5 on-task episodes per participant. (Further, about half of those on-task episodes were locally focused and half globally focused; this is similar to the overall average.) Those participants (nine total) who rated their satisfaction in the two range (between 2.0 and 2.9) had an average of 7.6 episodes per session, with 5.3 of those episodes being on-task, and most of the on-task episodes focused on local-level issues. Thus, these data indicate that those participants who rated the experience as ‘pretty’ or ‘very’ beneficial overall also produced the most episodes, the highest number of on-task episodes, and a greater number of locally based comments than did the other groups. (Only one student rated the activity in the 0-2 range.) Table 23 shows a synopsis of these ratings.

Table 23

Satisfaction with PR v. Participation in PR

Satisfaction Rating	# Participants	Avg. # On-Task Episodes per Participant
0-1.9	1	4
2.0-2.9	9	5.3
3.0-3.9	16	7.5
4.0	3	6.3

In terms of the types of interactions and their relationships to the participants’ satisfaction levels, the data indicate that those students who rated the task between 3.0 and 3.9 engaged in the highest average number of basic interactive suggestions (5.8 per person) as well as the highest average number of reader non-interactive suggestions (3.1 per person) compared to the other

ratings groups. Those students who rated the experience at a 4.0 on the satisfaction scale demonstrated similar numbers in these categories: these students offered an average of 5.6 interactive suggestions per person and 3.0 reader non-interactive suggestions per person. These students also offered a similar average number of negotiated suggestions per person (with an average of 2.8 negotiated suggestions per person for those who rated the activity at a three, and an average of 2.6 negotiated suggestions per person for those who rated the activity at a four). However, it is important to note that the number of negotiated suggestions from these groups was fewer than the number offered by the participants who rated the activity in the two range. Those students who rated their satisfaction with activity between 2.0-2.9 offered an average of 3.4 negotiated suggestions per person—the highest of any ratings group—even though this group only 4.8 total episodes per participant. Of those, an average of 4.4 suggestions per participants was interactive and an average of 1 per person was non-interactive. Table 24 gives these numbers.

Table 24

Satisfaction with PR v. Level of Interaction

Satisfaction Rating	Average # per Participant		
	# of Reader Non-Interactive Suggestions	# of Basic Interactive Suggestions	# of Negotiated Suggestions
0-1.9	0	2.0	2.0
2.0-2.9	1.0	4.4	3.4
3.0-3.9	3.1	5.8	2.8
4.0	3.0	5.6	2.6

These data may indicate that, for the group that rated the activity fairly lowly (in the two range), a higher percentage of their episodes were negotiated than for any other group. This seemingly conflicting data indicate that this group may have gone through many episodes, during

which the two sides tried to negotiate meaning, and may or may not have come to a satisfactory resolution for one or both sides. Such an experience may have been frustrating for the students, thus causing them to rate the activity as only “somewhat effective.”

Finally, interesting results were also derived from a comparison of the participants’ satisfaction ratings of the activity to the number and types of changes they made to their drafts. One striking feature of these data is that those students who rated their satisfaction in the two range made the most total changes to their drafts, at an average of 22.8 per participant. However, the vast majority of these changes were writer-initiated (20.3 per participant) and thus did not reflect peer-reviewed suggestions. Of the remaining peer-reviewed changes for the two-ratings group, approximately 2.5 per participant, almost all were positive. The average number of positive, peer-reviewed changes each participant made *increased* from this group to the group that rated their satisfaction with the activity in the three range (between 3.0 and 3.9). Those who rated the activity in the three range (16 participants) exhibited 4.1 positive, peer-reviewed changes per person. However, this group had fewer total changes than the previous group (an average of 20 per participant) and fewer writer-initiated changes (15.3 per participant). Therefore, a higher percentage of the changes for this group came from peer-reviewed changes than was the case for the group that rated the activity in the two range. Finally, for those three students who rated the activity at a perfect 4.0, an even higher number of positive, peer-reviewed changes was exhibited (an average of 9.3 such changes per participant). Further, this group demonstrated fewer writer-initiated changes and fewer changes overall. Table 25 offers these statistics.

Table 25

Satisfaction with PR v. Use of Peer Comments

Table 25

Satisfaction with PR v. Use of Peer Comments

Satisfaction Rating	Avg. # per Participant			
	Peer-Reviewed Changes	Positive PR Changes	Writer-Initiated Changes	Total Changes
0-1.9	2	5	5	10
2.0-2.9	2.6	2.4	20.3	22.8
3.0-3.9	4.7	4.1	15.3	20
4.0	11	9.3	8.3	19.3

Therefore, the group that rated this activity the highest (at a 4) also demonstrated the highest percentage of peer-reviewed changes, and positive peer-reviewed changes, per participant. These findings support the notion that peer interaction is important in terms of the perception of the activity, the number of changes each participant makes, the number of changes that correlate to peer review suggestion, and the positive effects of these changes.

Brief Conclusions

The spoken and written data for the 30 participants in this study offered a variety of indications regarding the effective types of interactions that can occur during peer review, the levels of suggestions that produce the most positive changes to later drafts, and the students' perception of these drafts. As a whole, these data indicated that although the participants produce far more writer-initiated changes to their drafts than changes resulting from peer review, they still felt that peer review is a 'pretty' beneficial and satisfying exercise for improving this and other papers. Further, when students do engage in basic interactive and/or negotiated debates about their papers, they tend to produce a higher percentage of positive changes to their drafts than when they simply initiate their own changes. Finally, the data indicate that the greatest percentage of positive changes correlated to negotiated suggestions that are directed at global-level issues. Given these findings, peer review should be considered an effective activity for ESL students in an academic writing classroom. Specifically, peer review can be used to supplement

students' writer-initiated changes and help them develop skills in evaluating, critiquing, and revising written work. Not only would these analytical skills be useful for students as they revise their own work, but also such skills could help students in all areas of their academic lives.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study offered many new and nuanced insights into the form, function, and effectiveness of peer review in the university-level ESL writing classroom. First, the spoken data offered early indications that this activity can be pedagogically useful in that it promotes interaction between students, it encourages negotiation of meaning, and in so doing, it creates an authentic atmosphere in which students can share their work and comment on others' work. These data indicated that students stayed largely on-task. Occasionally students discussed the rules of the class, the demands of the assignment, or the meta-text involved in their papers; however, few of their language episodes were off task entirely. The spoken data also indicated that more than half of the time, the on-task language episodes, and more than two-thirds of all episodes, were one participant's suggestions about the other person's draft. These findings indicated that students took seriously the task of evaluating their partners' work, and the opportunity to offer comments and critiques. A qualitative analysis of these data supported the notion that the dyads stayed on task and truly contributed to each others' work.

Deeper analysis of the spoken data also offered two important indications about the content and form of the on-task suggestions. Of the on-task suggestions, half pertained to local-level problems, while the other half pertained to global issues. This virtual split proved important during subsequent analyses of the changes that were actually implemented in later drafts.

Additionally, the spoken data indicated that, of the on-task suggestions, a large percentage (46%) were negotiated, and a majority (83%) was interactive to some degree. Only 17% of all on-task suggestions were non-interactive. These data should not be interpreted to mean that a certain level of suggestion (global or local), or a certain type of interaction (non-interactive, basic interactive, or negotiated) is better than another type. Indeed, it is important to address issues on both the global and local levels, and students can be successful in doing so through deep negotiation of meaning, through more basic interaction, or through non-interactive suggestions. In this study, participants stayed on-task, and happened to prefer an interactive, and particularly a negotiated, manner of discussing suggestions. Indications such as these were important for determining how the level of suggestion and type of interaction affected the changes that participants made to their drafts.

The written data offered further rich information by which to judge the effectiveness and potential benefits of this activity. First, the statistics indicate that this particular group of ESL students felt more comfortable making their own changes than relying solely on their peers' advice. This appeared to be a good strategy as a large percentage of the writer-initiated changes produced positive outcomes on the final draft. (Indeed, 68% of writer-initiated changes were positive.) However, compared to writer-initiated changes, peer-reviewed changes produced a higher percentage of positive outcomes: of 145 peer-reviewed changes, 87% resulted in positive outcomes on the final draft. Furthermore, peer-reviewed changes resulted in lower percentages of both neutral and negative outcomes than did writer-initiated changes. This finding indicates that, for this group of ESL students, peer review primarily supplemented students' individual revision processes.

Further interesting, yet less concrete findings were derived from an analysis of the level of change that students made to their final drafts. It is important to preface conclusions about how local and global suggestions influenced the later drafts with a note: all changes made to the drafts could ultimately be considered 'local,' because both 'local' and 'global' revisions resulted in particular and specific changes. In other words, if a participant told their partner to add more examples throughout their paper, and the partner added five examples, each of these examples counted as one change. Furthermore, since it was impossible to determine through the transcriptions alone which suggestions were actually implemented, the changes were correlated with the suggestions after all the data were coded. This was done in order to determine the extent to which local and global suggestions impacted the paper; however, this process surely influenced the way in which the changes were categorized.

