

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WRITTEN AND ORAL  
FEEDBACK ON EFL WRITING PERFORMANCE**

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**ADVISOR**

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T.C.  
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TEZ BEYAN FORMU

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## SOSYAL BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

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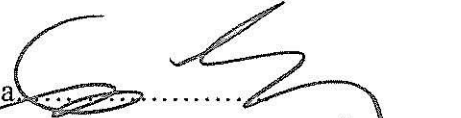
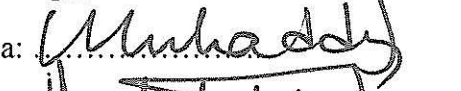

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**ÖZET****YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ****İNGİLİZCE YAZMA BAŞARISINDA YAZILI VE SÖZLÜ GERİ BİLDİRİM  
TÜRLERİNİN VERİMLİLİĞİ****Özgür ŞAHAN****Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Muzaffer BARIN****2012, Sayfa: 69****Jüri: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Muzaffer BARIN (Danışman)  
Prof. Dr. Mukadder ERKAN  
Prof. Dr. Mehmet TAKKAÇ**

Geribildirim yazma becerisinin gelişmesinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Nitekim öğretmenin verdiği yazılı dönütler ve bire bir öğrenci görüşmeleri, her iki geribildirim türünün nasıl uygulanması gerektiği, öğrencilerin geribildirim türleri hakkındaki düşünceleri üzerine yapılan araştırmalar, ikinci dil ve yabancı dil olarak İngilizce kompozisyon öğretimi literatüründe çok geniş bir yer tutmaktadır. Yapılan çalışmaların bazıları birbirlerini desteklerken bazılarında ise çelişkili sonuçlar ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin kompozisyonlarını karşılaştırmak ve geribildirim türlerinin öğrencilerin yazdıkları kompozisyonlar üzerindeki muhtemel etkisini araştırmaktır.

Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları, Atatürk Üniversitesi Kazım Karabekir Eğitim Fakültesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği birinci sınıfta eğitim gören öğrencilerdir. Sınıf kontrol ve deney grubu olmak üzere ikiye bölünmüş ve öğrencilerin bir dönem boyunca haftalık rutin kompozisyonlarında yapmış oldukları dilbilgisi hatalarına kontrol grubu öğrencileri öğretmen tarafından verilen dönütler almış, deney grubu öğrencileri ise kompozisyonlarında yaptıkları hatalarla ilgili geribildirimi veren araştırmacı ile bire bir görüşmelerde bulunmuştur. Süreçte elde edilen veriler SPSS 15 kullanılarak analiz edilip yorumlanmıştır. Ön-testte her iki öğrenci grubunun hata ortalamalarına dair sonuçlar gruplar arasında farklılık olmadığını gösterirken, yapılan son-testte bire bir görüşmelerle geribildirim alan deney grubunun hata ortalamalarında azalma gözlenmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yabancı Dilde Kompozisyon Yazma, Öğretmen Yazılı Dönütü, Öğrenci-Öğretmen Görüşmeleri



**ABSTRACT****MASTER'S THESIS****THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WRITTEN AND ORAL FEEDBACK ON EFL  
WRITING PERFORMANCE****Özgür ŞAHAN****Advisor: Assist. Prof. Muzaffer BARIN****2012, Page: 69****Jury: Assist. Prof. Muzaffer BARIN (Advisor)  
Prof. Dr. Mukadder ERKAN  
Prof. Dr. Mehmet TAKKAÇ**

Feedback plays a crucial role in the process of the development of writing skill. However, studies undertaken on the effectiveness of teacher written feedback and one to one conferencing feedback, and students' responds to these particular types of feedback occupy a significant place in the literature of ESL (English as a second language) and EFL (English as a foreign language) writing. Although some studies have yielded similar results, some others have come up with conflicting findings. The purpose of this study was to compare EFL students' essays which received different types of feedback and to examine possible impact of different types of feedback upon their writing.

The sample group consists of first year students at Atatürk University Kazım Karabekir School of Education, English Language Teaching Department. The class was divided into control and experimental groups. Control group received teacher written feedback while experimental group received one to one conferencing feedback to the grammatical errors in their weekly essays. Data collected through the process were analyzed with SPSS 15 and interpreted. While pretest results demonstrated no significant differences between the control and the experimental groups, comparatively fewer errors were observed in one to one conferencing feedback group out of posttest results.

**Key Words:** Foreign Language Writing, Teacher-Written Feedback, One to One Conferencing Feedback

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present an overview of the thesis. It will inform about background of the study, purpose and significance of the study, related research questions with the thesis. It will also describe the context of the study briefly besides explaining the limitations and key terminology of the study.

#### 1.1. GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Learning a language occurs in a certain process. However, it is systematic in the classroom environment for all the language skills (writing, speaking, reading, and listening). Writing seems as the most challenging even for the native speakers of the language as it is the most neglected in terms of both learners and instructors. Writing is not only the process of bringing the words together but also the resulting product of that process. As there is a production at the end of the process, we can term the writing skill as the productive way of the language.

As the ability to write down a sentence is different from to write down a persuasive composition about an important topic, no single definition can be made for writing and testing it. Besides that, separate definitions should cover L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) writing skills. Silva (1993) found many differences between L1 writing and L2 writing with regard to both composing processes and features of written texts. Writing in the first language can be defined as adapting the knowledge of the language to a specialized and technical version of the language and it is linked to formal education, but it is not very simple in the second language as it is in first language. As second language learners are novice in four skills of the language and the system of writing is very different from their first language's, they may have problems with regard to a lot of aspects such as planning, reviewing, fluency, structure, word order, etc. because of the constraints of limited second-language knowledge, writing in a second language may be hampered because of the need to focus on language rather than content. Silva (1993: 668) supports this idea claiming that writing in a second language tends to be *'more constrained, more difficult, and less effective than in first language'*.

In a world becoming more global day-by-day, the importance of a common language with four skills is unavoidably increasing. The ability to speak and write both in first and second language has a significant role in many aspects such as communication, education, business, etc. and writing effectively is becoming increasingly important in second language teaching for these global factors. Today, the number of the non-native speakers of English is much more than the native ones. This fact brings the need to learn English in the earlier ages, because students need English to follow the innovations at every stage of the education.

The developments in scientific dimension with writing emerged in 1970s (Raines, 1991; Nystrand, Green & Wiemelt, 1993). Before that time, writing was seen as an activity to perform the structures, and linguistic features of the language's grammar. Because of being the most neglected one among the four skills of the language, writing was also seen just as homework but with the increasing demand of communication in written form in the world, language teachers and researchers have been in search of improving the writing skill of the learners.

The factors underlined above force the instructors to give more significance to writing and speaking skills. As the role of writing in second-language education increases, there is a great demand for suitable and reliable ways to test writing ability of the learners. In this respect, writing skill has been started to be dealt in the classrooms. One point should be kept in mind that whichever skill instructors teach, "practice" plays a key role to achieve the ideal perfection. Leki (1991a) supports this idea stating the most efficient way to learn writing is writing again. Hence, students need help in the learning process. How the help reaches students, who provides the help for the students and in which ways it can be more efficient are some of the main questions to be investigated to find the most suitable and efficient way of learning and teaching a language. Therefore, many studies have been done in both L1 and L2 writing. The errors students make in their drafts and how those errors occur have been in the centre of studies of writing.

The language teachers generally provide assistance needed in writing, so language teachers play a role not only as instructor but also as "*reviser*", "*editor*", "*guide*" and "*marker*" (Eyleyen, 2008: 3). Connected with these positions of the teachers, how to

deal with the errors students make has attracted too much attention of the teachers and researchers for more than 30 years.

In assessing writing, giving feedback to students to overcome these errors may increase the accuracy of writing. Then, feedback can be defined as the clues given as written or oral, direct or indirect to the students for editing their errors. From the definition of feedback, correction of the errors may have a prominent role for the improvement of writing. However, many studies have been done about L2 writing and feedback in L2 writing (Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Roberts 2001; Truscott 1996, 1999).

Although feedback is seen very crucial in education for both encouraging students and consolidating learning (Anderson, 1982 ; Brophy, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978), there still exist many questions answered partially about feedback and Hyland & Hyland ( 2006: 2) underlined these questions;

- *What kinds of feedback are most appropriate in different contexts?*
- *What are the most effective teacher practices?*
- *How do students perceive and respond to feedback?*
- *How do cultural factors influence response?*
- *Does feedback improve student writing in the long term?*

Besides the studies trying to find answers to the above questions, there have also been studies investigating whether giving feedback is useful for the students or not (Chaney 1999; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1997; Komura, 1999; Truscott, 1996, 1999). While Chaney (1999), Fathman and Whalley (1990), Ferris (1997) and Komura (1999) find that students were able to successfully edit the errors with the help of feedback given by the teachers, Truscott (1999) advises teachers to find an alternative for treating students' errors. The researcher also (1996) highlights the harmful effects of feedback. However, according to the indication of Havranek (2002), as writing is a formidable task, the majority of second and foreign language learners see corrections as essential and want to be corrected regularly (Schulz, 2001). In this sense, researchers have been doing studies to answer the above questions and to clarify the conflicting results of the researches on feedback. In some studies, it is aimed at investigating whether giving feedback to the grammar only or giving feedback to the content and organization only is more efficient to increase the accuracy of students' writings. It is

also possible to see studies whether giving feedback is important or not in terms of SLW (second language writing) developments. Additionally, comparing different feedback types is the focus of the studies and how to give feedback written - oral, direct-indirect, or coded-uncoded is a concerning issue for the studies. Some studies also investigate the relationship between the writing types and feedback types.

In the present study, control group EFL students have taken only coded feedback on their grammar errors and experimental group EFL students have been exposed to one to one writing conference in addition to coded feedback on their grammar errors. The effectiveness of these two feedback types has been compared in terms of increasing students' writing accuracy.

## **1.2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of coded feedback and one to one conferencing in addition to coded feedback on students' errors in a process-oriented EFL writing classroom. More specifically, the researcher aims to see if the students getting two different types of feedback show any difference in their writing performances in terms of grammatical accuracy and to see which feedback type that students have taken is better to help students to write more effective and accurate essays in English in terms of using a true grammar. The control group students have taken only coded feedback on their errors over process-oriented writing classrooms, which include pre-writing, writing and editing stages. The researcher has given one to one writing conferences to the experimental group students about their errors, which are coded on the papers.

It is expected at the end of the study that the students who have chances to discuss their coded errors (one to one writing conferences) with the researcher will lessen the frequency of errors and write better essays in terms of grammatical accuracy at the end of a ten week study, while the students who gets only coded feedback on their errors will develop less in terms of editing their errors and grammatical accuracy of the essays.

### **1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The aim of this study is to determine which feedback type written (coded) or teacher-interview feedback (one to one conferencing) is more efficient on editing EFL students' grammar errors on their essays. The research questions relating to the present study are:

- 1) Does teacher written feedback (coded feedback) have an impact on editing grammar errors in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, what extent?
- 2) Does teacher-conferencing feedback (one to one conferencing) have an impact on editing grammar errors in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, what extent?
- 3) Which feedback type relating to this study is more efficient on students' writing improvement in terms of grammatical accuracy?

