



Effects of peer- versus self-editing on students' revision of language errors in revised drafts

Nuwar Mawlawi Diab*

Department of Humanities, Lebanese American University, Chouran 13-5053, Beirut, Lebanon

Received 18 March 2009; received in revised form 8 October 2009; accepted 12 October 2009

Abstract

Previous research on the effects of peer-editing in bringing about language development generally examined the linguistic performance of only a few students and did not focus on specific language errors nor used a control group. To counteract these limitations, this study used a pre-test/post-test comparison group quasi-experimental design to compare the effects of peer-editing to that of self-editing on students' correction of specific language errors in revised drafts. The language errors under study are two rule-based errors (subject/verb agreement, pronoun agreement) and two non rule-based errors (wrong word choice, awkward sentence structure). Results revealed that compared to the comparison group, the experimental group significantly reduced their rule-based errors in revised drafts but not the non rule-based errors. Since both groups received teacher instruction in editing language errors, but only the experimental group engaged in peer-editing, these results may be attributed to peer-editing. The study contributes to teaching pedagogy by encouraging teachers to use peer-editing in the writing classroom and to focus on the correction of few language errors to bring about language development.

© 2009 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Rule-based errors; Non rule-based errors; Peer-editing; Self-editing; Peer feedback

1. Introduction

The effect of error correction on students' language ability in revised drafts is still being questioned in applied linguistics and composition studies. Research studies investigating the matter may be classified into two strands: one strand investigates the effect of teacher feedback on language errors, while the other strand examines the effect of peer interaction on language development. Below is a review of the literature on both strands.

* Tel.: +961 3 088661; fax: +961 1 867098.

E-mail address: nuwar.diab@lau.edu.lb

2. Literature review

Some teachers and researchers have been sceptical about the efficacy of teacher feedback in reducing language errors in students' revised drafts. According to Truscott (2004, 2007), error correction as a means of improving learners' language abilities should be abandoned. A basic assumption in this regard is that teachers' efforts at correcting errors are futile given that they ignore the instructional sequence of grammatical learning that students must go through before they acquire a second language (Truscott, 1996). Truscott's scepticism about error correction is shared by other researchers as is apparent in the literature review below.

In a study carried out to determine whether teacher comments on content or grammar result in better student writing, Kepner (1991) concludes that students who receive message-related feedback write better than those who receive surface-error feedback. However, Kepner's (1991) students had simply received comments on their journals and were not asked to revise and correct their entries in response to teacher feedback. Moreover, Leki (1991) disagrees with the value of form-focused error correction in improving students' writing. She argues that

even under controlled conditions, in which a variety of correction techniques has been used consistently and systematically, evidence suggests no difference in degree of student improvement regardless of what types of responses to written errors (including ignoring errors) are employed (p. 204).

In contrast, other studies acknowledge the efficacy of teacher feedback in reducing student language errors in revised drafts (Fathman and Whalley 1990; Ferris, 1997, 1999). In Fathman and Whalley (1990), all students who receive only grammar feedback improve their grammatical accuracy. Moreover, Ferris (1997) concludes that among other teacher feedback, 'summary comments on grammar appear to lead to the most substantive revisions' (p. 328). Likewise, Ferris (1999) asserts that error correction that is systematic, selective, and clear can help students to improve their writing ability. However, the above studies (Fathman and Whalley 1990; Ferris, 1997, 1999) do not examine which errors are easier to avoid than others, nor do they investigate the error correction methods that may lead students to correct their language errors in revised drafts.

Studies that do examine specific language errors generally trace the effect of teacher feedback on reducing these errors in revised drafts (Ferris, 2006; Ferris and Roberts, 2001; Ellis et al., 2008). Ferris and Roberts's (2001) study suggests that the type of error addressed seems to influence language accuracy since 'error feedback had noticeably higher success ratios in the three "treatable" categories (verbs, noun endings, and articles) than in the "untreatable" word choice and sentence structure categories' (p. 172). Another study in which the type of error corrected seemed to influence language learning is one by Ferris (2006). Ferris (2006) found that the students were able to reduce in their third drafts about 80% of all error categories marked by the teacher on the second drafts (short-term effect), with the exception of errors in idiom and subject/verb agreement categories. However, this study, like that of Ferris (1997), does not involve a control group. Accordingly, its results may have been due to a number of factors. On the other hand, Ellis et al. (2008) compared the effects of focused and unfocused corrective feedback on two experimental groups' use of definite and indefinite articles. While one experimental group received focused corrective feedback, the other received unfocused corrective feedback. However, the control group received no error correction. Results revealed that both experimental groups outperformed the control group in terms of reducing article errors.