As mentioned earlier, the participants made approximately the same number of local and global suggestions during the peer review sessions. Global-level suggestions appeared to have produced a greater number of changes than local-level suggestions. Additionally, the data seem to indicate that there was a higher number of positive, global-level changes than of positive, local-level changes (although there were approximately the same number of neutral and negative changes at each level). Thus, it appeared that global suggestions correlated to a greater number of changes than local suggestions, and that these revisions resulted in a greater number of positive changes to the draft than did local-level suggestions. See 'Future Research' for further discussion.

The most interesting and indicative results came from a comparison of the spoken and written data. This comparison first revealed that the great number of generally interactive suggestions (which includes basic interactive suggestions and negotiated suggestions) produced

many more positive changes than did the reader non-interactive suggestion episodes. More specifically, the negotiated suggestions correlated with more positive changes than the basic interactive suggestions and more than the reader non-interactive suggestion episodes. However, negotiated suggestions also produced more neutral changes than did either of the other two suggestion types. None of the suggestions types produced many negative changes. This coincides with the positive results for peer review in general: most peer-reviewed suggestions correlated with positive changes (in fact, 87% of peer-reviewed changes were positive). However, it is important to note that the comparatively high number of positive changes associated with negotiated suggestions is likely due to the fact that there were more negotiated suggestions than any other type of suggestion. In terms of the total changes, only 8% were positive, peer-reviewed changes that resulted from negotiated suggestions. An additional 7% were positive, peer-reviewed changes that were associated with basic interactive suggestion episodes. Thus, while generally interactive suggestions (basic interactive or negotiated) correlated with a high percentage of positive changes (within the category of peer-reviewed changes), the relatively low total number of peer-reviewed changes meant that these types of suggestion had a limited impact on the papers overall.

Further, as stated previously, a comparison of the written and spoken data also yielded tentative conclusions regarding the effect of suggestions at two different levels, global and local. While there were equal numbers of local and global suggestions, the global suggestions appeared to correlate with more changes than the local suggestion did. Changes associated with from global suggestions also correlated with higher ratings than did changes resulting from local-level suggestions. However, as correlation is not the same as causation, it is difficult to determine the exact extent to which local and global suggestions affected the drafts.

Limitations

Despite the positive indications that the data offer regarding the effectiveness of peer review in a university-level ESL writing class, there were several limitations to this study that may impact how the results can be interpreted and applied. Factors such as a limited range of participants, and limitations on time and money may have affected this study significantly.

This study was first limited in terms of the number of participants involved. Although 30 participants gives a strong indication of how typical international, non-native English speaking undergraduates might perform during peer review, more participants would have allowed this study greater validity. Furthermore, data collection and analysis was only carried out once; it reflects the performance and reactions of one group of students at one place and time. It is entirely possible that a different set of students in another place or at another time would have different experiences with and reactions to the process of peer review. Additionally, as mentioned above, the participants' backgrounds were not terribly diverse. Although the students represented 10 countries, the majority of the students are Asian, particularly Chinese. Future studies that look at other cultural groups, or a wider range of cultural backgrounds, may produce different and interesting results. Finally, a major variable of the present study is that several of the students were enrolled in this researcher's class at the time of the study. While the students were made aware of the fact that their participation in this study would in no way affect their grade, it is entirely possible that the participants' behavior was affected by the fact that their teacher would be analyzing their recorded speech and written work (more so than during average grading). In conjunction with this limitation is the aspect of recording: the unavoidable fact that the participants were being recorded during peer review could have affected the quantity and quality of their interactions.

In addition to various participant factors, this study was also limited by time and resources. The majority of these data were gathered, analyzed, and compiled during one semester, meaning that not all of the many aspects of the data were considered and analyzed for the study. Indeed, some potentially influential aspects of the collected data were not analyzed during the study. This included the participants' notes on the heuristics sheet, the participants' reactions to the writing process as a whole, and comparisons of tertiary data points. Data points that were not compared included, for example, the changes participants made to their drafts and their previous experience with peer review, the "ease of communication" (or any other particular point on the questionnaire) and the number of changes made to the drafts, the number of episodes and how many years the participants had been studying English, etc. Such data points, while interesting, were considered too detailed and not specific enough to the particular research questions involved in this study. Analysis of the data points was limited to those which would best answer the questions of which types of interactions were involved in peer review, whether these interactions created effective and successful changes in the drafts, and whether this is an effective or beneficial activity for classes of this type.

It should also be noted that a significant limitation of this study involved the number of available researchers. As more comprehensive analysis of these data would have taken a research team, the data analysis was limited to the knowledge and intuitions of one teacher-researcher. Had a research team been available, such a team would have been able to verify all the codifications on the transcripts of the spoken data as well as on the written drafts. Further, a research team could have resolved any problematic analyses by coming to an informed consensus on the data. Finally, such a research team may have had the time (and funding) to carry out more extensive statistical analysis than that which is presented in this study. However,

given the limitations in terms of time, money, and availability of graduate students/potential researchers, this research ‘dream team’ could not be assembled. Despite this, MATESOL graduate students were consulted to verify random samplings of the codifications and resolve particularly difficult issues in the data.

Pedagogical Implications

There are many valuable insights than can be derived from this study and applied to university-level ESL writing classes. First, the data in this study indicated that peer review can be a useful tool to implement in the university-level ESL writing classroom. Contrary to much of the literature on this topic, the students in this study seemed to appreciate the activity, finding that they expressed themselves ‘pretty’ well, communicated with their partners ‘pretty’ effectively, and used their partner’s suggestions in a largely beneficial way. Overall, the students felt that peer review was a ‘pretty’ beneficial and effective activity. This was especially true for the students who had never done peer review before.

Furthermore, the data indicated that this overall positive attitude about peer review correlated with positive changes on participant drafts. Those participants who had the highest number of total language episodes, and the highest number of on-task episodes rated the activity highly. It is important to note that while these participants did not have the highest number of interactive or interactive/negotiated episodes—their counterparts who rated the activity as only ‘somewhat’ effective did—the higher-raters did exhibit the highest number of positive changes to their drafts. This indicates that instructors who implement peer review must recognize that while interaction is important, both in terms of student perception of the activity and the benefits of the activity, too much interaction can complicate matters for students and ultimately frustrate

them. Thus, students should be instructed to direct their more intense interactions and negotiations to areas that will be most beneficial to their papers.

To that end, several pedagogical recommendations can also be drawn from this study that specifically relate to the types of interactions that students should have during peer review. First, it is important to mention that the data indicated that students initiated their own changes to a much greater extent than they implemented changes as a result of peer review. Since writer-initiated changes led to a high percentage of positive results, students should not be discouraged from making their own changes. However, since peer suggestions appear to lead to a higher percentage of positive changes than writer-initiated revisions, peer review should not be discarded. Instead, it should be used in conjunction with the student-writer's existing revision process. The results of this study suggest that the most productive use of peer review in a university level ESL writing class such as this is as a supplementary tool, used to support the writers' individual writing processes.

Thus, it is recommended that instructors of such classes integrate peer review into a two-part revision process. First, students should be instructed to turn in a compulsory rough draft, which they would then have a class period or a few days to revise individually. Next, students should exchange papers and review their peer's work. Finally, students should meet and discuss each writer's ideas for changing his or her own paper. While peers should certainly be encouraged to offer any type of useful feedback, they should be directed to focus on the elements of the paper that the writer is considering changing. After discussing these elements for each writer, students should then have the opportunity to make any further revisions for the final draft. In this way, the peer's comments and the writer's existing inclinations to change the paper work together in an effort to improve the paper. Given that both writer-initiated and peer-reviewed

changes generally produce positive results, combining these two factors should be very effective for the paper.

Another reason that such a technique would be successful is that this technique encourages peers to negotiate problems or concerns that the writer (or the reader) may have about the paper at hand. Since the data indicated that most of the on-task suggestions were negotiated, and since the data indicated that this type of suggestion episode produced a considerable number of positive changes, encouraging this type of interaction should be beneficial for the students' final papers. This technique also has the added benefit of authentic interaction in which students are able to negotiate for comprehensible input (either spoken or written), hear feedback, and offer responses. As the Interaction Hypothesis purports, spoken interaction has great potential for priming students for language acquisition, and for facilitating language acquisition. The results of this study indicate that these benefits can be applied to written language as well, in that peer review allows students to broker for comprehensible input, receive feedback, and create output in writing. In other words, by having the opportunity to present and discuss their written work, hear comments and criticisms, and respond to those sentiments through written revisions, students are participating in interaction in writing in a way that is similar to the spoken interaction. By encouraging students who are about to undertake peer review to focus on those areas of the paper that the writer is already inclined to change, the instructor would maximize the opportunities for students to engage in the type of interaction that produces significant, positive changes to both written and (potentially) spoken language.