### **1.4. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

The study includes the sample from under-graduate level EFL students studying one of the Turkish State Universities where the medium of instruction is in English and the study was carried out in 2010-2011 academic years. Ataturk University English Language Teaching Department is responsible for training students as qualified English teachers. The department accepts 60 students every academic year, and it gives a five-year education (including prep class). First grade students take 20 hour English instruction per week three of which are writing courses and students are required to attend 80 % of the classes.

### **1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Writing is the most challenging skill for most of EFL students, and it is the most neglected one in EFL classrooms. Teachers/students have been trying so much to struggle with the problems they have to face during teaching/learning writing. Since writing skill is a kind of output in learning a language process, it is a must to learn grammatical rules of the language and students need guidance to be aware of all the information they need for producing a piece of writing. That is, to achieve writing skill, students should access a certain amount of knowledge on grammatical structures and



lexical rules of a foreign language. Based on these conditions, students' need for the assistance and guidance during the process of writing can be provided with the help of a drafting system in a process-oriented classroom. Feedback on students' writings can be given under certain titles such as feedback on mechanical errors and feedback on content/organization. Both kinds of assistance can be of positive effects on learners' writing.

Since the EFL teachers are in search of a true and functional methodology of giving feedback, the results of this study may encourage them to find the most suitable feedback type for their own students. The main question in teachers' mind is how to struggle with errors relating with grammatical structures and lexical elements of the language, as these kinds of errors hinder the meaning that may be intended and may cause a discomfort in content and organization.

As stated above, there is a need to conduct further studies on the impact of feedback in writing. This study aims to compare teacher written feedback and one to one conferencing feedback. In other words, extra explanations and a piece of particular time left for each student may be of importance in addition to defining the errors on students' papers is the scope of the study.

#### **1.6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The number of students who participated in this study is limited. ELT department at Ataturk University has two classes for every grade. Since one of the classes took an English preparation class, the researcher conducted the study in the other class whose students did not take English preparation class. To make the study more valid and reliable, the students of this class were divided into two groups with the aim of providing the equality of control and experimental groups rather than carrying out the study with two separate classes. It would have been better if we had had the opportunity to have included more students in the study. It gets harder to generalize the results when the sample is smaller.

This study was conducted in the first semester of 2010-2011 academic years. The study lasted for ten weeks, two of which didn't include a giving feedback activity. When we think the adaption of both teacher and students to a new type of feedback, it

would have been better if we had had carried out the study for a longer period of time. Two different feedback types were given to students. The feedback type “one to one conferencing”, which was given to the experimental group, needs more time to satisfy students’ expectations. It would be also better if we had more time in each week for giving feedback.

### **1.7. DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERMS**

**Writing:** Writing is the way how students tell what they see, what they hear, what they think and what they live (Kavcar, Oğuzkan & Sever, 1995: 59).

**Product-based writing approach:** A kind of writing approach that basically concerns with the output rather than the process itself.

**Process-based writing approach:** A kind of writing approach that includes certain activities such as inventing, preparing, drafting, refining and rethinking, connecting and revising and editing (White, 1988). These activities can be gathered under three titles called prewriting, writing, and post-writing (Hedge, 1988; Chastain, 1988).

**Feedback:** It can be defined as the clues given as written or oral, direct or indirect to the students for editing their errors.

**Teacher written feedback:** It is the kind of feedback that aims at informing students about the impressions of readers and helping them revise their papers by marking the errors and writing comments on the paper.

**One to one conferencing feedback:** It is the kind of feedback that aims at conferencing between teachers and students in terms of discussing on student errors to make the errors more comprehensible by clarifying vague points.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

This section will give an overall framework of the literature concerning the thesis. Firstly, writing in L2 context will be introduced with the main lines since there are so many issues about this area. However, two basic writing approaches, product and process based writing approaches, will be explained under a separate title. Secondly, feedback in a general sense, teacher written feedback and teacher one to one conferencing feedback that are the scope of the study will be explained with empirical studies researchers have done before.

#### 2.2. THE NOTION OF WRITING SKILL

*How is writing like swimming? Give up? Answer: The psycholinguist Eric Lenneberg once noted, in a discussion of “species specific” human behavior that human beings universally learn to walk and to talk, but that swimming and writing are culturally specific learned behaviors. We learn to swim if there is a body of water available and usually only if someone teaches us. We learn to write if we are members of a literate society and usually only if someone teaches us... (Lenneberg, 1967, cited in Brown, 2001: 334).*

Different types of writing definitions shape around the needs and purposes of different groups of people. Therefore, it is wrong to restrict writing in a single definition. Zamel (1982: 195) sees writing as the point where meaning is created that is, it is a product of a person’s search for meaning as writers are not likely to know what they will write beforehand. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) explore the meaning of writing in terms of the rhetorical triangle in writing, and such triangle consists of reader, the recipient of the final product of the writing process; the writer, the originator of the message; and the subject matter and the text itself. Both the writer and the reader have to consider all these aspects when writing and reading, respectively, for each one plays a significant role in the journey towards meaning. According to Klein (1985), writing is the ability to put pen and paper to express ideas through symbols. So that

representations on the paper will have meaning and the writer can communicate with other people. Kavcar, Oğuzkan, and Sever state that (1995: 59) writing is the way how students tell what they see, what they hear, what they think and what they live. Considering all these definitions, we can easily term writing as the written form of expressing feelings, thoughts, events, wishes and imaginations. That is to say, it is one of the most efficient tools used in communication.

In a world which has been shaping as only one unit, there must be a common language indeed; there must be a common skill of a common language. People's communication needs can only be provided by preparing a suitable ground for individuals in order to learn to write to some extent. Speaking is also a way of communication, but if we handle the topic globally, it can be realized that it is nearly impossible to noise abroad wherever we want. This is why the significance of writing comes into prominence.

However, writing is also a neglected skill in addition to speaking, as it is a difficult process to teach and learn. Maybe, it is because of the fact that writing is the last ring of chain of the language learning (Yeşilyurt, 2008: 14), and for many learners writing is seen as a problematic process because of the obstacles it has and the great suffer it needs. Firstly, we cannot put writing and speaking in the same scale although they are both productive skills of a language. Because a writer lacks all the devices that enable communicating more efficiently such as gesture, body movement, facial expression, pitch and tone of voice, stress and hesitations while a speaker lives all the advantages of these factors (Rosen, 1969). Besides, there are also some crucial elements that effective writing requires such as a high degree of organization, accuracy, the use complex grammatical devices, a careful choice of vocabulary, paragraph structure, cohesive devices, grammatical patterns, and sentence structures (Hedge, 1988: 5).

In spite of all these difficulties, writing presents a lot of advantages to the learners throughout the improvement of learner's education process. Learning is not only a healthy communication tool but also it contributes broadly to the learning process (Judy, N. & Judy, J., 1981: 13). Raimes (1983) advocates this idea claiming that writing helps students learn by reinforcing the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary. They

also have a chance to practice the structures they have learnt with the help of writing, and when they write they make an effort to express ideas and as a result of the constant use of eye, hand and brain reinforce learning.

Writing is an essential classroom activity. It is of considerable importance for reinforcing learning in the other skills. As writing is a crucial skill in teaching a second language, teachers should decide on the most effective approach to use in the process of teaching writing.

### **2.3. SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING RESEARCH CONTEXT**

The developments in ESL composition are nearly parallel to developments in the teaching of writing to native speakers of English (Berlin, 1987; North, 1987) and the developments in scientific dimension with writing emerged in 1970s (Raimes, 1991; Nystrand, Green & Wiemelt, 1993). Before that time writing was seen as an activity to perform the structures, and linguistic features of the language's grammar. Since the recognition of writing as having an important part in teaching language, the need for an appropriate approach in L2 writing has arisen. The goal of research into extended L2 writing has often centered on how best to teach L2 writing. This research question has been necessary to figure out some other questions such as what writing is, what good writing means, what the characteristics of a good writing are.

There is no doubt that as Kroll (1990: 11) notices "*To be effective teachers of writing, English as a second language (ESL) composition professionals need an understanding of what is involved in second language (L2) writing. They need coherent perspectives, principles, models- tools for thinking about second language writing in general and ESL composition in particular and for analyzing and evaluating competing views*". Zebroski (1986: 57) also underlines the significance of a writing theory suggesting that "*if we write and teach writing, we have a theory of writing by definition.*"

There are many approaches in L2 compositions that have been trying to bring better understanding of writing for L2 writers and more applicable techniques for teachers to meet the researches for easier and more efficient teaching methods. In the context of foreign language teaching, learners experience some difficulties transferring

ideas from their native language (for example, Turkish) into the target language (that is, English). For this reason, writing is seen not only as a product but as process, as well.

In this study, two main approaches, product-based and process-based, among a number of approaches that have been shaped around these two will be explained in the next section.

### **2.3.1. Product-Based and Process-Based Approaches**

The product-based approach basically concerns with the outcome of the activity rather than the process itself. The main interest of this approach is the product which is produced at the end of the process rather than the way students travel throughout the process. Therefore, according to this approach a good piece of writing is equal to one or more paragraphs that contain well-structured sentences around the grammatical rules.

The product based approaches see writing as mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of the language, and writing development as mainly the outcome of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher (Badger & White, 2000, cited in Bozkır, 2009). This approach makes the students and teachers feel that the planning stage begins and ends in the first period of the writing process, but in reality, all proficient writers not only plan what they write before producing writing but also they plan throughout the process rather than exclusively at the start (Zamel, 1983).

Analyzing the usage of structures and style and developing well-organized paragraphs are in the focus of this approach and it is a must for students to avoid errors, and teachers' main function is to stress how important the correctness is in writing. Traditionally, the purpose of writing activity is to practice the grammatical patterns of the language and lessen all kinds of errors as possible. Carefully controlled writing activity aims to provide for students to see only correct language and practice the structures that they have learned (Leki, 1991a). In this sense, students struggle with a great stress while trying to avoid errors in order to be seen successful and achieve good marks. There is no doubt that this situation results in an undesired teaching process for both students and teachers since students only repeat the same structures and construct easy sentences by making simple changes in the sentences that are already known. In

this sense, students cannot find opportunities to express their own voices because of these restricting factors.

The rise of this approach is to include students in the writing process. In this sense, more qualified papers are produced at the end of the process since writing is the creation of meaning through the process (Zamel, 1982). According to O'Brien (2004), process approach sees writing as an act of discovery. Thanks to the shift from form and accuracy to fluency and purpose with this approach, students are not anxious about errors. As Leki (1991a) states when students are not focused on grammatical error but when they are instead writing freely, writing what they want to say, they develop confidence and a sense of power over the language (cited in Gök, 1996).