The other strand of research which examines the use of peer-editing to develop student writing has reported mixed degrees of success. Some researchers consider peer-editing ineffective and claim that students are not able to spot weaknesses in their colleagues' essays as they are weak themselves (Allaei and Connor, 1990), that students do not trust each other's comments (Carson and Nelson, 1996), and that they have general preference for teachers' feedback over peer-editing (Zhang, 1995). On the other hand, other researchers have recommended the use of peer-editing in the ESL writing classroom and argued that it helps students engage in critical reading and writing, gain audience awareness (Berg, 1999), explain their points of view (Villamil and de Guerrero, 1996), experience less writing anxiety (Stanley, 1992), gain confidence and language skills (Byrd, 2003; Min, 2006), and become more supportive of each other

(Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger, 1992; Schmid, 1999). However, these researchers do not investigate the ability of peers to edit and reduce language errors in their colleagues' essays. Only a few studies in this strand (de Guerrero and Villamil, 2000; Donato, 1994; Ohta, 2000, 2001) trace language development resulting from peer interaction, and they are generally small in scale (fewer than 10 students) and descriptive in nature. Subscribing to the qualitative method of inquiry, they mostly analyse student collaboration, and some of them assume that language development has taken place when, in a language related episode, the learners discuss faulty linguistic structures to arrive at the correct forms. They do not employ any method of measuring learning. Moreover, these studies do not include control groups that receive different treatments, so it is not clear whether the language development reported in them is the result of peer collaboration or teacher instruction and class practice.

The above review of language studies highlights three issues: (1) the different research designs adopted by these studies which may explain the discrepancies in their findings; (2) the issue that it is not whether language errors should or should not be corrected but rather which language errors to correct and how to engage in error correction in order to help students reduce these errors; (3) the scarcity of studies investigating peers' ability to spot and correct each other's language errors. Accordingly, the present study addresses a gap in the literature with respect to students' ability to edit and reduce specific language errors in their colleagues' revised drafts. This study was the third cycle of an action research carried out on the researcher's students as part of a doctoral study, where the first cycle examined peers' ability to improve their colleagues' overall essay quality and the second cycle examined students' attitudes towards peer-editing. To ensure that its findings are not attributed to a factor other than peer feedback, this study avoids the limitation of the above-mentioned studies on peer-editing by employing a pre-test/post-test comparison group quasi-experimental design.

3. Research questions

The study investigates two research questions: (Q.1) Is trained peer-editing or trained self-editing more successful in reducing the percentage of rule-based language errors in revised essays? (Q.2) Is trained peer-editing or trained self-editing more successful in reducing the percentage of non rule-based language errors in revised essays? The language errors under investigation are subject/verb agreement errors (coded S/V Agr.); pronoun agreement errors (coded Pr. Agr.); wrong word choice (coded W.W.); and awkward sentence structure errors (coded S.S.). A sentence is considered awkward when it is poorly written but not a sentence fragment or a run-on sentence. The researcher selected these errors because her 20 years of teaching experience revealed that they were common in students' essays (see also Connors and Lunsford, 1988; Lunsford and Lunsford, 2008 for a list of common errors). The first two errors are referred to as rule-based errors (errors that may be corrected by applying grammar rules) and the other two as non rule-based errors (errors that may not be corrected by applying grammar rules).

4. Methodology

The researcher who is also the teacher provided an experimental and a comparison group with instruction on editing language errors. However, while the experimental group peer-edited language errors in their colleagues' essays, the comparison group self-edited language errors. The performance of the two groups was compared to determine which method is more successful in reducing specific language errors (see Section 4.3 for details).

4.1. Participants

The student sample was composed of two groups, one of which served as comparison group and the other as an experimental group. The comparison group included 18 students, while the experimental group included 22 students. The two groups were registered in two classes of English 3, an EFL freshman level

course which the researcher taught at an English medium university in Lebanon. English 3 is the third course in a sequence of five English courses, three taken at the freshman level and two at the sophomore level. The students placed in English 3 should have scored at least 500 on the SAT, 263 on TOEFL (computer-based), 600 on the university's English Entrance Exam (EEE), or passed another pre-requisite course. The two groups under study were Lebanese students whose native language is Arabic, and English was their L2 or L3 (French being their L2). The researcher sought and gained the students' consent to carry out research on their essays.