In other words, university-level ESL composition instructors and students should not pressure themselves to implement peer review in the classroom in the same way that it is used in the L1 classroom. Indeed, the some of the classic problems with peer review in the ESL

classroom were evident in this study. For some dyads, the more proficient speaker dominated the conversation, leading to a large number of comments and critiques on their partner's paper (potentially too many) and no critiques for the speaker to consider for his or her own paper. Other participants offered very little feedback despite plenty of opportunity, while others still simply ignored their partner's comments altogether. However, these situations were the exceptions to the general rule that, for this group of participants, peer review was an effective and well-received activity. Instructors should not hesitate to implement peer review into their ESL writing classrooms, especially for those students who are new to the process. If the activity is explicitly framed as a supplement to the writer's revision process, and an opportunity for writers to discuss their potential changes, this study indicates that such a process would be highly successful in the classroom.

Future Research

There are many avenues of potential research in the area of peer review interactions. First and foremost, a study such as this would benefit from a follow-up interview of each participant. A number of questions could be addressed in such an interview, including: which interactional element of peer review the student found most comfortable and/or most useful, whether he or she preferred to incorporate local or global suggestions into their paper, and whether he or she preferred to receive non-interactive suggestions from the reader and think about them later, or whether he or she prefer to discuss or debate the reader's suggestions. Follow up interviews could also address indications from the data that were confusing. For example, the data indicated that more basic interactive/negotiated episodes occurred than non-interactive, and that these episodes led to many positive changes. However, it also indicated that far fewer peer-reviewed changes were made in comparison to writer-initiated changes. A follow-up interview could

clarify why this occurred, and determine why the participants preferred to make their own changes to making changes discussed in peer review. By triangulating the spoken data, the written data, and the participants' responses in follow-up interviews, future research studies could determine exactly how and why the writers made the changes they did.

Future research studies that conduct participant post-interviews could also address some of the ambiguities in the data of the current study. For example, although there were equal numbers of local and global suggestions, there appeared to have been more changes at the global level than the local level. Although this may have been due to the methodology involved in counting the data (which future studies could also revise and improve), such a difference may also have been due to the participants' preference for global-level suggestions. Future research and follow-up interviews could investigate whether participants actually preferred global suggestions, and/or whether they found global-level changes more appealing for some reason. It could be that, as global-level suggestions tended to be more abstract, the writers preferred to use these suggestions to inform changes, making these changes more writer-initiated than peer-reviewed. In this view, writers may have implemented fewer local-level suggestions because they viewed this type of specific suggestion as intrusive on their own writing and revision process. Alternatively, writers may have doubted the accuracy of their partner's local-level suggestions, given that these suggestions were more likely to relate to specific grammatical or lexical problems. In this view, global-level suggestions may have been preferred due to the fact that, in their abstraction, they were less likely to be wrong (in the writer's eyes). The writers themselves could corroborate whether the changes that they implemented were the direct result of local or global suggestions, and not some sort of unlikely coincidence.

Future research could also answer some of the outstanding questions about the impact of various types of interactions during peer review. First of all, future research could verify the codifications of the language episodes as reader non-interactive, basic interactive, or negotiated. Due to limited resources, the categorizations made in the present study were verified by two researchers: the primary teacher-researcher in this study who coded all of the data, and one other graduate student in the same TESOL program who verified these codifications. The secondary researcher reviewed random samples of the language episodes and categorized these episodes according to the definitions provided by the primary researcher. With additional resources, future students could employ research teams to verify that the language episodes are coded according to strict scientific standards. Secondly, future studies that employ post-activity interviews could verify that particular interactions or types of interactions actually caused the student to make particular changes. The participants would also have the opportunity to express whether he or she felt certain types of interactions to be more effective or beneficial than other types.

Future research could also verify the coding standards for the written data. Changes to the rough drafts were coded as positive, neutral, or negative, and were correlated with particular types of suggestions and interactions. The primary researcher defined the boundaries of 'positive,' 'neutral,' and 'negative' changes, and coded the 28 drafts according to these definitions. A consultant was then brought in to verify these codifications through random samples of the data. Future research, with greater resources, could define and implement this categorization process in a more scientifically stringent way.

Finally, future research could reveal more about the effectiveness of peer review interactions in two simple ways. First, future researchers could avoid any possible conflict of interest by soliciting participants that were not connected to the primary researcher through a

student-teacher relationship. Teacher-researcher studies can be quite useful in the field: they generate data that truly reflect the current state of the classroom, and they encourage teachers to participate in the research side of the field and in the ongoing process of professionalization. However, such studies are vulnerable to the potential conflict that arises from employing students as participants and casting teachers in the role of objective researchers. Secondly, future studies could also verify and/or expand upon the findings of the present study by involving more participants and participants at various stages of writing development. The present study involved thirty participants, all of whom were in one of two sequential composition classes for non-native English speakers. Future research studies that incorporate a greater number of participants, and participants at higher levels L2 writing development, could offer more valid and/or more nuanced results regarding the effectiveness and the benefits of peer review for non-native English speakers.

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Appendix A

Permission and Consent

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Title of Research Project:

Meaning and Repair Negotiation between Nonnative English Speakers in a Peer Review Context

I. Procedures:

A. Purpose and Design of the Project: In this project, I would like to look at instances of meaning and repair negotiation in a university-level ESL writing class peer review session. In my (limited) experience as an instructor at this level, I have found peer review activities to be rather unsuccessful and frustrating for the students and teacher alike. During peer review, students have to negotiate meaning as it appears in their classmates' written work, as well as meaning as it occurs during this task-based conversation. In part, I believe that the lack of success in ESL peer review activities is due to the multiple linguistic demands placed on the student in this context, as well as their inability to effectively identify and broker instances of miscommunication during this type of activity. In this project, I would like to identify the common sources of miscommunication as they occur during peer review exercises, through analysis of recordings of these sessions. I would like to analyze the conversation that occurs as a result of misunderstanding, including how the misunderstanding is signaled, how it is resolved, and how successful the resolution is for the conversation as well as for the revised written work. Lastly, I would like to evaluate the student's papers to gauge what type of effect (if any) the negotiations of meaning during peer review had on the final product. Through these analyses I hope to be able to make pedagogical recommendations for students and teachers who engage in peer review, so that this process is more successful and satisfying for all those involved.

B. Participants: For this study, I will be asking my students in EN 120 (English Composition for Nonnative Speakers) for their voluntary participation. In this class there are 12 nonnative English speakers from 6 different countries. The students exhibit a range of writing and speaking skills that will contribute to the richness of the data. Thus, they can all benefit from the peer review process. Therefore, this activity will be incorporated as a routine part of the class, and those students who choose not to participate in the study will not be recorded. However, since peer review is a pedagogically sound and useful tool, all students present during the peer review exercise will be participating in that activity, even if they choose not to be recorded.

C. Site: Recordings will take place in Morgan 301, our classroom.

D. Detailed Procedures:

1. Students will be paired according to their strengths and weaknesses as student writers in the English 120 class. Specifically, they will be paired according to their potential to help one another and make use of their complementary strengths, so that each participant has the maximum potential for educational gain from this experience.
2. Students will exchange papers prior to the recording session. They will be asked to read a set of heuristics by which they will evaluate the paper. These evaluations will be done at home and should take approximately 1.5-2 hours.
3. Students will be encouraged to analyze the paper for its strengths and weaknesses, and take notes on these features. They should be prepared to discuss and explain these observations during the recorded session.
 - a. Students who do not want to be recorded have the option of not participating in the study, with no negative impact on their grade. However, those students who choose not to be recorded will still participate in the peer review process, as it is a valuable opportunity to improve their paper and is a routine exercise in university-level composition classes.
4. **Participants in the study will be recorded** as they exchange ideas, suggestions, and questions about each other's work during the peer review session. The session will last approximately one hour and the pairs are expected to discuss both papers during this time.
5. Participants will have two nights to implement any changes they see fit to implement from the peer review session. They will hand in their rough and final drafts, as well as the heuristics sheet, at the next class meeting. This is in accordance with the normal procedures of the class.
6. Participants will also fill out a short peer review evaluation sheet, which requests basic information regarding the student's linguistic and educational background, and their evaluation of how successful the peer review experience was for them. The questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes.
7. The recorded sessions will be transcribed and analyzed as data for this study.

E. Materials that will be Part of the Study: See two attached questionnaires.

F. Debriefing: Participants will have the option to request any findings or information regarding the result of this research project when they fill out the post-peer review evaluation sheet. Should the participants request information about the study or its findings, this information will be sent to them via email as soon as it is completed and available.

II. Informed Consent:

A. Instructions: Participants will be informed of the above procedures at least one week in advance of the date when the recordings will be made. They will also be informed that their participation is completely voluntary and will not affect their grade or their standing in our class. The students will have four days to consider their participation and ask questions about the study. One class prior to the recording date, the students will turn in their consent forms and exchange papers for review at home. They will also receive the heuristics sheet as a guide for making suggestions on the paper. Those who decline to

participate will be paired together, and will also exchange papers and fulfill the peer review activity, although they will not be recorded. If there is an odd number of students who decline to participate, one non-participating student will be paired with a willing student and the pair will not be recorded.