Brown (2001: 335-6) states what process approach brings to writing with the adaption from Shih (1986) as following:

- *focus on the process of writing that leads to the final written product;*
- *help student writers to understand their own composing process;*
- *help them to build repertoires of strategies for prewriting, drafting, and rewriting;*
- *give students time to write and rewrite;*
- *place central importance on the process of revision;*
- *let students discover what they want to say as they write;*
- *give students feedback throughout the composing process (not just on the final product) as they attempt to bring their expression closer and closer to intention;*
- *encourage feedback from both the instructor and peers;*
- *include individual conferences between teacher and student during the process of composition.*

According to the suggestion of process approach “*writing is a highly complex, goal-oriented and recursive activity*” (Furneau, 2000: 2). This process includes certain activities such as inventing, preparing, drafting, refining and rethinking, connecting and revising and editing (White, 1988). These activities can be gathered under three titles called prewriting, writing, and post-writing (Hedge, 1988; Chastain, 1988).

Prewriting is the first stage of the writing process and the point at which students discover and explore their initial ideas about a subject. This stage mainly includes brainstorming, putting the information together, planning, and listing the ideas about the topic. Prewriting stage encourages students with many ways (Brown, 2001: 348):

- *reading a passage*
- *skimming and/or scanning a passage*
- *conducting some outside research*
- *brainstorming*
- *listing*
- *clustering*
- *discussing a topic or question*
- *instructor-initiated questions and probes*
- *free-writing*

Namely, these stages prepare students to an efficient writing process.

The second stage is writing or drafting in other words, the process of composing, and it contains three sub-stages which are rehearsing, drafting and revising (Murray, 1980, cited in Chastain 1988). Writing is the process of writing down ideas, organizing them into a sequence, and providing the reader with a frame for understanding these ideas. At this point, students organize their ideas and write them into paragraphs. Students need enough time to compose their papers efficiently as Chastain (1988) states enough time is really important for students to express themselves better and reach a higher performance. “*At the drafting stage, the writers are focused on the fluency of writing and are not preoccupied with grammatical accuracy or the neatness of the draft*” (Richards & Renandya, 2002: 317). Therefore, students can concentrate on their works without fear of making errors. This is essential to complete a writing task smoothly. In the last stage of sub-stages (revising) mentioned above, writers skim their papers and try to regulate the meaning and improve the language used in the paper in terms of grammar, punctuation, vocabulary etc. and remove the errors from the paper.

Post writing is what students do after they have all the ideas in their papers sorted out properly. In this stage, most important one is to find someone to read the paper or



read the paper to someone in order to notice if something sounds awkward or unclear. Responding to the students' writing and giving feedback is of great importance to keep students' motivation higher to write again and increase their effectiveness in writing. *“This stage contains the processes of marking by the teacher; students' redrafting their writing by evaluating, rethinking, and rewriting some parts of their texts; and editing, which is the stage of checking for accuracy and making final revisions”* (Hedge, 1988: 145).

Both response to students' writing that generally deals with the content and feedback that generally deals with the form are important facts to help students endear writing and improve their writing skill. Rest of the literature review will explain the notion of feedback and its types that are concerned in this study.

#### **2.4. AN OVERVIEW ON FEEDBACK FOR ESL/EFL WRITING**

Errors, which occur in L2 writing, stem from various reasons such as L1 use during L2 writing (Sasaki & Hirose, 1996; Sasaki, 2002, 2004; Wang & Wen, 2002), lack of second language knowledge or cultural differences between the nations. At this point, some crucial questions that seem difficult for teachers to deal with these errors arise (Chaudron, 1989): Is it necessary to correct errors? If necessary, which and how should errors be corrected? Who should correct them? Teachers should follow a reasonable way to find answers to these questions, because the teacher's error correction strategy is important as every mark or comment on the paper has a positive or negative effect on the learner.

While giving feedback to the students' errors, teachers should be very careful because of the probability of misdirection. Therefore, feedback strategies such as timing, amount, mode, audience, and how explicit it needs to be are of great importance (Brookhart, 2008). All kinds of errors (grammar, meaning, fluency, organization, theme and others) determine the quality of the written products of the students. In assessing writing, giving feedback to students to overcome these errors may increase the accuracy of writing. Then, feedback can be defined as the clues given as written or oral, direct or indirect to the students for editing their errors. It is understood from the definition of feedback that correction of the errors may have an important role for the improvement of L2 writing.

### 2.4.1. Approaches to Feedback in EFL/ESL Writing

Feedback is widely accepted as a very crucial point for both encouraging and consolidating learning (Anderson, 1982; Vygotski, 1978), and many studies have been done since the importance of feedback emerged. For the last 20 years, changes in writing pedagogy and research have transformed feedback studies, with teacher comments often supplemented with writing workshops, conferences, peer feedback and computed delivered feedback (Hyland & Hyland, 2006: 1).

Since the late 1980s, peer feedback has gained a great interest in ESL/EFL field. Paulus (1999: 267) highlights the advantages of peer review in her study citing that it brings a genuine sense of audience into the writing classroom (Keh, 1990; Mittan, 1989), assists develop students' critical reading and analysis skills (Chaudron, 1984; Keh, 1990), and encourages students to focus on their intended meaning by discussing alternative points of view that can lead to the development of those ideas (DiPardo & Freedmani 1988; Mangelsdorf, 1992; Mendonça & Jonhson, 1994). Many studies have also been done to find out the effectiveness of peer feedback. While Chaudran (1984) found the effectiveness of teacher and peer feedback to be nearly the same, Zhang (1985) found out that teacher feedback was more effective for editing and improving grammatical errors than peer or self-feedback type. However, some other studies have found out more positive and encouraging results supporting peer feedback. Paulus (1999) stated that peer feedback had positive effects on student revision to a significant extent and Mendonça and Johnson (1994) found that students benefited from their peers' comments in more than half their revisions.

One of the approaches to feedback is computer-mediated feedback. Developing technology and computer facilities have made the role of computer important in delivering and mediating feedback. Hyland and Hyland (2006: 8) highlight that "*in more local contexts of instruction, writing workshops have also been extended through the use of computer networks that allow students to exchange writing with each other and with the teacher and receive comments without the need for face-to-face interaction.*" There have been contradictory notions concerning computer-mediated feedback. Warschauer, Turbee and Roberts (1996) states that computer-mediated communication allows students to be more active and autonomous when seeking

feedback. According to Belcher (1990) and Hartman et al. (1991), computer-mediated communication has particular advantages for empowering disadvantaged and less able students in terms of motivating them. However, Belcher (1999) has warned that though many students respond well to computer-mediated communication, it can be a disadvantage for those who lack access to good computer facilities at home. The lack of face-to-face communication may result in a negative effect. Liu and Sadler (2003) concluded from the comments made by peer reviewers and in technology-enhanced and traditional face-to-face contexts that face-to-face interaction resulted in a more positive response with more focused feedback and more questions and interaction among peers.

Feedback has been also categorized as either direct (explicit) or indirect (implicit) in various studies. Direct feedback may be defined as explaining the errors and providing the correct form for the student writer. Indirect feedback occurs when the teacher indicates in some way that an error exists and instead of giving the correct form of the error, the teacher prefers to let the writer know the existence of an error and leave it to the students to solve it (Ferris & Roberts, 2001). Many studies have been done to understand and compare the level of effectiveness of these two types of feedback. In these studies that have compared direct and indirect approaches, two of them (Ferris and Helt, 2000; Lalande, 1982) have reported an advantage for indirect feedback, two (Robb, Ross & Shortreed, 1986; Semke, 1984) have indicated that there is no difference between the two approaches and one of these studies (Chandler, 2003) has presented positive findings for both direct feedback and indirect feedback.

For writing teachers, providing feedback is seen as of the most important tasks in terms of motivating students and improving the level of accuracy in writing (Ferris, 2003). Writers typically intent their papers to be read, and feedback given to their errors in any way in classroom provides them chances to see how others respond to their writings and to learn how they write better. In this sense, Ferris (2003: 122) lists the generalizations reached in the previous research on the role of feedback in L2 writing as follows:

- 1. Feedback is most effective when it is delivered at intermediate stages of the writing process.*

2. *Teachers should provide feedback on all aspects of student texts, including content, rhetorical structure, grammar and mechanics.*

3. *Teacher feedback should be clear and concrete to assist students with revision. At the same time, teachers need to be careful not to appropriate student texts.*

4. *Teacher feedback must take individual and contextual variables into account.*

5. *ESL writers attend to teacher feedback and attempt to utilize it in their revisions.*

6. *Teacher-student writing conferences may be more complex with L2 writers.*

7. *There is a great deal of variation in what students talk about during peer feedback and how they interact with one another – which may be related to how the teacher models feedback and structures peer response sessions.*

8. *Research evidence is conflicting about the degree to which students utilize peer feedback in their revisions.*

9. *Students appear to enjoy peer feedback and find it helpful.*

Writers also typically pay more attention to the feedback that is given on grammar rather than content and organization. Therefore, the place of grammar in teaching writing development is in the concern of many researches. Frodesen (2001: 246) makes a list of tips for giving feedback on grammar as such:

1. *Indirect feedback is generally more useful and more desired by the students than direct correction of errors.*

2. *Teachers should not provide feedback on errors in any one piece of writing- this can be overwhelming to students- but should focus on several errors the teacher considers as most needing attention.*

3. *Deciding which errors most deserve attention requires consideration of many student variables (e.g., metalinguistic knowledge, proficiency level) and the instructional situation).*

4. *Teachers can alert students to areas of concern in early drafts also, so that all the attention to language errors does not need to be given with the last draft, when many students find they do not have sufficient time to address them effectively.*

Another important issue is that writing teacher should leave his/her grammar immediate corrective character behind; instead, he/she should draw a picture that defines errors and feedback as a way to better writing process. Kroll (2001: 230) points out indicating that in the process of evaluation, the teacher should see himself as only a writing teacher rather than a grammar teacher and s/he should take some issues into consideration such as when to correct errors, who will correct them, which errors to correct and how to correct errors. Besides these issues, the circumstances of the students, the aims of the course and the stage of the composing process are some other issues that should be taken into consideration.

Several studies investigated to what extent giving feedback is effective to ESL/EFL students' writing performance ( Chaney, 1999; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1997; Komura, 1999;). While Chaney (1999), Fathman & Whalley (1990), Ferris (1997), Komura (1999) and find that students were able to successfully edit the errors with the help of feedback given by the teachers; Truscott (1999) advises teachers to find an alternative for treating students' errors. Truscott also (1996) highlights the harmful effects of feedback. However, as writing is a formidable task, the majority of second and foreign language learners regard corrections as essential and want to be corrected regularly (Havranek, 2002; Schulz, 2001).

#### **2.4.1.1. Teacher Written Feedback**

Despite of increasing emphasis on the importance of oral response and the other feedback type peer-feedback, teacher written response continues to play a prominent role in most L2 writing classes. Surveys on feedback indicate that ESL students greatly value teacher written feedback rather than alternative forms, such as peer feedback and oral feedback in writing conferences (Leki, 1991b; Zhang, 1995). Written feedback aims to inform students about the impressions of readers and help them revise their papers by marking the errors and writing comments on the paper. Teachers usually mark the errors by underlying them and coding the errors to indicate the error types such as VT (verb tense), P (punctuation), S/V (subject-verb agreement), etc. and they write comments about content and organization. How teacher's response to student writing is also crucial. Teachers should choose the appropriate language that aims at being

informational, pedagogic and interpersonal while writing comments on papers in terms of giving feedback (Leki, 1990).