B. The Eight Basic Elements of Informed Consent: 1. The consent form and all associated instructions and questionnaires will be written to the level of the students, free of jargon and overly complicated constructions. The students will be given four days to fully read and comprehend the forms, as well as to ask any questions that may arise. 2. A week prior to recording, students will be informed that their participation in the recording session is voluntary and will not affect their grade or standing in the class. 3. As the students are from many different cultures and backgrounds, we will spend one half of a class meeting discussing how research is (and should be) conducted in the US, and comparing this methodology to that of research in their home countries, in order to promote a cross-cultural understanding of the similarities and differences between research methodologies. 4 & 5. Students will be given a detailed explanation of the abovementioned procedures included in the consent form, and will be provided a heuristics guideline in advance (along with their partner's paper), so that they will be fully prepared for the peer review exercise. 6. Students will be asked to sign the consent form to verify that they have read and understand the procedures of this study and are willing to be recorded. 7. After four days, the students will indicate whether or not they want to be recorded (i.e., participate in this research), by signing all applicable paperwork. 8. Once all paperwork is completed, participants will be recorded during their peer review sessions and non-participating students will engage in peer review without being recorded.

C. Consent form: See attached form.

III. Risks and Benefits:

A. Possible Risks: First, participants may feel stressed by the demands of the peer review exercise; however, these demands are the same as those of any in-class partner-based activity, and should only incur minimal, if any, stress. Second, participants may feel somewhat uncomfortable about being recorded during this exercise; however, these recordings will not be shared with any other party and the resulting transcripts will not display the real names of the participants. The recordings will be destroyed upon termination of this study, and the identities of the participants will remain confidential. Furthermore, students have the option not to participate without risking any negative impact on their grade, and participants may choose to terminate their participation at any point during the study without risking any negative impact on their grade.

B. Potential Benefits: Students who participate in peer review, the crux of this study, will have a chance to review others' work and have their own work reviewed. They may benefit from the suggestions of others and, and they may be able to improve their own editorial skills. Furthermore, they will be able to practice and improve their ability to interact on an academic level with their peers. Finally, they will have a chance to

contribute to a greater understanding of the problems of peer review for this group, the strategies that students use to resolve these problems, and the effect of this interaction on written work.

Compared to the potential benefits, the risk associated with being in this study is small.

Script for Presenting the Research Study:
Meaning and Repair Negotiation between Nonnative English
Speakers during Peer Review Exercises

Phase 1: Introducing Peer Review

Instead of doing teacher-student conferences to improve on your upcoming rough drafts, we are going to be doing another type of activity. In this activity, you will be working with your classmates and improving each others' papers. Think about the different levels of improvements—global and local—that we have discussed during this class, and consider the different ways that you have made improvements on your last two papers. In this exercise, which is called peer review, you will be using these techniques to improve on your classmate's paper. For example, if you have been working on organization in your previous papers, and making sure there is a strong thesis and good topic sentences, you can use these skills to evaluate your partner's paper. I will be giving you a list of things to look for on both the global and local levels. It will be your job to find these elements and see how well the writer performs in these areas. If you find any parts that are missing or can be improved upon, write that on your sheet and make a note on their paper. If you read something that is especially good, note that on the paper as well. For the next class, be ready to explain your comments, help your partner improve his or her paper, and listen to their comments.

Phase 2: Introducing the Project

I chose to do peer review on this paper for a few reasons. First, I think it's a good exercise to read another person's work and consider their ideas, their point of view, and the techniques they use when they write. Second, I think peer review can help you, as student writers, improve your ability to find errors and edit papers—both your partner's paper and your own future papers. Finally, I think it's a great way to exchange ideas about writing and practice conversation in an academic setting. However, I know it can be difficult to comment on a paper that is written in your second language, by a person who also speaks English as a second language. It can be especially difficult to explain your comments, ideas and suggestions clearly and without unintentionally hurting the other person's feelings. So, I want you all to practice these skills, and I want to understand better how to improve upon the process of peer review in an ESL classroom. I want this process to be easier and more effective for you, the students.

To that end, I am also doing a research project about peer review in an ESL writing class, and I am asking that you all be involved as my group of subjects. Everyone will still go through the peer review process, but those of you who are willing to participate in my study will have their session recorded on an audio recorder. I am going to pass out consent forms—forms that you can sign if you want to participate in the project. On these consent forms, you can read about the details of this project, which I will also explain aloud.

Phase 3: Detailed Procedures

For the peer review activity, I will pair you up in the same way that I often do, according to which students have complementary skills—or skills that they can help each other with. You all will read and evaluate each other's paper as I described before. However, if you choose to

participate, I will ask to record your peer review session and I will ask you to fill out a brief and simple questionnaire after the session is over. Participating in the study will not take any extra time, except for the few minutes it takes for you to fill out the questionnaire. Also, I will not be evaluating your sessions for “correctness”; rather, I just want to see how you and your partner interact during the session, so I can improve on peer review in the ESL classroom for future students. You would be helping me and future students make this a better activity. After the session is over, you will have a chance to go home and make the improvements on your paper that your partner suggested. These are the only changes you need to make. Then, everyone will turn in their papers as normal. I will grade them, and for those people that participated, I will be looking to see how effective the peer review activity was for the improvement of the paper.

Phase 4: Option not to Participate

Even though everyone will be doing the peer review activity, you are not obligated in any way to take part in this study. That means, you have the choice to not be recorded during the peer review session. That does not mean that you do not have to do peer review; it is part of the normal class activities. However, if you feel uncomfortable about being recorded, you can decline to be recorded without any impact on your grade or your standing in this class. Your decision to participate in the recording is totally voluntary—it’s up to you. I will not grade you based on your peer review session or based on your decision to be recorded during the session. If you want to participate, you will sign this consent form. If you do not want to participate, simply don’t sign the form. If you sign the form and later decide you don’t want to participate, that’s fine; I will simply not record your session. You are free to change your mind before or during the recording session.

Phase 5: Confidentiality

When research is conducted here in the US, we try to be very careful about protecting the people who are nice enough to lend their time to our projects. This means that we keep the data protected so that others can’t see it, and we keep the identities of the participants a secret. Only I will know who has participated in this study. When I analyze the data, I will have two people helping me, and neither of them will know your real names. Instead, we will use numbers and fake names to identify your voices and your papers. When I write the paper, I will continue to use numbers and fake names, and after I am done with the project, the recordings will be destroyed. We will do this activity in class, so only your classmates will be present.

Phase 6: Findings

Of course, when I am done with this project, I hope to have some results that indicate how peer review can be used in an ESL writing classroom, and how the process of peer review can be improved for classes like ours. If anyone is interested in these results, you can write this in the “Comments” box on the questionnaire that I will give you after the session is over. Be sure to include an email address that I can reach you at when the results are ready. I would be very grateful to you all if you choose to participate! If you have any questions, feel free to ask them now or to email them to me anytime. We will talk further about peer review during our next class meeting, and I request that you hand in your consent forms on Friday.

Sara Brathwaite
Fall 1008 Thesis Research
Approval Information
Data Storage

First, I plan to make copies of both my recorded and written data, in case of some type of accident that destroys one version of either. For my recorded data, I will be copying the voice recordings of the students' sessions onto my computer, access to which is always password-protected when I am not using it. For the written data, I will be copying both the rough and final drafts of the students' papers, and placing these copies, along with the original recordings, into a locked box in a safe and private location at my home office. The original drafts of the students' papers will be returned to them when I have finished grading them, approximately one week after their due date. While I am grading them, they will also be stored in a drawer in my home office.

As a part of my study, two independent raters will look at my data. These two raters are the only other people, besides myself, that will have access to my written data (only). By the point that they obtain the data, I will have already identified the voices with pseudonyms and put identification numbers on the papers.

While in my home office, the data will only be accessible to me. My roommates have the keys to neither my room nor the private box (in which I also keep other sensitive personal documents). Further, all analysis of the data that is done by the independent raters will occur in my on-campus office, Rowand-Johnson 208. I will personally carry the data from my home office to this on-campus office and will remain present during these rating sessions, thus ensuring the confidentiality of the participants and the privacy of the data.

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
Participant Information Sheet for a Research Study

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This study is called *Meaning and Repair Negotiation between Nonnative English Speakers in a Peer Review Context*. The study is being done by Sara Brathwaite, a master's degree student at the University of Alabama.

Sara Brathwaite is being supervised by Dr. Dilin Liu, Professor of Applied Linguistics/TESOL in the English department at the University of Alabama.

What is this study about?

This study is being done to find out how nonnative English speakers interact during in-class peer review exercises. During this exercise, students will evaluate each other's work and later exchange their comments and suggestions during a recorded session. For this study, two drafts of each participant's essay will be analyzed as data as well.

Why is this study important--What good will the results do?

This knowledge is useful because it can help future English composition teachers and students (who speak English as a nonnative language) understand how these students interact during peer review, how they identify and resolve communication problems, and how (or if) these interactions translate to improvements in their written work.

Why have I been asked to take part in this study?

You have been asked to be in this study because you are currently a student in English 120, English Composition for Nonnative Speakers.

How many people besides me will be in this study?

About 11 other people will be in this study.

What will I be asked to do in this study?

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to do these things:

1. Students will be paired so that each participant has the maximum potential for educational gain from this experience.
2. Students will exchange papers prior to the recording session.
3. Students will evaluate their partner's paper at home, using a set of guidelines.

3. Students will be encouraged to analyze the paper for its strengths and weaknesses, and take notes on these features. They should be prepared to discuss and explain these observations during the recorded session.

a. **Students who do not want to be recorded have the option of not participating in the study, with no negative impact on their grade.** However, those students who choose not to be recorded will still participate in the peer review process, as it is a valuable opportunity to improve their paper and is a routine exercise in university-level composition classes.

4. **Participants in the study will be recorded** as they offer feedback on their partner's paper. The recording session will last 15-20 minutes.

5. Participants will also fill out a short peer review evaluation sheet. The questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes.

6. Participants will then be asked to reflect on their writing process, in writing, for about 10-15 minutes.

7. The recorded sessions will be transcribed and analyzed as data for this study.

How much time will I spend being in this study?

Being in this study will take about 3 hours total. One and a half to two hours will be spent on routine preparations for the peer review activity. Approximately one hour will be spent doing peer review, during which time the participants will be recorded.

Will I be paid for being in this study?

You will not be paid for being in this study.

Will being in this study cost me anything?

There will be no cost to you except for your time in completing these otherwise routine class activities.

Can the researcher take me out of this study?

The researcher may take you out of this study if s/he feels that being recorded is having a very negative impact on your ability to perform as a student and your ability to benefit from the peer review exercise.

What are the benefits (good things) that may happen to me if I am in this study?

Although benefits cannot be promised in research, you will have a chance to review others' work and have your own work reviewed. You may benefit from the suggestions of others and/or you may be able to improve your own editorial skills.

What are the benefits to scientists or society?

This study will help teachers of nonnative English speakers in writing classes, as well as the students themselves, anticipate the problems that occur during peer review interaction. Hopefully, educators will gain insight on how to solve these problems. In general, students and teachers will have a better idea of how to improve the process of peer review.

What are the risks (dangers or harm) to me if I am in this study?

There is a chance that some participants will feel uncomfortable while being recorded during peer review. In order to maximize the participants' comfort level, recordings will be done during class and only class members will be present. Once the study is completed, the recordings will be destroyed, and the names of the subjects will be changed to maintain their confidentiality.

How will my confidentiality (privacy) be protected? What will happen to the information the study keeps on me?

For the purposes of this study, participants' voices will be recorded and two versions of one written sample will be collected (a rough draft and a final draft). In order to maintain confidentiality, all participants' drafts will be identified by a number and their voices will be identified by fake name. During analysis, three raters (including the investigator) will look at the transcripts and written work for each student, in order to evaluate the changes that result from the peer review activity. Except for the investigator, these raters will not know the identity of the participants; rather, they will use the system of numbers and fake names to manage the data. All written drafts will be returned to the student, in accordance with the normal procedures of the class (i.e., after they are graded by the instructor), and all recorded data will be destroyed at the end of the project. The project will end in May, 2009.

What are the alternatives to being in this study? Do I have other choices?

The alternative to being in this study (i.e., being recorded during peer review) is not to participate (i.e., not be recorded). Students are still expected to participate in peer review as it is a valuable tool for writing improvement.

What are my rights as a participant?

Taking part in this study is voluntary—it is your free choice. You may choose not to take part at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of any benefits you would otherwise receive.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board (IRB) is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The IRB may review study records

Appendix B
Student Guideline Sheets

Name of Reviewer:

Name of Writer:

Revision Questions for Peer Reviewers: The Global Stage

The Thesis Sentence

1. Write the thesis sentence:

2. Is the overall purpose of the paper clear to you from the thesis sentence?
If not, how could it be improved?

3. Does the thesis adequately predict the paper's plan of development?

Support for the thesis

1. Does every paragraph in the paper clearly support the thesis?

2. Are there any portions of the paper that are unrelated to the thesis? (For example, are there any unnecessary summaries or sections of apparent padding?)
If so, which sections are they?

3. Are there sufficient examples and pieces of evidence to support the thesis persuasively?

Organization

1. Is the overall organization of the paper clear and effective?

2. Did you feel lost at any point?
If so, which point was it?

Insight

1. Does the paper convey interesting insights into its subject?

Overall quality

1. What are the paper's main strengths?

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. What are the paper's main weaknesses?

- a.
- b.
- c.

Suggestions for revision

1. What specific recommendations can you make concerning the revision of this paper?

- a.
- b.
- c.

Editing Questions for Peer Review: Local Stage

Transitions

1. Are the transitions between sections and paragraphs effective?
2. Did you feel lost at any point? Where?
If so, how could these transitions be improved?

Style

1. Is the style sufficiently clear, varied, and graceful?
2. Where are the unclear, monotonous, or awkward passages?
3. Is the style concise?
4. Do you see any wordy passages?
If so, which ones are they?
5. Do you see any clichés?
6. Do you see any excessive use of *to be* verb forms (*is, are, etc.*)?

Word Choice

1. Does the language seem appropriate for its intended audience?
2. Do you see any discriminatory language?
 - a. If so, where?
3. Do you see any excessively formal or informal language?
 - a. If so, where?

Mechanics

1. Have the mechanical details (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.) been handled accurately and carefully?
2. What (repeated) errors do you notice throughout the paper?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Peer Review Follow-Up Questionnaire:

1. How many semesters of college have you completed at this point?
2. What is your major? If you do not yet have a major, what do you think your major will be?
3. How long have you been studying English? _____ years and _____ months (approximately)
4. How long have you lived in the US? _____ years and _____ months (approximately)
5. Have you ever done peer review before at this University? ____ Yes ____ No.
6. Have you ever done peer review at another University? ____ Yes ____ No.

6. Using the following scale, rate how beneficial you think this exercise has been/will be for your current paper: (By “beneficial,” I mean, do you think you can use your partner’s suggestions and comments to improve your paper? To what extent do you think these comments and suggestions will be beneficial?)

Not beneficial Somewhat beneficial Pretty beneficial Very beneficial

7. Using the following scale, rate how effectively you felt like you were able to express your ideas, opinions, and suggestions about your partner’s work to that person. Do you feel like you were able to express your thoughts effectively?

Not effectively Somewhat effectively Pretty effectively Very effectively

8. Using the following scale, rate how clearly you understood your partner’s comments, suggestions, and opinions. Do you think he or she expressed his or her ideas effectively? (This does not mean that you had to agree with their ideas; rather, it is simply a question of whether you understood those ideas.)

Not effectively Somewhat effectively Pretty effectively Very effectively

9. Overall, rate how easily you were able to converse with your partner (i.e., how well you understood each other during conversation):

We did not understand each other well We understood each other somewhat

We understood each other pretty well We understood each other very well.

9. Overall, rate how effective you think peer review is for improving an essay:

Not effective Somewhat effective Pretty effective Very effective

Comments:

Appendix C

Verification of the Data

Verifying Peer Review Data

General Directions

For both sets of data, I request that you look at the data as it is presented, and evaluate each set according to the parameters I have laid out below. To do this, follow these steps:

- Read the “Directions for Verifying Spoken Data” and “Directions for Verifying Written Data.” At the end of each set of directions is a summary.
- Look at an example page for each type of data.
- Look over the data. (There are three sets of data for each type: 3 transcripts of spoken data, and 3 sets of student rough and final drafts.)
- For each separate piece of data, evaluate it according to the parameters given.
- Enter your evaluations as laid out in the directions for each type of data.
- Do these steps for both sets of data.

Directions for Verifying Spoken Data

Background: The spoken data consist of transcriptions of the first fifteen minutes of the peer review sessions. I used periods (.) to indicate a full stop and dashes (--) to indicate when the speaker has been interrupted by the other person. Also, when the speaker is quoting from the text, I put his or her words in quotation marks (“”). Anything that is unclear on the tape is written as [unclear]. Also, I gave fake names to all of the participants to protect their identities. I told the students they could offer positive and negative comments, and I gave them a set of guidelines by which they could evaluate their peer’s paper. Some students relied on the guidelines heavily (even quoting from that worksheet), and some did not use them at all.

In my initial analysis, I first went through and separated the language episodes into separate topics and suggestions. To highlight a particular language episode, click on the comment box.

Your first step is to code each language episode as “on-task,” “about-task,” or “off-task.”

- “On-task” episodes are those during which the dyad discussed elements of the drafts before them by offering positive feedback or constructive criticism. Instances of reading the student draft aloud are also considered to be on-task episodes.
- “About-task” episodes are defined as those episodes in which the students discussed something related to the draft, but not directly pertaining to the draft itself. This includes discussion of the peer review task, the objectives or rules for the task or for the class, the demands of the task or class, the grammatical rules of English, or the meta-text that a participant analyzed in his or her paper. Episodes labeled as about-task are not subject to any further analysis.
- “Off-task” episodes are defined as any language episodes in which the participants strayed away from the activity at hand and discussed other, unrelated matters. These episodes are not subjected to any further analysis.