A number of studies have tried to find out how effective teacher written feedback as a way of improving students' writing. The studies on first language suggest that much written feedback lacks of good quality and often misunderstood by students, being too unclear and inconsistent (Sommers, 1982) and besides it is generally "authoritarian," "formalist," and "insensitive" (Connors & Lunsford, 1993). Zamel (1985: 86) draws a similar picture in ESL contexts:

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

This type of feedback was argued as both discouraging and unhelpful by early researches influenced by process approaches. Being influenced by the process-based theories, Zamel (1985: 96) also points out that teachers should control their "*reflex-like reactions to surface level concerns and give priority to meaning.*" In the literature of this topic, Truscott (1996) who does not see teacher feedback as a beneficial way of responding to students' errors in writing argues that teachers should adopt a "correction-free approach" in their classrooms to change student attitudes towards writing. Knoblauch and Brannon (1981: 165, cited in Hyland, 2003: 178) summarize their survey of the L1 research on teacher feedback with a comment as follow:

*"Commenting on student essays might just be an exercise in futility. Either students do not read the comments or they read them and do not attempt to implement suggestions and correct errors"*.

Despite these negative thoughts about teacher written feedback, there is a great deal of studies showing the positive effects of teacher written feedback on improving second language writing. According to Ferris (1997), this type of feedback is more practical when compared to oral feedback since teachers can catch the most suitable

time to read the papers. That they also do not need to interact with the students is the other key point which makes written feedback more preferred by the teachers. According to the studies (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1995, 2002), both students and teachers think that teacher written feedback is an important part of the writing process since error feedback over a period of time can improve students' language accuracy. Ferris (1997) found that a reduction in errors can be observed when teachers' response shapes around comments rather than corrections. Moving from the studies mentioned above, the inference may be that second language writers highly value teacher written feedback (Hyland, 1998) and many learners favor feedback on their grammar (Leki, 1990).

#### **2.4.1.1.1. Empirical studies on the effects of teacher-written feedback**

A number of studies examined the effects of teacher-written feedback. The studies tried to survey the efficiency of teacher-written feedback are listed below chronologically.

Semke (1984) surveyed the effectiveness of four different feedback types: comments only, direct corrections only, direct corrections with comments and indirect coded correction and found that there were no differences between groups in terms of grammatical accuracy but comments group students wrote more, and showed a good progression in language proficiency.

Cohen (1987) examined 217 students in language classes of various universities to see the effectiveness of teacher-written feedback. This study indicated that students' feelings showed that teachers should give feedback on local issues such as grammar and mechanics more than on global issues such as ideas, content, and organization.

Fathman and Whalley (1990) looked at the link between teacher feedback and students revision. In this study, 72 ESL student writers wrote a composition in the classroom, and they were given one of four feedback treatments: (a) no feedback; (b) feedback on content; (c) feedback on grammar; and (d) feedback on both content and grammar. Then the papers were turned to students to rewrite their compositions. It was observed that four treatment groups showed statistically improvement, but the improvement of the two groups who received content feedback was more than other two groups'.

In the Ferris' study (1995), which was the replication of Cohen's study, 155 students took part in the survey that was composed of only one draft and similar results to Cohen were found and also she found that students prefer feedback during the writing process instead of taking feedback after they have already finished a composition.

In a similar study, Russikoff and Kogan (1996) almost applied the same steps as in Fathman and Whalley's study expect for writing environment. Students were asked to write their compositions outside of class, and there was no time limitation. Students were exposed to four feedback treatments. All four groups improved their content scores and the students who showed the greatest improvement belonged to the groups which received content feedback. In this study, the content feedback group improved its mean score than did the content plus grammar feedback group.

#### **2.4.1.2. Teacher-Conferencing Feedback**

One of the alternatives to written feedback is writing conferences between teachers and students. Many L1 scholars supported writing conference as the ideal approach for both instruction and feedback with the emergence of process-oriented composition instruction in 1970s. Despite its complex nature, it has many advantages over written feedback. Ferris (2003) underlines the advantages of "immediacy", "negotiation", and "opportunity for clarification" in the use of writing conferences. Teachers and students seem to enjoy the opportunities for the detailed discussion that writing conferences offer and research shows that comments that students receive through conferencing are more focused and usable than through written feedback (Zamel, 1985).

Brookhart (2008: 47) claims that oral feedback covers all the issues that written feedback does. She indicates that more formal and structured type of oral feedback is teacher-student conferences rather than group oral feedback or whispering words while passing a student's seat. She also puts forward some key points about student teacher conferences such as deciding on the most appropriate time and place to speak to the students on their errors. Additionally, she (2008: 53) gives some principles about student teacher conferences with the statements as follow:

*"These conferences should follow the same principles for feedback content related to focus, comparison, function, valence,*



*clarity, specificity, and tone as that apply to other kinds of feedback strategies. And they should be used sparingly, with careful judgment about how the student will receive them.”*

Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) highlight the popularity of this feedback type deriving from three reasons. First, teacher can save more energy and time than they do when they use written feedback. Second, it gives opportunities to interact and negotiate. Last, it is an effective means of communicating with students who have an auditory learning style. Besides, Brender (1995) advocates that students who have three or more conferences in a term not only improve their writing skill, but also improve their listening and speaking skills. In one-to-one conferencing, teachers can understand whether students understand what they are implying by interpreting their gestures on their faces (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990). Additionally, Duomont (2002) suggests communicating with the student in a more gentle way which is to use first person plural to imply that the teacher and the student are sharing a common interest in improving the draft.

#### **2.4.1.2.1. Empirical studies on the effects of teacher-conferencing feedback**

Despite all the desire and enthusiasm stated above, there have not been enough empirical studies on the nature and effects of writing in L1 and L2 classes (Ferris, 2003). Only a few studies focused partially on the effectiveness of conferences between teachers and ESL writers (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997; Sheppard, 1992)).

In Goldstein and Conrad's study (1990), three ESL writers' texts, conference transcripts, and revisions were examined to evaluate both each student's participation patterns and the apparent influence of these patterns on their revisions. The findings showed that there were considerable differences in terms of their willingness and ability to nominate topics for discussion and give other input, to set the agenda, and to negotiate meaning. The other important issue they underlined in this study is cultural differences between students that may influence conference dynamics. Their conclusion from the study is that:

*“We cannot expect that students will come to writing conferences understanding the purposes of such conferences, the rules of speaking, and the respective roles of the participants. Since the quality of their conferences and revisions can be affected by participant expectations, we must teach students the purposes of conferences can serve, and stress that the discourse and the teacher-student relationship can vary greatly between a conference and a classroom. In a sense, we need to give students permission to break the rules they may have learned previously and we need to teach them new rules for a new speech event.” (p. 457).*

Sheppard (1992) examined two different feedback types by dividing 26 collage-level ESL students in the United States into two treatment groups. While one of the group students took comprehensive indirect error feedback, the other group participants took general marginal comments about the clarity of the writers’ ideas. Both groups had follow-up one-to-one conferences and the error correction group was required to rewrite their essays after the conferences. Sheppard reported that both groups improved in accuracy of grammar over time.

Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) examined first drafts, conference transcripts, revisions, and first drafts of the next essay assignment for eight students. Four of the eight students were ESL writers and four of them were native English speakers. Furthermore, they were subdivided into strong and weak writers. The following results were reported:

- a) The conferences between the teachers and the weaker students were shorter and more teacher-dominated
- b) There were no measurable differences between L1 and L2 writers
- c) All students revised their texts and this could be traced to the conference transcripts.

Although the evidence on the effects of writing conferences is extremely limited, Ferris (2003: 40) makes some generalizations based on previous research as following:

*“First, we need to be aware that a one-on-one interaction with a writing instructor may be extremely stressful for some students. This could affect their willingness to participate in the conference, their ability to comprehend what the teacher is saying during the conference, and their retention of key points after the conference is over. Secondly, writing conferences, unlike written teacher feedback, place additional burdens on L2 students’ aural comprehension and oral fluency. Considering these potential problems and drawbacks, teachers may wish to make conferences optional rather than required (for those students for whom such an interaction might be truly upsetting), have three-way conferences (two students with one teacher, for a hybrid peer response/teacher conference session), or have the student writer (or the teacher) take notes on and/or audiotape conferences so that the student can review and remember points discussed later.”*

Realistically, in many teaching situations individual conferences are simply not possible due to time and space limitations. However, students need to see an individual conferencing atmosphere so as to be motivated to work better in their writing. As for motivating students, Carnicelli (1980) advises teachers to praise good parts of the papers, as well as point out weakness during the conferencing session. Conferencing sessions are excellent opportunities for both teachers and students to uncover any misunderstandings by asking direct questions to each other (Goldstein, 1990). Therefore, getting ready in advance in terms of preparing a list of questions and comments may be a good idea for both teachers and students.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the overall design of the study, the participants that are samples, researcher and instructor, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, description of the feedback types that are given to students, rater training and rater reliability.

#### **3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN**

An experimental design (pre-test, post-test, control group) in which there is a random selection of participants and random assignment of the students to control and experimental groups has been used in the present study. Actually there were two first-grade classes at the beginning of the study. One of the classes (class A) includes the students who took prep-class education, and the other class (class B) includes the students who were jumpers (did not take prep-class education), that is, they were the students who had been successful at the preparatory class exemption exam. Only class B was selected for the study as there might be differences between the classes. Besides having the similar writing proficiency, these students were selected as they had an undergraduate writing course. This course consisted of three contact hours per week over a 14-week term. Class B was divided into two groups which include 18 students for each and one group was designated the control group and the other became the experimental group. Both groups had the same teacher and researcher.

The study was conducted in a first-grade classroom, in the department of English Teaching at Ataturk University. This study was carried out in a ten-week period (see Table 3.1) in the first semester of 2010-2011 academic years. The students were accepted to the department out of the grades of exams including the English exam (abbreviated in Turkish YDS) which measures students' proficiency in understanding what they read in English and how they use grammar rules. In order to see whether there was a significant difference between the students of two groups, all the EFL students participating in the study took an indirect writing test on a single prompt (pre-

test). The task was an argumentative essay that the students completed in 50 minutes. To ensure reliability and objectivity, two different raters marked the writing papers using a 30-point syntactic scoring scale. The researcher used the scale developed by Pölzleitner (2008: 3). This scale is presented in Appendix A. These scores were used as the pre-test scores, to be used later at the end of the study to compare with the post-test scores and to see whether there is a significant difference between the writing proficiency of the students at the beginning of the experiment.