Next, focus on the “on-task” episodes in which one partner offered—or both partners discussed—a suggestion (or a criticism of one person’s draft). For each on-task suggestion,

determine whether the participants were discussing a global or a local issue. Use your best judgment.

- Global issues are defined as organization, content, or *recurring* lexico-syntactic problems.
- Local issues are defined as word-level problems (either semantic or syntactic), punctuation, some sentence-level problems (including starting a new sentence or combining two sentence into one) and problems with writing conventions (including punctuation, spacing, titles, etc.).
- Problems with thesis statements are a little hard to categorize—sometimes they are global (for example, “your thesis doesn’t match your topic sentences, you need to change one of them to make them match,”) and sometimes they are local (“this word/phrase in your thesis is wrong, you need to fix it or change it to this”). Use your best judgment here.

Next, all on-task suggestions need to be coded according to the degree of interaction between the participants, in order to understand whether the participants were simply doling out suggestions and instructions, or whether they were actually negotiating these suggestions. Each on-task suggestion should be labeled as one of the following: “reader non-interactive,” “basic interactive,” or “negotiated.”

- Reader non-interactive episodes are those in which one party gives their comments or critiques without input from their partner, the writer. Basically, the reader offers his or her opinion in monologue format.
- ‘Basic interactive’ suggestions are those in which the reader offers his or her comments or suggestions, and the writer responds with simple backchanneling cues (‘uh-huh,’ ‘yea’ or ‘yah,’ and ‘mhmm’), immediate agreement (‘ok’ or ‘yes’), or laughter. In these episodes, the reader does most of the talking, and the writer responds in an immediate or superficial way. There is no real negotiation of meaning between the two participants.
- ‘Negotiated’ suggestions indicate that two participants were actively seeking to build or clarify meaning (within the text or regarding something said in conversation). The negotiations do not necessarily have to be successful in order to be labeled as such. Instead, episodes that contain negotiation represent an *opportunity* for one or both participants to come to a deeper or more tangible understanding of a problematic language element.

Summary:

In order to verify the spoken data, you need to...

1. Open the document entitled “Transcripts for Verification.”
2. Look at my example transcript.
3. Read through the other 3 transcriptions.
4. Note how, on the transcripts, I’ve already separated the language episodes into separate topics and suggestions.
5. Code each episode as “on-task,” “about-task,” or “off-task”
6. Identify the “on-task” episodes
7. Code each on-task episode as either “global” or “local”
8. Code each on-task episode as “reader non-interactive,” “basic interactive” or “negotiated”

9. Enter your codes in the comment boxes to the side of the text.
10. Save and send to me.

Directions for Verifying Written Data

Background: Each student turned in two drafts of a paper. The drafts are attached in order (rough draft first, final draft second). See the document entitled “Student Rough and Final Drafts for Evaluation.” On the rough drafts, many students have made marks and written comments—ignore those marks. On the final drafts, I highlighted places where changes occurred, made notes to myself about what the student changed, and evaluated the change as either positive, neutral, or negative. Since I had to scan the students’ drafts after I evaluated them, these marks and highlights obscure some of the text. You do not need to be able to read my marks. I have tried to include the best copies of each draft.

The first thing to do is read both of the drafts. The drafts are pretty short, 2-5 pages each. They are from both 120 and 121 classes, so they are either analyzing Amy Tan’s “Mother Tongue” (for 121 students) or they are doing a process analysis assignment (for 120 students).

Next, compare the two drafts and look at the changes that show up in the final draft. You can follow my marks (as I have already identified all of the changes). The changes are also given on the table in which you will enter your evaluations (see the document entitled “Table for Evaluating Written Data”). In other words, you do not need to identify the changes for yourself; they are given to you.

Once you see which changes have been made, you then need to evaluate those changes as “positive,” “neutral,” or “negative.” Evaluate the changes in terms of their effect: how well does the new version conform to the standards and expectations of written English in a university-level ESL classroom? **Ignore my evaluations.**

- Positive: Those revisions that changed word, phrase, or sentence from non-native to native-like grammatical usage are considered positive.
- Neutral: changes from already native-like grammatical usage to another form of native-like usage (for example, ‘the author uses’ v. ‘the author is using’) or from one non-native-like grammatical usage to another, are considered neutral.
- Negative: those revisions that changed native-like grammatical forms to non-native like forms, or further confused a non-native like grammatical form, are considered negative.

Once you have made your judgments, enter them into the table below. On the table, I have written each student-writer’s (fake) name, the page on their final draft, and the changes they made per page. If you cannot determine an evaluation for one of the changes (or if you cannot read the text), just skip it.

Summary:

In order to verify the written data, you need to...

1. Open the document entitled “Student Rough and Final Drafts for Evaluation.”
2. Look at my example draft.
3. Read through the other three sets of drafts.

4. Identify the changes from the rough draft to the final draft. You can also see the changes on the table entitled “Table for Evaluating the Written Data.”
5. Evaluate each change as “positive,” “neutral” or “negative.”
6. Enter your evaluations in the table.
7. Save and send to me.

EXAMPLE TRANSCRIPT

Lin and Kwan: EN 120 Process Analysis Essays

Lin: Ummm, I think there's ...some...problem with the sentence...like, the—like, you have to drive a car, and get a “for”...what—what this mean?...This sentence? Uh, I think—

Kwan: Ahh it means...yea it missing—

Lin: I think a little more—yea, this one, I think—

Kwan: Ah...

Lin: And...I think uh... “*can't*”—uh this is the—the informal way, to write. You need to separate the *can* and *not*. Uh...

Kwan: But, teacher—teacher never talk about it.

Lin: Uh but the—like, for the last time, when we figure out the grammar, like the problem...said...said this. And...a few different—different things, maybe you can change to different policy, you should do more...[unclear] Uhhh I *don't* think the separate here and not

Kwan: --mhmm—

Lin: --um here. I think it's a little bit. I-I think this is what the—I don't think use the [unclear].

Kwan: The—the—the way of to get the driver license is complicating. So I—I w—I was complicating to get the driver license. [pause] It—it is complicating, so I can [unclear]

Lin: I—I think uh...it is...“complicated”—I—I'm not sure about this one, I think—and um, yes... I—I think you describe all the goals and...and this—in that case, I'm not sure that...the which one...

Kwan: This I keep; I like this.

Lin: [laughs] And ummm...umm eh—here you to write—I think, “big...rude” [pause] um, that's the—I think the logic here ...and...another a—a new one...and here is all separate. [pause] “I think uh you might need to borrow a car”—I think uh *they* didn't get a driver license yet, so you say for a car—how—how can they drive?

Kwan: You can tell—I supposed, they—they, I assume that they are—like they have an international driver license—

Lin: Ohhh.

Kwan: Do you see?

Lin: Maybe—could be—

Kwan: I—I mention that.

Lin: You need make it more clear. Uhhh...and [unclear]?

Kwan: If you are working in the deporta—department of drivers license. [unclear]

Lin: So, uhh...

Kwan: Who work in there—the department.

Lin: May—maybe you can make it more clear uh about the uh—the documents.

Kwan: Cuz I mention you're going to—here, again—

Lin: --but in...like you ummm, because here you have ‘they’ and ‘them’—like think [unclear]

Kwan: Alright.

[pause]

Lin: “Here are—there are cars driving against them and racing against them and driving against them”—maybe you can have comma or something, or uh, ‘There are two cars, which are...’

Kwan: Mhh, so you can—maybe you can remove that—

Lin: --what?

Kwan: You can remove, remove “the cars which are.”

Lin: Yea.

[pause]

Lin: I think here is “at”—the past—

Kwan: Mhmm.

Lin: I think here we can choose another one...another...[pause]...Uh, here...spelling?

Kwan: [unclear]

Lin: Oh, no—the “choose,” “choose Korea.” I think it’s ‘c-h-o-o-s-e.’

Kwan: It’s past tense though—it’s past, when I choose the past I choose the Korean language.

Lin: Ohh.

Kwan: Korea—Korean.

Lin: Yea—uh, I think you need to add uh, a transition word? Like ‘as a result,’ or ‘then’ they can get a...and...here, also and...I think you need like, transition word. [pause] Oh, not here. Yea, that’s all.

Kwan: There’s so many.

Lin: Oh no—this one is based on what I say.

Kwan: Because you changed the word grammar—that, that question—

Lin: --yea—

Kwan: --so I will not care about the content...if there are all right, there’s strong thesis...let’s talk about—about my content...

Lin: Uhhh, yea, I think your, like, thesis statement is clear—like, you want to write about the process of getting a driver license. And...but I think wh—uh for the topic, when an international student see it—like, this is the audience, for an international student—

Kwan: --mhmm—

Lin: --and they will be interested, this paper. But that’s the—American, I think you need to make it more clear...