**Table 3.1.** Design of the Study

<b>Time</b>	<b>Number of Subjects</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Week 1	28	Pre-Test
Week 2	28	Writing Task 1
Week 3	28	Writing Task 2
Week 4	28	Writing Task 3
Week 5	28	Writing Task 4
Week 6	28	Writing Task 5
Week 7	28	Writing Task 6
Week 8	28	Writing Task 7
Week 9	28	Writing Task 8
Week 10	28	Post-Test

Along with the experiment period, researcher carried out the study with the instructor who is responsible for giving writing course to the classroom and who had M.A. degree in ELT. The instructor and researcher designed three hours of the course per week. According to the design, first hour of the week was used for the first drafts; second hour of the week was used to give feedback to the papers by the researcher; last hour of the week was used for the second drafts. In the feedback hour, one group was exposed to teacher-written coded feedback; other group was exposed to teacher-conferencing on coded feedback that teacher give extra explanations on the coded errors of each student.

In the first week, the students were given a pre- test (see Appendix B), and all the feedback codes were explained to the participants. The error chart included 11 types of error which the researcher determined from the frequency of errors that students made in the pre-test. According to the codification of the errors; subject/verb agreement errors were coded as S/V, singular/plural errors were coded as S/P, missing word errors were coded as MW, wrong word choice errors were coded as WWC, spelling errors were coded as S, punctuation errors were coded as P, verb tense errors were coded as VT, redundancy errors were coded as R, wrong word formation errors were coded as WWF, capitalization errors were coded as C and other grammar errors were coded as OG (see Appendix C. ).

The students in both groups were given eight writing tasks except for post-test in the following eight weeks. Each week students have written about a different topic using a different writing format. For each week, drafting system was applied, and students received weekly regular feedback. The two groups received two different types of feedback to their writings. The feedback coded on the drafts for mechanical errors is the same for both groups. Researcher gave teacher written feedback that was underlined and coded on the writing papers by allowing control group students to check their errors. Experimental group students were also exposed to researcher's explanations individually on their errors besides checking their underlined and coded errors. The researcher did not take the data for weekly assignments into consideration and analyze it.

In the tenth week, the students were given a post-test (see Appendix D) to see students' success in writing. For the scoring of the post-test, the same procedure was followed as it was done in the pre-test.

### **3.3. PARTICIPANTS**

The students of first grade at ELT Department, course instructor and the researcher are the participants of this study.

### **3.3.1. Writing Samples**

The students participating in the present research (N=36) were the first-grade ELT students from the same class. The sample classroom had 20 hours of instruction a week, three of which were writing courses. The age of the students ranged from 17 to 22, and they are studying nearly for the same purpose, which is to be an English teacher. The students were divided into two groups, which were control, and experimental group. The students who did not write even a week in the process of research have to be removed from the data to get more secure results. Therefore, along with the research process, 8 students did not submit their assignments regularly and the data derived from these students were not analyzed to preserve the reliability and the validity of the study.

Each group consisted of 14 students. In the control group, there were 14 students, 10 females and 4 males who were all Turkish students and graduated from a high school. In the experimental group, there were 14 students as in control group, 11 females and 3 males and they were all Turkish and graduated from a high school, too. Both groups' students had 9 years of English education. The mean of the control group's grades in pre-test was 20, 1679 and the mean of experimental group's grades in post-test was 20, 0250.

### **3.3.2. Instructor and Researcher**

The instructor is the writing teacher of the class. He has been teaching for 5 years at this department and also working for School of Foreign Languages of Ataturk University. He has a 5-year English teaching experience in England at a primary school before he started working for the university. He was not responsible for giving feedback to the groups, but he believes that students should be provided with extra explanations on the errors for the improvement of students' writing. He gave courses about writing, writing skills before the study began, and in the process of the study, he was with the students in the classroom while they were writing their drafts and collected their papers to deliver them to the researcher.

The researcher has been teaching and rating undergraduate level EFL students' writing for three years in a different state university in Turkey. He was responsible for giving feedback both control and experimental groups. He underlined the errors and

coded them on the papers, and he additionally explained students their errors by using one to one conferencing method for the experimental group. He also graded students' weekly writings in terms of grammar in order to motivate students and adapt them to the research process besides finding and underlining errors and recording them to the portfolios, which were created for each student.

### **3.4. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

Data for this study has been collected through qualitative data collection instrument. The pretest has been the results of the first classroom assignment in the third week of the term. The posttest had been the final classroom assignment before the term ended. The grades of pretest and posttest have provided the data to see development of students in writing. We also graded weekly assignments periodically to see the students' weekly development and to motivate students by writing grades on their essays.

#### **3.4.1. Pretest**

A pre-test was used to see if both groups were similar in terms of writing proficiency before the application of the research. It was the first classroom assignment before the application began. The pretest was an indirect writing test on a single prompt and prepared by the instructor of the writing course.

The time given for the test was 50 minutes, and students were asked to write a four or five paragraph essay using the question directed to students. The researcher evaluated the essays, he did double check, and the averages of first scores and second scores were taken to ensure the reliability of the results.

#### **3.4.2. Posttest**

A post-test was used to see the writing proficiency of students after the application. It was the last classroom assignment before the final exam. The test was an indirect writing test on a single prompt as in the pre-test and again prepared by the instructor of the class.

The time given for the test was 50 minutes and students were asked to write a four or five paragraph essay using the question directed to students. The researcher again



evaluated the tests. Double check was done, and the averages of first scores and second scores were taken to ensure the reliability.

The posttest and its results were really important to see the final situation of the students. The researcher was able to determine which feedback type is more efficient and beneficial for students, in other words, to see if there is any significant difference between the two groups at the end of the experiment.

### **3.4.3. Weekly Writing Tasks**

One of the crucial parts of the research design was the weekly regular writing tasks of students apart from pre-test and post-test. Each week students were asked to write about an essay topic in a different writing format. At the end of the 50 minutes lesson, the instructor collected the essays, the instructor submitted the papers to the researcher, and the researcher gave feedback to the papers and distributed the papers to the students the following lesson. Every step was the same such as underlying and coding the errors, grading the essays in terms of grammar except for one to one explanations on the errors of the experimental group students. The grades of the weekly assignments were not calculated and analyzed. The only aim of the weekly assignments and the grades was to accomplish the procedure and to see the weekly development of students.

## **3.5. DATA COLLECTION**

The study lasted for ten weeks. In the first week, a pre-test asking the students to write an essay was applied. The aim of the pre-test was to ensure that if the groups were equal in terms of vocabulary, grammar, linguistic competence and other mechanics. A 30-point part of 100-point syntactic scoring scale was used to evaluate the pre-tests of students to determine the initial writing competence of students. The scale had four components, which were task achievement, organization and cohesion, range of grammar and vocabulary and accuracy of grammar, vocabulary and spelling (Pölzleitner, 2008). Each component has a certain score range. The raters evaluated the essays and gave them a score out of 30 which was the total point of accuracy of grammar, vocabulary and spelling in the scale. The grades of two different raters were compared later to see if there was any discrepancy between the grades. The instructor

also applied double check technique to the pre-tests to calculate the reliability of the study.

The students in the control group and the experimental group have been exposed to two different feedback types for eight weeks, and they have been given eight different writing tasks in the following eight weeks. The instructor and the researcher used a process approach (see Table 3.2) including pre-writing, drafting and editing stage. In pre-writing stage, the instructor gave brief directions to students about the writing format and the language that should be used for the essay. After the explanations, students wrote their essays in 50 minutes, and the instructor collected the essays. Right after the collection of the papers, they were submitted to the researcher. The evaluation process in terms of rating the papers according to the scoring scale, finding and categorizing the errors, and coding the errors was completed before the second class of the course during the week. In the feedback hour, the researcher took place in the classroom and firstly distributed the papers of the control group students. Nearly ten minutes were given to students to examine their papers in order to see what kind of errors they made. The control group students submitted their papers to the researcher and left the classroom if they did not have any question marks in their minds. The rest of the students, the experimental group, took their essays and examined their papers for a few minutes. After that, the researcher spent the rest of the time giving explanations on each student's errors and answered the question of students. The second stage was the chance for the students to notice and understand their errors. Last class of the week was used for the final draft. Students were asked to write about the same topic in 50 minutes under the supervision of the instructor.

Following the same procedure for each week was one of the crucial parts to ensure the reliability of the research. The teacher first explained the kind of essay and gave the suitable topic for the essay with some explanations with a sample outline related with that type of essay. Then, the students were required to write the essay in 50 minutes. Why writing procedure was completed in the classroom was to remove the differentiation there might be such as using a dictionary or getting help. Then, the instructor collected the papers to submit them to the researcher on the same day. The researcher evaluated the papers and gave a grade out of 30, but students were not aware of the grades in order to avoid any deterioration in students' motivation. The study

started with 36 students but the data of two students was not included since they did not submit the assignment on time. Neither the instructor nor the researcher let them feel this situation, as they needed feedback on their writing for their development in writing ability.

In the last week of the study, a post-test, which was an indirect writing test on a single prompt, was applied. The aim of the post-test was to see the developments of the students of two groups. The posttest results for the frequency of errors, and the grades given according to the syntactic scoring scale were compared with posttest results to see which feedback type were more efficient in terms of editing grammar errors of EFL students' writings.

**Table 3.2.** Data Collection Process

	<b>Control group</b>	<b>Experimental group</b>
Week 3	Introduction to error codes + Pre-test	Introduction to error codes + Pre-test
Week 4	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 5	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 6	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 7	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 8	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 9	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 10	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 11	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Underlined-Coded Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	1 <sup>st</sup> draft + Teacher Conferencing Feedback + 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
Week 12	Post-test	Post-test

### **3.6. FEEDBACK TYPES**

Two feedback styles are being compared in this study. Therefore, the two groups received two different treatments. One of the styles consisted of providing students with underlined and coded feedback to their errors; the other one is conferencing with students on their underlined and coded errors.

#### **3.6.1. Underlined and Coded Feedback**

For the control group, the researcher of the study underlined the mechanical errors and wrote error codes for each type of error. For instance, verb tense errors were coded as T, spelling errors were coded as S, subject/verb agreement errors were coded as S/V, punctuation errors were coded as P, and capitalization errors were coded as C. The instructor has given the necessary information about these abbreviations to the students so that they understood what kind of error they have done. The researcher did not give any explanations to the students.

#### **3.6.2. One to One Conferencing on Students' Underlined and Coded Feedback**

For the experimental group, the researcher of the study underlined the mechanical errors and wrote error codes for each type of error. Additionally the researcher gave extra explanations on the errors and tried answer students' questions about unclear points by using one to one conferencing method. In this type of feedback, students do not have to search for the correct versions of their errors.

### **3.7. RATER TRAINING**

The researcher trained the other rater before measuring rater reliability. At the beginning of the training, the researcher introduced the rater error codes and the scoring scale that was used to evaluate the papers. Additionally, researcher gave key points about hunting the errors. Then, 10 randomly selected essays were chosen to be examined both by the researcher and the rater. They not only graded the essays but also found the errors in them to compare mean points of error frequencies.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the data analysis and interpretation of results. First, the results of rater reliability were presented and analyzed from two dimensions, which were calculated out of sentence structure of an analytic scoring scale and frequency of grammar errors. Then, the pre-test and post-test results were analyzed and interpreted. Moreover, the pre-test results and post-test results of each error type were analyzed to see which feedback type is more efficient on which error type.

#### 4.2. DESCRIPTIVES

The students participating in the present research (N=28) were the first-grade EFL students from the same class. The age of the students ranged from 17 to 22. The students were divided into two groups that are the control group and the experimental group. The control group consisted of 4 male and 10 female; the experimental group consisted of 3 male and 11 female. All the students had the same language background that is Turkish.

**Table 4.1.** Descriptive Statistics

Group	N	Male	Female	Language Background
Control	14	4	10	Turkish
Experimental	14	3	11	Turkish

#### 4.3. RATER RELIABILITY

To ensure the rater reliability, randomly ten writing papers out of weekly assignments were given two different instructors (one of whom is the researcher) who have writing teaching experience to score their marks. They graded both pre-test and

post-test papers out of 30 which was the maximum point for sentence structure component of the 100 point scoring scale to make the study more valid in terms of reliability. According to the results it was found that there was a high inter-rater reliability ( $p=.717$ ).

Two raters also evaluated these randomly selected essays in terms of determining the frequency of errors. The raters calculated the total frequency of errors. While the mean of the errors that rater1 determined was 7.4, the mean of the errors that rater2 determined was 7.8. ( see table 4.2 and table 4.3)

**Table 4.2.** Paired Sample Statistics Test Results for Rater Reliability According to Frequencies of Errors

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
rater1	7,4000	10	4,83506	1,52898
rater2	7,8000	10	4,21110	1,33167

**Table 4.3.** Paired Sample Statistics Test Results for Rater Reliability According to Raters' Grades

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	df	p.
rater1	20,0500	10	,38297	9	.717
rater2	20,0900	10	,15239		

#### 4.4. ANALYSIS OF THE TESTS

Pre-test and post-test were used and evaluated to obtain the quantitative data. The pre-test was applied before the treatment at the beginning of the study. The aim of the pre-test was to compare the two groups in terms of their proficiency in writing regarding the use of sentence structure (syntax). Weekly regular writing assignments were only used to accomplish the procedure of a regular error treatment period (8 weeks), and the data of these essays were not taken into account and analyzed. The aim of the post test was to see which feedback type was more efficient on editing grammar errors. Additionally, the pre-test and post test results of error categories were compared

to see which error types were treated better and if so, to what extent they developed. In this sense, the data for each error category were analyzed for both control and experimental group separately.

#### 4.4.1. Results of the Pretest

The researcher implemented a pre-test to the two groups to determine whether the two groups were equal in terms of grammar usage in writing, and “Paired Samples Statistics” was used to compare the means of the two groups. Both the frequencies of error were determined and essays were graded out of 30 which was the maximum point of grammar component of the analytic scoring scale.

The mean score found for the experimental group was 20, 0250 (SD=.38916) out of 30. The mean score found for the control group was 20, 1679 (SD=.30547) out of 30. According to the Paired Samples Statistics, the p-value was .216. As  $p > .05$ , the difference among these two groups is not statistically significant. That is, no evidence was found to suggest that these two groups are significantly different. The researcher was able to compare these two groups using the two treatments since there was not a significant difference between two groups.

**Table 4.4.** Paired Samples Statistics Test Results for Pretest Scores

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p.</b>
experimental	20,0250	14	,38916	13	.216
control	20,1679	14	,30547		

The mean point of errors for the pretest in experimental group was 21, 5714 (SD= 11, 91453). The mean of errors for the pre-test in the control group was 15, 9786 (SD=9, 73449). As can be seen in the table 4.5, the p-value was .155. As  $p > .05$ , there is not any significant difference between two groups. In addition to the results of pre-test scores, the equality of the two groups is also clear with the statistics of the error frequencies.



**Table 4.5.** Paired Samples Statistics Pretest Results for Frequencies of Errors

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p.</b>
experimental	21,5714	14	11,91453	13	.155
control	15,9786	14	9,73449		

#### 4.4.2. Samples to Errors for Each Error Category from Student Essays

The data in this study were gathered from the errors that students made in their essays. Each error in each student's essay was determined separately and coded. According to the codification of the errors; subject/verb agreement errors were coded as S/V, singular/plural errors were coded as S/P, missing word errors were coded as MW, wrong word choice errors were coded as WWC, spelling errors were coded as S, punctuation errors were coded as P, verb tense errors were coded as VT, redundancy errors were coded as R, wrong word form errors were coded as WWF, capitalization errors were coded as C and other grammar errors were coded as OG. To make the error codes clearer and more comprehensible, three samples from students' essays for each error category are listed below;

##### *Subject-verb agreement error (S/V):*

After the dinner, the girl **come** in. (It must be comes instead of come).

Five of them **was** married and..... (It must be were instead of was).

She **have** four nieces and one nephew. (It must be has instead of have).

##### *Singular-plural error (S/P):*

One day she took all **student** to the police station. (There must be 's' at the end of student).

She helped her mother with **houseworks**... ('s' is redundant at the end of housework).

One of the three main **character** is Basil Hallward... ('s' is necessary at the end of character).

*Missing word error (M/W):*

I was a very active, curious and talkative child. (There must be 'a' between was and very)

But even if I was six, I wanted to be a teacher. (There must be 'if' between even and I)

It starts on Friday evening and..... (There must be 'on' between starts and Friday)

*Wrong word choice error (WWC):*

Now she is an student at Ataturk University to be an English teacher. (It must be 'a' instead of 'an').

She began her education life in Narman Primary School. (It must be 'at' instead of 'in').

My sister was born three years before than me... ('earlier' must be used instead of 'before').

*Spelling error (S):*

I want to be a reporter in CNBC chanel. (What student intended to say is 'channel').

The man offered her a job in his clup. (What student intended to say is 'club').

They were on niutral ground. (What student intended to say is 'neutral').

*Punctuation error (P):*

Suddenly, they fell down into the darkness. (A comma is necessary after the adverb 'suddenly').

There was nothing to eat. (A full stop is necessary at the end of the sentence).

What was the fault of that little girl? (A question mark is necessary at the end of the sentence).

*Verb tense error (VT):*

My father came in and says "it is time to wake up". (Past form of the verb 'say' should be used).

When I was graduating from the collage, I was pretty happy. (The verb 'graduate' should be conjugated in simple past tense instead of past progressive tense).

Since we **are** nervous, we hardly managed to its preparations. (Past form of ‘to be’ should be used).

*Redundancy error (R):*

They liked to travel so they travelled lots of **the** cities in Turkey. (The usage of ‘the’ is redundant in this sentence).

When she came **to** home, she realized that she had forgotten her purse in her office. (‘to’ between came and home is unnecessary).

In the second year she entered the department of electric engineering at **the** Yıldız Technical University. (The usage of ‘the’ is redundant in this sentence).

*Wrong Word Formation (WWF):*

He will **going** his own way without his father. (Infinitive form of the verb ‘go’ should be used instead of adding –ing at the end of the verb).

I heard that **her** died. (The subject pronoun ‘she’ should be used instead of her).

I **chosed** department of English. (past form of the verb ‘choose’ is ‘chose’ which should be used instead of chosed).

*Capitalization error (C):*

I think, Lord Henry is a realist. **for** example; he influenced Dorian Gray. (A new sentence begins with a capital letter).

That is why when his father needs cigarette, he tells **ensar** to buy from the supermarket. (Ensar is a proper noun and this kind of nouns begins with a capital letter).

It begins on **thursday**. (Days in English begin with a capital letter).

*Other grammar error (OG):*

**The same as my brother**. (This sentence includes an error that results in an ambiguity).

**It is take her time hundreds of hours**. (True version of the sentence: It takes her hundreds of hours).

**The woman’s arm just broke**. (Passive voice should be here).

#### 4.4.3. The distribution of errors for each error category

For eight weeks, the students of both groups received two different types of feedback for their grammar errors in writing, but the data for weekly assignments were not collected, because the main aim in mind was to compare pretest and posttest results in terms of frequencies of errors and to determine which feedback type was more useful regarding the increase and decrease in the number of errors.

According to the data that belongs to the experimental group concerning the mean of the error categories in Table 4.6, it can be observed that there is a decrease, to some degree, in the mean of errors except for S/V errors (Mean of pretest results is .6429 and mean of posttest results is 2, 5714). A similar observation can be done for the control group. That is, a decrease exists, to some degree, for the error categories in Table 4.7 except for S/V and C errors (mean of the pretest results for S/V error category is .5714 and mean of the posttest results for S/V error category is 1, 0000; mean of the pretest results for C error category is .9286 and mean of the posttest results for C error category is 1, 3571).

**Table 4.6.** Means of the Error Categories in Pretest and Posttest for Experimental Group

<b>Error Category</b>	<b>Mean of the error in pre-test</b>	<b>Mean of the error in post-test</b>
S/V	,6429	2,5714
S/P	1,1429	1,0714
MW	2,9286	1,3571
WWC	2,9286	1,7143
S	1,2143	,7143
P	4,1429	2,0000
VT	1,3846	,6154
R	2,2143	,4286
WWF	1,9286	,7143
C	1,9286	,3571
OG	1,3571	,8571

**Table 4.7.** Means of the Error Categories in Pretest and Posttest for Control Group

<b>Error Category</b>	<b>Mean of the error in pre-test</b>	<b>Mean of the error in post-test</b>
S/V	,5714	1,0000
S/P	,6429	,3571
MW	1,1429	,5714
WWC	3,1429	1,8571
S	,7857	,7143
P	3,7857	2,8571
VT	,5714	,2143
R	1,9286	1,0714
WWF	,9286	,5714
C	,9286	1,3571
OG	1,3571	,3571

#### **4.4.4. Results of the Posttest**

In an eight week period out of ten weeks, two of which were devoted for pretest and posttest, students were exposed to two different error treatments. The students wrote an essay each week, received feedback and rewrote it using the feedback they got. To determine the effectiveness of feedback types students got for their essays, a posttest was conducted at the end of the period. The same procedure was followed, and the same technique for the pretest was used to analyze the posttest results. “Paired Samples Statistics” test was used to compare the means of the two groups in terms of the error frequencies and the scores given for their grammatical accuracy. The analysis of posttest results will be quite helpful to determine which type of feedback was more useful and functional on dealing with students’ grammar errors, and these data will give answers to the research questions.

The mean score found for the experimental group was 20, 3571 (SD=.23847) out of 30. The mean score found for the control group was 20, 3893 (SD=.18100) out of 30. According to the Paired Samples Statistics, the p-value was .690. As  $p > .05$ , the difference among these two groups is not statistically significant. That is, no evidence was found to suggest that these two groups are significantly different.

**Table 4.8.** Paired Samples Statistics Test Results for Posttest Scores

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	df	p.
experimental	20,3571	14	,23847	13	.690
control	20,3893	14	,18100		

The mean of errors for the pre-test in the experimental group was 13, 5714 (SD=7, 91021). The mean of errors for the pre-test in the control group was 11, 6429 (SD=7, 06679). As can be seen in the table 4.9, the p-value was .265. As  $p > .05$ , there is not any significant difference between two groups. In addition to the results of post-test scores, it can be observed that there is no suggestion that proves statistically difference between the two groups in terms of students' improvements on accurate grammar usage in their writing.