Kwan: ...well...you can take your time...

Lin: [laughs] No, I—that’s all.

Kwan: ...you can take your time...

Lin: Yea, I think the problem is the transition word—

Kwan: --uh huh—

Lin: --that’s the logic...of the sentence...yea.

Kwan: Alright, uh...your thesis statement very clear, and well your thesis was good. And it—uh, your uh paper main weakness—I thought like, you were talking too general, so when you write your ending—when you wrote your examples, I think that—it’s not like—it’s not that—it’s too general I think, not like...specific to your like...your experience—experience, or... I—I don’t—even though you looked like your experience, I don’t feel like...just general...so...

Lin: So you think it’s too general?...about the...

Kwan: Everything...I felt like that [pause] Ummm, the problem is very good here, “I don’t know the director’s name or the name of the street. I—I consider that same [unclear]?” You—you can say the sentence as connect as one sentence, you can just the such kind uh—such kind of situation, but you can use like transition word—you can make one sentence if you use word—transition word.

Lin: You mean, ‘but’...

Kwan: Yea, ‘but,’ ‘and,’ ‘so’...yea. One more problem was your conclusion was too short so...right there.

Lin: My what was too short?

Kwan: Your conclusion.

Lin: Conclusion!

Kwan: Yea...maybe so...but it's not finished yet...so, I guess you need more like—

Lin: --add more?

Kwan: Yea. I guess that's all. [sigh] And I couldn't—I couldn't understand here, like—

Lin: You can not understand?

Kwan: Yea...you just—it just writes about anything, and I think it should be—oh like uh—a negative sentence? But you put—yea, negative so...you—yea, you want to say, 'You felt—you—you usually feel you—you didn't—you haven't done anything'...

Lin: Okay, so—

Kwan: --you didn't, right? In your paper, you 'didn't do anything.'

Lin: Yea. Oh--okay, I—I know. [laughs] So, I should change to you...what I do, 'You haven't done anything'—cross out the 'not'?

Kwan: 'You couldn't have did anything'—right? 'You couldn't—didn't do' ...?

Lin: Yea, I—

Kwan: You couldn't so you bad. 'Oh, I didn't know so'—you bad, you bad like that! I think this is general, right?

Lin: Yea—

Kwan: So, you did the...whole idea here...like me. And...the other thing is your...[unclear]...I'm not sure, I didn't really complete all of it...so it's very good. It was easy [unclear], so if they don't believe me [unclear]

[pause]

Lin: So, you thing my *topic* too general? Like, what--?

Kwan: Yea...

Lin: But maybe I say like, how to control your—how to use your day time useful...

Kwan: I—I think, good.

Lin: Yea, because that's my paragraph...like...figure out how to make your daily life useful. Like your—

Kwan: --yea, yea, yea—

TRANSCRIPT 1

Chun and Xia: EN 120 Process Analysis Essays

Chun: Okay...ummm...I guess your...writing skill is better than me, but I just turn it back to figure some mistakes—

Xia: --oh—

Chun: --and uh...the mistakes are very, very few...but uh...I guess maybe in this way...maybe put some “and”...uh, uh...or some ah...maybe, maybe put some [unclear] in the first and second, mmmm. Ahhh another thing...uh, I guess, your grammar is pretty good, and your sentence structure is also m pretty...ummm...m here’s your changed sentence pattern, always, but uh in my opinion, I guess um, the sentences is kind of lock—locker? Mmmm...

Xia: Too longer?

Chun: Ah, yea, kind of longer. Uhhh, I guess if you put it shorter, will try to put it much more...clearly. It can make your essay much...stronger—I’m not sure, but just my opinion. And second one is that, umm...this—this topic is about how to teach English students to write good essays, and to write. And sometimes I just ah, mmm...found that you focus on the teach—teaching process in class, not, not very effectly for teaching classes ahh to write good essays. I’m not sure, but—but kind of, yea—

Xia:--yea—

Chun: --I—if I were you, I would focus on how to write essays for English students—teach, teach them...uhhh...and the third thing is that...I guess there is a lot of introduction...like the second paragraph...uhhh it’s call—it’s prepare them—it’s prepare students—how to prepare—how to be in [unclear]...

Xia: Emmm...uhhhh...

Chun: Students [unclear]?

Xia: Uhhh, for teacher, for uhhh, for teacher starting to...teach...maybe to write the...the classroom.

Chun: Uhhh the uhhh, this is classroom?

Xia: Before we write we need to know that student will know—will not know everything.

Chun: Oh, okay.

Xia: So—so, they have to think about—

Chun: --uh huh—

Xia: --the—uh, the steps of the uhhh the teaching, from the—latitude, from come [unclear]—

Chun: --ahhh, yea—

Xia: --so, I want to give—tell the [unclear] toward the teacher—

Chun: --ahhh—

Xia: --they need to know that student ar—will not know everything—

Chun: --yea, yea. That—that—that’s a—that’s a good thing, but I just put the...in the many [unclear], I just write it like...ahh...not only stuff you’re doing, but so many introduction for each paragraph. So I just suggestion you that ummm you write some call... *doing* things, not action, introduction—I’m not sure—

Xia: --I think this way—

Chun: --because you speak, your—your writing here is much more better than me. I just turn my back to, to some [laughs] little mistakes, yea. And uhhh uhhh...yea, yea—just, just, this is my many—my many introduction. Your essay—overall, your essay is pretty good—

Xia: --yes, like what?

Chun: Ahhhh, it's clearly, because after write—write your paper, I know how to—how to make mine better.

Xia: Uhhh, I think here I say uhhh, you need more—more, you need to improve your grammar mistakes—

Chun: --oh, yea, yea, yea—

Xia: --and some...some sentences such as the first one, I—I can't really understand and I—I don't think it's English grammar.

Chun: --oh yea—

Xia: --so, can I ask now, where—whe—do you translate from Chinese--?

Chun: --uhhh, there's a first—uhhh, it—it's like...I say Chinese?

Xia: Do you translate from Chinese? Or you—where do you get this sentence?

Chun: Ummm, I get this sentence from a book.

Xia: Ah.

Chun: From a book, uh, it's like...*How to be a—How to Enjoy Your Life...*

Xia: Ummm. Do you translate by yourself?

Chun: Uhhh—

Xia: No?

Chun: No. Not just translate by myself—

Xia: Is the book in Chinese or in Eng—

Chun: It's in Chinese.

Xia: So you translate?

Chun: Yea.

Xia: Yea. [sigh] I think this one...has some...problems.

Chun: Yea, yea.

Xia: So I say, somehow I can understand but I think the grammar is not English.

Chun: Okay.

Xia: And...and I correct some...

Chun: Uh huh—

Xia: --a—a few grammar mistakes.

Chun: Yea, yea.

Xia: And, everyday—everyday life—it should be combined...

Chun: Uh huh—

Xia: --for—for “daily life.” I—I check my [unclear]

Chun: Uh huh, oh, okay. Thank you.

Xia: And I think, some...something about...uhhh...ahhh...I don't know, I—I think “forever”—I check my fla—my dictionary and I think in English it's *not* going to...end...

Chun: Oh, *not*...

Xia: And...

Chun: Okay, I—I got it. So this one is right, right?

Xia: Mhmmm.

Chun: Okay.

Xia: And it's missed spelling—

Chun: --okay—

Xia: --it's funny—

Chun: Ohhh!

Xia: Oh, sorry. Oh yea, yea. And so, I can—I can't understand this sentence.

Chun: Oh, yea. I guess that...are doing—are making coffee not uh...emmm...it's not for...it's not for...mm us. Before I met him, my parents will give me some money after my, after cooking a big summer job...and I just decide in this my preference is not for...for they give me that money.

Xia: Oh. [pause] It's money. [laughs]

Chun: Yea, yea. Hot coffee...hot coffee...hot coffee is wrong, I'm sorry.

Xia: Uhhhh, I think, change this...

Chun: Yea, I know.

Xia: Now I know it's money, ok. [laughs] Now I understand...uhhh mmm...um, you—in your paper I saw some your personal--

Chun: --mhmm—

Xia: --opinions, and your experience —

Chun: --mmmm—

Xia: --when you are a child, but...I—I—I really don't know if the first personal voice you can put into this kind of instructional...process essay...

Chun: Mhmm

Xia: So...let me ask you question, to, to... our teacher--?

Chun: Mmm.

Xia: --because usually I don't write my thesis—my personal—my personal experience in this kind of thing—

Chun: --oh, yea—

Xia: --so, sometimes you say, you need to do this, this, this, and then you say, when I was a child, and I feel confused, why I need to know when you were a child?

Chun: Ohhh, okay. This part is not very useful for the step, right?

Xia: Yea, I think...

Chun: --okay—

Xia: ...I think your write quite...quite a lot of...

Chun: --okay, okay—

Xia: ...your personal...experience...

Chun: --okay, okay, yea—

Xia: ...so, I don't think I can...

Chun: --yea—

Xia: ...say yes or no...[laughs]

Chun: Thank you.