**Table 4.9.** Paired Samples Statistics Posttest Results for Frequencies of Errors

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	df	p.
experimental	13,5714	14	7,91021	13	.265
control	11,6429	14	7,06679		

According to pretest and posttest results for frequencies of errors, it is possible to observe a decrease to some extent for both groups. But mean points of the groups show that the experimental group students (pretest mean point: 21.5714, posttest mean point: 13.5714) have done better than the control group students (pretest mean point: 15.9786, posttest mean point: 11.6429).

#### 4.5. IMPACT OF FEEDBACK TYPES

After an eight week drafting system in process oriented writing classroom, a posttest was used to observe if any difference occurred between the feedback groups in terms of writing accuracy. Posttest results demonstrated that there were no significant differences between the groups statistically. However, the fact that there is not any difference between the groups should not raise negative questions in mind with respect

to the efficacy of feedback types used in this study. The pretest and the posttest results are presented with the research questions below:

*Does teacher written feedback have an impact on editing grammar errors in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, what extent?*

The mean point of grammar errors in the control group was 15, 9786 according to pretest results. The students in this group took teacher written feedback to the grammar errors on their essays. Through the process, teacher written feedback students examined their grammar errors with the error codifications they were introduced. They might have been more aware of their grammar accuracy in their own writing skills and provided more accurate and better essays in terms of the language patterns and rules. Posttest results referred to this awareness and improvement. According to the posttest results, the mean point of grammar errors was 11, 6429 at the end of the study.

In terms of language of the essays, teacher written feedback leads to an improvement in the students' essays. In other words, students in teacher written feedback group benefited from the feedback and wrote more successful and comprehensible revisions. Grammatical errors may lead to a loss in meaning. Therefore, students' revisions turned into more satisfactory compositions for the readers after the students used the feedback efficiently. The corrections of errors that affect the meaning of the sentence in the essays such as MW, WWC, VT, R and WWF removed the ambiguity or meaning loss in the second drafts.

*Does teacher-conferencing feedback have an impact on editing grammar errors in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, what extent?*

For the experimental group, the mean point of the grammar errors was 21, 5724 according to pretest results. Teacher one to one conferences were used for students' grammar errors in this group. The experimental group students had the opportunities to discuss their grammar errors with the researcher in detail. Additionally, this feedback type might have helped the students who have audio-lingual learning style. Through the process, students examined their grammar errors on their essays and discussed them with the researcher in a certain time separated for each student. Teacher conferencing

group students might also have increased their awareness of their grammar accuracy and improved their writing skill at the end of the study. Posttest results indicated students' improvement in terms of using more accurate grammar in their writing skill. According to posttest results, the mean point of grammar errors was 13, 5714 at the end of the study.

Considering the improvement between the drafts in terms of language use, the experimental group students revised their essays better than the control group students. As stated above, this group's participants enjoyed the advantages of discussing with the teacher about the errors they made on their first drafts. The teacher explained the students how readers might misunderstand the intended meaning because of the grammar errors. The experimental group students paid attention to the recommendations of the teacher on how to edit the errors and clear the semantic loss. The students wrote the second drafts with an awareness of the advices of the expert (i.e. teacher) and the second drafts turned into more qualified papers in terms of grammatical accuracy.

*Which feedback type relating to this study is more efficient on students' writing improvement in terms of grammatical accuracy?*

Although no statistically differences were found between the experimental group students and the control group students with regards to editing grammar errors on their essays, the students who got feedback in teacher-student conferences seem to have improved their writing more than the other group students. A certain decrease in the frequencies of grammar errors on students' compositions can be observed to some extent in both groups, but which feedback type has resulted in more positive results is the main question in mind. Pretest and posttest results show that teacher conferencing feedback group (pretest mean point: 21.5714, posttest mean point: 13.5714) might have improved much better than teacher written feedback group (pretest mean point: 15.9786, posttest mean point: 11.6429). As can be seen in the pretest and posttest results, the numerical difference in the experimental group ( $21.5714 - 13.5714 = 8$ ) is higher than the one in the control group ( $15.9786 - 11.6429 = 4.3357$ ) which might have referred to the fact that teacher conferencing feedback type might have been more useful.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

In this study, it is aimed to investigate the effectiveness of two feedback types (teacher written and teacher conferencing) on EFL students' essays. A control and an experimental group were designed to carry out the study. Quantitative research method was used to compare types of feedback used in the study. At the beginning of the study, a pretest was administered to students to see if there were any differences between the students in terms of writing competence. After eight-week feedback procedure, a posttest was again administered to students to observe a possible difference at the end of the study. By the data collected throughout the process, the research questions which were tried to be answered were:

- 1) Does teacher written feedback have an impact on editing grammar errors in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, what extent?
- 2) Does teacher-conferencing feedback have an impact on editing grammar errors in a process-oriented EFL writing class? If so, what extent?
- 3) Which feedback type relating to this study is more efficient on students' writing improvement in terms of grammatical accuracy?

In this chapter, the answers of these questions will be evaluated under the headings of *Comparison between the Feedback Groups* and *Further Research*.

#### 5.2. COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FEEDBACK GROUPS

The main aim of this study was to explore the effectiveness of teacher written feedback and teacher one to one conferencing feedback on EFL students' compositions. To learn the participants' writing performance level, a pretest was administered to students. By this test, students' general accuracy of grammar and error frequencies according to error types was determined. Students' assignments were examined throughout the term and participants took feedback to their compositions weekly.

Concerning the accuracy of grammar, there were no significant differences between the groups at the end of the process.

One of the important issues about giving form feedback is how grammar corrections effect the written production. Although grammar correction is seen one way of helping writers to improve the accuracy of a piece of writing and its communicative effectiveness, it is not seen an aspect of writing that should dominate teaching-learning process. It is seen as a secondary concern and it has a lower priority than content and organization. In this connection, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) have presented evidence from error gravity studies which show how L2 student writing is evaluated negatively as a result of continuing with error correction.

Through the training, teacher written feedback students may have improved their writing resulting from the feedback given on linguistic patterns. Although Truscott (1996) highlights the harmful effects of teacher feedback, it is possible to observe, to some extent, an improvement that teacher written feedback might have provided. The results of teacher written feedback group correlate with Fathman and Whalley (1990) who investigated the effectiveness four feedback types which were no feedback, grammar feedback, content feedback and content- grammar feedback and Ferris (1997) who investigated the influence of teacher's commentary on students' revisions.

One of the efficient ways of giving feedback to students may be the writing conferences. Both teachers and students can do what they exactly want to improve the skill of writing. The teacher can explain the remarks carefully and effectively in conferencing sessions. Additionally, students can enjoy the conferences by asking questions about their papers to clarify the flue points of written feedback on their essays. Ferris (2003) and Zamel (1985) underline the advantages of teacher-student conferences over written feedback. Ferris (2003) points out the useful sides of writing conferences which are "immediacy", "negotiation", and "opportunity for clarification". Students concentrate on their errors in conferences more than they do in written feedback (Zamel, 1985).

Through the training, teacher conferencing feedback students may also have improved their writing resulting from the feedback given on linguistic patterns. It may be possible to observe a correlation with Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) and

Sheppard (1992) who found traces supporting that students revised their texts with the help of conferences.

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that;

- Both teacher written feedback and teacher conferencing feedback help students to improve their writing.
- Teacher conferencing feedback works best for students to identify their weakness and strengths and to edit their grammar errors in EFL writing.

### **5.3. FURTHER RESEARCH**

Firstly, a process approach to teaching writing and multiple drafting strategies takes a lot of time and needs a great deal of work, so both students and instructors will need a longer process for drafting and revising. Writing is the skill that can be improved in a long period, so the best way of getting more reliable results is to carry out the study in a longer term.

Secondly, researchers should include more students in further studies to obtain more reliable results. Moreover, students' motivation and thoughts should be taken into consideration, so instructors may decide on their feedback strategies more accurately.

Finally, instructors should take training on how to give feedback and improve their feedback strategies to determine the most useful feedback type for their own contexts and students.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Syntactic Scoring Scale

		Maximum Score	100	25
<b>Task achievement</b>			30	8
Excellent to very good	All content points fully dealt with; wide range of ideas relevant to task Meets text type requirements including specified length Register and format consistently appropriate		30 29 28 27	8 7
Good	All content points dealt with; ideas relevant to task Some inconsistencies in text type requirements Register and format on the whole appropriate		26 25 24	6
Average	Most content points dealt with; sufficient valid ideas Several inconsistencies in text type requirements Reasonable, if not always successful, attempt made at appropriate register and format		23 22 21	5
Fair to Poor	Some content points dealt with; few valid ideas and/or repetitive Most content points mentioned; barely meets text type requirements Attempts at appropriate R/F are unsuccessful or inconsistent		20 19 18	4
Poor to very poor	Hardly any relevant content points dealt with Hardly any or no valid ideas Does not meet text type requirements		17 15 13 11-6	3 2 1-0
<b>Organization and</b>	<b>Cohesion</b>		20	5
Excellent to very good	Valid ideas organized effectively Variety of appropriate linking devices		20 19 18	5
Good	Valid ideas organized clearly Suitable linking devices		17 16	4
Average	Mainly valid ideas organized adequately Some simple linking devices		15 14	4
Fair to Poor	Choppy; ideas organized inadequately Communication or purpose of writing sometimes obscured; repetitive Rare or incorrect use of linking devices		13 12	3
Poor to very poor	Confusing; ideas disconnected; lacks logical sequencing No appropriate linking devices		11 10-4	2 1-0
<b>Range of</b>	<b>Grammar and Vocabulary</b>		20	5
Excellent to very good	Wide range of appropriate vocabulary and structures to express valid ideas efficiently Ambitious attempts at advanced, idiomatic language		20 19 18	5
Good	Good range of appropriate vocabulary and structures Ambitious attempts at advanced language		17 16	4
Average	Moderate range of structures and vocabulary		15 14	4
Fair to Poor	Limited range of vocabulary and structures; very simple Evidence of direct translation; interference from mother tongue		13 12	3
Poor to very poor	Inadequate range of structures and vocabulary Lack of vocabulary obscures communication; essentially translation		11 10-4	2 1-0
<b>Accuracy of</b>	<b>Grammar, Vocabulary and Spelling</b>		30	7
Excellent to very good	Accurate word/idiom choice; confident handling of appropriate constructions to communicate efficiently and concisely Hardly any errors		30 29 28 27	7
Good	Language is generally accurate Possibly some errors but errors do not impede communication Demonstrates mastery of basic grammatical structures		26 25 24	6
Average	Well-formed sentences; generally accurate expression Possibly a number of errors but errors do not impede communication		23 22 21	5
Fair to Poor	Frequent errors of vocabulary, grammar or spelling Errors may obscure communication at times		20 19 18	4
Poor to very poor	Frequent errors distract the reader Frequent errors obscure communication		17 15 13-6	3 2 1-0

Adapted from Pölzleitner (2008)

**APPENDIX B: Pretest Writing Topic**

**Student' name:**

**Student's ID:**

**Write a composition introducing yourself.**



**APPENDIX D: Posttest Writing Topic**

**Student's name:**

**Essay topic: Write the routines of the wedding ceremonies in your hometown.**

## APPENDIX E: Sample Student Essays for Pretest

- ALL ABOUT ME -

My beginning occurred on October 5 1988 in Erzurum. Of course, I can't consciously remember anything from the two, three or four years of my life after birth.

Whenever I try to talk about my family, I get all choked up. They left a great hole in me. My father is a chef and he is originally from Erzurum. My mother is also from Erzurum. My sister was born three years before than me on December 1985, and in addition to this, my brother was born two years before than my sister on August 27<sup>th</sup> 1983. I have a close relationship with my family, especially with my father. If I do something wrong he can just look at me - "he don't have to say anything and I say "I won't do it no more". During my life I have good conditions with the help of my family. I went to the standard schools in Erzurum, but also to a Kindergarten before starting in the elementary school level in Erzurum. Erzurum, a city, is not a community of high technology. It is a thriving market for livestock and leather products. It is the largest city in eastern Anatolia. By the time I was a student in high school I was taking supplementary English courses. In the end I had learned and progressed so much in English. In 2008 I was a student at German department. For all two years, I lived the life of someone I didn't know; From now on, I am going to be a real person. Because I am a student at English department. My return to the English department is in 2010. I am still making the effort to achieve something of value through my current studies or with any new ideas that come in the future. Being here is very exciting for me.

Now I have a life route. The sentence "if you are still taking about what you did yesterday, you haven't done much today" is shaping my life. I have no fear of perfection. I try to increase my level of intelligibility, raise my awareness. I learn how to organize my life during my education or my being. I don't look back in anger, nor forward in fear, but around in awareness.



= My life story =

Actually, everything began in a small village. 20 years ago, I was born about a sunset time in Ardahan. Like every child, I also had a normal childhood. When I was 6 years old, the first school days began for me. Although I didn't make any extra thing, I had always been noticed by my teachers. After 5 passing year in the village, I began to middle school. In these days, I had very hard time. Because the school was so far to my home so I had must to go there by any transport. In winters, it was terrible. After three years, I had graduated from my school by the degree of first rank.

It was the turn of high school. That year, my uncle, who lived in Istanbul, passed away. His wife (my aunt-in-law) was alone. Everybody said to me that: 'You will go to Istanbul, you will live with your aunt-in-law and you will go to high school there.' At last, I said okay. And I went. It was the turning point of my life. The first year was very hard for me. Life to me meant friends and family who I could trust and who could trust to me. That means, I had had some sad and depressed days but at the same time, I had very good and unforgettable days.

### THE STORY OF MY LIFE

I am Özlem. I was born in Kadıköy. But I have lived in Gebze so far. Although a long time passed, my mother and father hadn't got any children. My name is Özlem because they wanted to have a <sup>SIP</sup>child. Özlem means to their desire of a child. When I was born, my mother and father were pleased. <sup>o.o</sup>Our <sup>SIP</sup>all neighbours had a good time. I passed on very good <sup>M.W.</sup>childhood. When I started to primary school, I was six years old. I was <sup>M.W.</sup>very active, curious and talkative child. If I was curious about something, I certainly learned it. I had a lot of questions everytime. I was a sentimental person. I am not sure why. But even <sup>M.W.</sup>I was six, I wanted to be a teacher. In my primary education, I used to play folklore every year. In those years, I was a social child. But when I started to high school, I was <sup>M.W.</sup>a quiet and shy person. In 2007, I <sup>M.W.</sup>gained university exam. I studied at Tourist Guiding Department in Nevşehir University. <sup>M.W.</sup>In that university I studied two years. I stayed in a dormitory. Nevşehir was special for me. I really liked that city. I went to Cappadocia with my friends. Fairy chimnies <sup>M.W.</sup>was marvellous. We rode bicycle on valley. For Tourist Guiding Department, we had to be under training about 150 days. This summer, I was under training. I sold tickets and I organized holiday. I worked all summer. I want to tell you something which existed in travel agency. One day, while we were sitting in agency, we heard a scream from outside. We suddenly went out. Our boss was beating <sup>M.W.</sup>to a girl because she was sitting in stairs. Later our boss went to somewhere and the girl called <sup>M.W.</sup>her brother. There were a lot of customers in agency. Nearly thirty minutes later, someone knocked <sup>M.W.</sup>to door. He came into office by force. He shouted <sup>M.W.</sup>to us and he threatened to us. He messed up everything in office. Then he went out to wait our boss. Also we called police. When the police came to office, we were crying. Everyone in office except me gave evidence. Our boss and employers went to police station. <sup>M.W.</sup>In there, they came to an agreement. I was frightened. This situation was the first in my life. Nearly one week later, I finished my training. But it was the worst experiment for me.

My name's Ensar ASLANTÜRK. I was born in 1991 in Erzurum. I live in Erzurum. My father is retired and my mother is a housewife. I've four elder-brothers and two-elder sisters. I am the last child of my family.

I studied primary school at Sükrüpaşa Primary School. And then, I graduated from Mecidiye Anatolian High School. Now, I'm studying at Ataturk University in English teaching department.

When I sit back and consider the significant events in my past, my passing every exam that I came across is the most important one. So I am proud of myself in every range of life.

My goal is to be a successful teacher in a university. I want to be an academic personnel.

I believe that I grew more, emotionally, socially, and intellectually during my four years of high school. than during any other period of time thus far. Because I was a shy, introverted person in primary school so I wanted to change myself in high school. And in high school it went well. So I'm happy now.

Now I'm in Ataturk University thanks to my efforts. And now I'm trying to understand the world, events, I'm trying to learn secrets of the life because university is a different place at least they said so.

## APPENDIX F: Sample Student Essays for Posttest

### - Weddings in my Country -

Marriage is a social union. People marry for many reasons: Legal, social, spiritual and religious. Traditional section marriage is different from now.

In the traditional section marriage starts with looking for a girl. Families begins looking for a girl firstly starting from their relatives, closes. After finding a girl families want to reach an agreement. Engagement is the next step. It's held in the bride's home. Women and men separately sit in the bride's home. And jewellery is given to the bride who dressed in special dress. Engagement ring is worn by the bride. Engagement continues about one year or more. Before wedding henna night is held. It takes place at the girl's home among women. The henna is put on the hands of the bride and distributed to the guests. A woman places the henna on one of the bride's hands and then coins or gold are also placed in her hands. Morning bride is taken by those who come from the bridegroom's side. After travelling around, bride arrives in the home of the bridegroom. Weddings are generally held in the evenings, and especially on Saturday or Sunday. The Turkish marriage celebration continues about 3 days. Bride might wear a beautiful silk wedding dress. It is a special cloth. Weddings often take place in a saloon. Families give food to guests. After the celebration bride and bridegroom go to their home.

In short, the traditional section marriage is our special, different culture. Now there are some differences. But in some regions these specialities continue. My brother got married on 20 December 2010. We celebrated his wedding like this. I want to share it with you!

### = WEDDING CEREMONY IN OUR COUNTRY =

There are lots of wedding ceremony<sup>SIP</sup> in our country. I am from Ardahan. Of course, we have a special celebration. It has two parts. First, henna night and second wedding. Wedding means happiness for couples.

Henna night is celebrated in bride's house. Bride wears a special dress for night. By day, people come to bride's house and they eat meals. They enjoy all day. At henna night, they put henna in palm of bride and groom. Mother-in-law put a gold in bride's palm. It means that they live in a<sup>wealthy</sup> life. Bride wears a red headscarf on her head. At the end of the night<sup>P</sup> everyone is tired.

The following day is the wedding day. The relatives of groom come for taking bride from her house. Bride writes her single friend's name under her shoes. The next step is wedding place. It can be a salon or an open air place. In front of the groom's door, mother-in-law and father-in-law say welcome all the guests. Guests and all the relatives of couple enjoy with music. Then, people give some money or gold to couple. It means that they help them for making their house or life.

After the wedding, bride groom's best man and the couple go to a restaurant for eating wedding meal. After a good meal, couple kiss their family's hands and leave the house for honeymoon.



### THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Firstly, the boy's father goes to the bride's house. They determine the day for a wedding. Everyone is invited to the wedding. People come together to go to the bride's house. These people set out on a journey with accordion. The women sing songs. Groom's aunt takes something such as tidbits, henna. The bride's horse is decorated. When the boy side come to the girl's house, firstly the dinner is eaten. The groom doesn't come to henna. While the dinner is being eaten, people want something from the girls side. After the dinner, the girl comes in. There is a red wrap on the girl's head. The boy's aunt uncovers this wrap and observes the girl's face. Also, she spreads out a fabric and the girl passes off this fabric.

The wedding ceremony changes to place where it is made. For example; if the wedding ceremony is in the village, generally the bride doesn't wear wedding dress. She usually wears traditional clothes. These clothes are called "buzma". These clothes are colorful. But for wedding ceremony generally, white clothes are preferred. Weddings are made with a meal. Everyone gives presents in the jewelry ceremony. Girls side also give something such as head scarf, towel to them. The bride goes to her husband's house with horse. When she arrives to home, her mother-in-law brings a zinc plate and the bride steps on it. In case of the bride is soft words and pleasant manner, the mother-in-law gives honey to her mouth. Also, the bride lays a finger on flour. It means that she will be fertile. The bridegroom moves out the roof. When the bride comes to home, he throws sugar on her head. The bride's brother ties red band on her waist. Before the bride goes out, the doors are locked and someone wants money from boyside.

In conclusion, wedding ceremony lasts for three days in Artvin. Everyone comes together. The most important thing is entertainment in our wedding ceremony. Everybody from nine to ninety play with accordion. People want to help each other. Foods are made. Especially meat is important for dinner. Respectfulness and love are the most important thing in Artvin's wedding ceremony. You can see a real fraternity and the wedding ceremony passes with a great enthusiasm in there.

## WEDDINGS IN KARS

Different cultures, different customs, different traditions. That's the way of weddings. Every religion, region and country has different wedding traditions. In the vicinity of Kars, there is also some traditions on weddings. (S/P)

The day before wedding, wedding guests go to bring bride and they stay there that day. The following day, bride's side keeps the door in order to take some money from groom's father. Whoever keeps the door has the right to want how much money he/she wants, but in moderation. Then wedding guests pray with imam. And bride is bring to ride the horse which is embellished in advance. (W/W/P)

Groom and his friends wait for bride over the roof. Groom throws an apple to head of bride, at the same time, groom's friends throw appetizers to the ground and children collect them. Thus, people enjoy with themselves with variety of activities throughout the wedding ceremony. (P)

(R)

**CURRICULUM VITAE**

<b>Kişisel Bilgiler</b>	
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Doğum Yeri ve Tarihi	YERKÖY/ 17.07.1987
<b>Eğitim Durumu</b>	
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