Xia: Ummm...from oral...to going to oral...is not formal use...like...[pause] I—ah, usually we don't put “but” in first word of sentence—

Chun: --ohhh, okay—

Xia: I think it's a contraction, but I really saw from book, and they did put “but,” in the—

Chun: --oh, the first?—

Xia: --yea, so...I'm not sure...[laughs]

Chun: Oh, ah, yea.

Xia: But some—when I see some—when I read some newspapers, they did put “but” in the first word, but I was—teacher told us not to do this—

Chun: --mhmm—

Xia: --but I see it in newspapers [laughs] so I don't know which is right. [pause] You see, so, it's really oral.

Chun: Oh...

Xia: You need to put *therefore*, or *hence* “she and he”; it’s more formal in...writing.

[pause]

Chun: Yea, I got it. Thank you.

Xia: If I say...if I say, “I’m not sure” in your ehh speech, when I check my dictionary—dictionary—it’s [Chinese word] means...

Chun: Ahhhhh, yes...

Xia: [Chinese word] So it’s not very appropriate...

Chun: Thank you.

TRANSCRIPT 2

Yasir and Chin: EN 120 Process Analysis Essays

Yasir: I'll start—I'll start, okay?

Chin: Go ahead.

Yasir: Ummm, your um, [unclear] I found your topic was like, really interesting... ummm... one thing about the—about the um, introduction—I like your beginning like using information about your fabric and uh I think you have choose like, big thesis, and I think that, you have add them in the... “This way if a can see from the University park clear enough from the first thing.”

Ummm, there's like some small mistakes—you're probably adding like some certain words that you don't need to... ummm just like “thing,” like that one here. Ah, you said, “that sort of business is necessary to all the people” ah I think it's gonna be more clear and more curt if you say, “it's necessary for all people in the world.” And I think um here, in the first sentence you added “that need”—I think it's not fair—not necessary, so if you want to just go ahead and just write “the people in the world to think at least once about...” it would be like, more correct in my opinion. Ummm, I like thesis statement as I told you, there are clear. Ummm, beginning with the first body paragraph, I found out you, like, almost you write the same way—ah, you started—you start the topic sentence actually like the same way—the ideas written in the thesis statement, so, myself I think it's better if you wrote the same ideas, just different words, like to make your paper stron—more interesting, like choosing another word.

Chin: [sigh]

Yasir: Just like to give it a beautiful picture. Uh I think one thing I liked in your paper, like, it's—I consider it just like one of the strength points in your paper, it's the example you added in the paragraph. Uh I think it's supposed—you argue for me that, you make it easy for me to understand the idea without even leaving too [unclear]. So this is definitely one of the strength points—one of the strength points in your essay. Ummm...um, in your first draft, I found right here, in this sentence—I don't know, it seems like could be a true sentence, I mean a correct sentence, but I think it would be better if you had added, um, a verb, between that word from the end, “lay.” Uh, as I told you, thought about. I think the same—the same thing with the uh I think the second paragraph—I think you have started with the topic sentence, but, exactly almost the same words are in the thesis statement. So I found this—eh, it's not a mistake, but I found it uh—repeated in every paragraph, I have found, also that—that thing in the third paragraph. Ah you—you uh, just put the uh, third statement that—that topic sentence, so I think, it's better for you but change it, just to give it like um, beautiful picture or more interesting. Um, another thing about—I liked about your essay, like the um organization of the essay, I think it's perfect. You have made the um, a good—a good organization; you start with the introduction, you had the thesis statement at the bottom of your paragraph. Topic, you explained it to me. Umm...like the—the body paragraph, with the same sentences, regardless if they are the same words, but uh, style and the organization in paragraph... of your essays you know... good. Uh, yea, I think the only thing I found about your es—you weakness about, as I—as I told you, the uh I think repeating the same words of the—in the thesis statement about you—I think it's the only weakness in your essay. Ummm, things I... I recommend for you--ah, add transactions, if you can. Some ideas need to be emphasized, like for example, if you can write them in another word, like ‘on the other hand,’ or I don't know—it would be, it would affect like extra—extra strength for the importance for... [pause] Ah, another thing I recommend is like, if you come up with different words for topic sentences and uh, the conclusion uh, I see you went the mistake when you repeated the

same ideas in the conclusion. But as I told you more in the topic sentences, you choose exactly the same words, so I would recommend you like change um the topic sentences and repeat maybe the conclusion, if you can. Like, talk in another words, it would make your astute. [pause] Um, I think this is about it.

Chin: Are you done?

Yasir: Yea.

Chin: Well, I read your essay—your paper, something to do with trying to find the perfect apartment...I might not know some words in the paper, but...I just tried to read how the organization is, you know, what you're saying, what you're—the structures the paper and stuff—

Yasir: --mhmm—

Chin: --aaand your paper's have introductions, have a first part, a second part, and a third part, to support your main ideas, and you got a conclusion at the end left...and I can get your...main idea which is how to find an apartment in Tuscaloosa, it is pretty interesting thesis statement I guess—

Yasir: --mhmm—

Chin: --and your supporting—supporting bodies were [unclear] for me, I can understand what you're saying, pretty clear. Like, in the essays, the weakness that you *had* was like, repeating what you were like—in the paper you say like, 'also,' 'also'; too much the same words.

Yasir: So...I mean the tri—triflection—introduction....

Chin: 'Another,' 'another,' that—'also,' and 'another'—

Yasir: --okay—

Chin: --I see a lot of 'also' and 'another'

Yasir: --so just—

Chin: --stuff like that—

Yasir: --okay, okay.

Chin: And...a few silly mistake here...as I told you, I guess you have a very [unclear] And, yea, whatever about the thesis statement I knew, I think you have it I guess—what's gonna come later, and the answer the questions that—

Yasir: You think that uhh my thesis statement was—was—my thesis were clear, to you?

Chin: Mhmm, your thesis was clear, I can tell what you're saying, and you can kind of see the words that comes up later, almost the—at the ending of the paper, so.

Yasir: Okay, okay.

Chin: Mmm I like your topic sentence, that's really good, I just write. If you're...house that's wide away from the campus, that's more...more...more difficult *have* a class that you get up in the day and come back—

Yasir: --uh huh—

Chin: --so I like your, I like your paper almost. Just words—like what I suggested is use more, like variety of words, that you think or—

Yasir: --okay, okay—

Chin: --thought about another word for...and use more transitions.

Yasir: Okay, okay.

Chin: Yea and, like, in the middle...of the passage...I kinda feel that it kinda goes like, wordy or stuff like—

Yasir: Okay, well, what about passage?

Chin: [pause] I don't know [unclear] So, in some sections I think like kind of words—kind of like you know kind of bad.

Yasir: Okay.

Chin: Yea maybe edit more often. You know it happens all the time, it's not a big deal.

Yasir: Okay.

Chin: Just try to explain more...do that...[pause] Yea I don't know, I—this is pretty good, I don't know any problems at all. But, I like your ideas, I like your structures, I like your examples in the paper...it's good. [pause] That's about it.

TRANSCRIPT 3

Jiao and Cho: EN 121 Argument Analyses of Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue"

Jiao: Uhhh, I think...ummm I think that your organization's good, um, I think you do well, ummm, your thesis—thesis' clear, and your topic sentences for each part...is clear. But I think you need umm to write a conclusion...

Cho: [laughs]

Jiao: Yea, and I uhh, and another thing is I think that you forgot to write is...is the tool ummm effective...at the end of each paragraph.

Cho: Yea...

Jiao: And umm...there's another thing that ummm...your ummm your fourth paragraph, you write, "The author's use of logos is found in facts and statistics." But—I think it's—you didn't give the example for how does the author use the statistics.

Cho: It could be the that [unclear] when she wrote—

Jiao: Oh!

Cho: --the number of statistics...and uhh...

Jiao: Is the organization part is clear...?

Cho: I think your ummm organization's really clear, but it's kind of like, did you mean...in the—this thing to be ummm, pathos? And then...logos?

Jiao: I think maybe I should write down like, pathos, ethos, logos...

Cho: You meant to...put logos there, right? "The author uses tool about logical appeal..." right?

Jiao: I think that's lo—logos, but how to...?

Cho: I think that's nar—narrative—

Jiao: Narrative! Yea.

[Pause]

Cho: In the...fourth paragraph, you can maybe put some strong examples of narrative...because it is not that strong...she doesn't give any details...

Jiao: Ohhh...

Cho: Yea, maybe give more examples...

Jiao: Yea.

[Pause]

Jiao: I don't know—I think you can put more intona—transitional words. I saw that you use like, more open—I feel like umm, in these two paragraphs, you can put that—

Cho: --I didn't put any transition?

Jiao: This...is...I mean you can do it in this part, because this—

Cho: --oh, okay—

Jiao: --you can do it here.

[pause]

Jiao: The main thing is, uhhh put like, again in your thesis. And it's clear for me.

Cho: Well, I was concerned about it.

[pause]

Cho: Do you think this is really clear? Um, summarize the whole paragraph?

Jiao: I think so.