4.2. Materials

Four instruments of data collection were used in this study: a questionnaire, a diagnostic essay, an editing form, and a formula to calculate language errors. To start with, a structured questionnaire (see Appendix A) adapted from Liebman (1992), was distributed in the first week of the semester to the experimental and comparison groups in order to determine the students' background and culture of learning. The students were requested to fill in the questionnaire in class and to write their names in order to facilitate seeking clarification of some vague responses. The two groups also wrote a diagnostic essay to determine their writing ability. The diagnostic essay was graded using a rubric that follows the Hamp-Lyons (1991) multiple trait approach. The questionnaire and the diagnostic essay were used to check whether the two groups were equivalent. Moreover, a language editing form was designed to help the students edit their colleagues' errors. It required the students to point out any of the four language errors under study, to indicate its line number, and correct it where possible (see Appendix B). Students were asked to number the lines, not sentences, of the drafts they edited because some sentences may be very long, which would make error identification rather difficult for the writers. In order to motivate the students to edit language errors to the best of their ability, editing forms were rated using a 3-point editing scale adapted from McGroarty and Zhu (1997). However, editing grades are not reported in this study. Finally, to calculate the number of errors the students made per essay, the following formula was used: total number of errors under study/total number of words per essay $\times 100$ (Chandler, 2003). Rule-based and non rule-based errors were calculated separately.

The results of the questionnaire revealed that the number of years that the students had studied English was similar in the two groups, with 14 out of 22 students (0.63%) from the experimental group studying English more than 8 years, compared to 11 out of 18 students (0.61%) from the comparison group. However, there were some differences between the experimental and comparison groups in terms of essay writing. The two groups had had different exposure to writing, with the experimental group having been less involved in studying grammar, learning organization patterns, engaging in peer-editing, reading and imitating examples of famous writers, and reading books about writing (Q.2). Moreover, with respect to grading criteria, there were minor differences between the two groups. Students in the experimental group rated clarity of main ideas and organization as the criterion most emphasized by their teachers when grading, followed by grammar and spelling as second most emphasized and the use of examples and details as third most emphasized. On the other hand, the comparison group rated clarity of main ideas and the use of examples and details as the criterion most emphasized by their teachers when grading, followed by organization and grammar and spelling as the second most emphasized criteria, then beauty of language as the third most emphasized. However, the students of the experimental group re-wrote their essays more often than those of the comparison group and focused more on correcting content, organization and language errors than did the comparison group. Likewise, attitudes towards editing differed between the two groups. The students of the experimental group seemed to be more worried about offending writers and more eager to please them with their comments than were the students of the comparison group. In contrast, the students of the comparison group appeared less sure of their ability to peer-edit. With respect to trust, both groups seemed to believe in their peers' ability to comment on their essays (Q.7). Also, the two groups agreed that students are able to edit their colleagues' essays when trained to do so (Q.8). However, they differed in the source they sought help from to improve their language. The students in the experimental group preferred to seek help from teachers in order to improve their writing, whereas the students

of the comparison group preferred to depend on themselves (Q.9). Finally, the majority of students in the two groups considered their language ability to be good (Q.10).

On the other hand, comparison between the two groups' performance on the diagnostic essay showed some difference in the students' language ability in favour of the experimental group. Accordingly, to ensure that the students in the two groups have rather similar training in essay writing background, instead of the diagnostic essay which the researcher had initially planned to use, the first draft of Essay One (causal argument), which students had written after being trained in editing, but before receiving peer feedback, was used as pre-test (T_1).

4.3. Procedure

The students in the comparison and experimental groups attended different classes of English 3. The students met three times a week for 15 weeks. In the first 5 weeks of the semester, both student groups learnt the components of the argumentative essay and received form focused instruction (FFI) on the four language structures under study (S/V Agr., Pr. Agr, W.W., S.S.) since research studies on FFI (Ellis, 2002; Norris and Ortega, 2000) have concluded that explicit FFI results in a significant acquisition of second language. In addition, students also practiced editing content, organization, and language errors using sample essays written by anonymous students from a previous semester (see Byrd, 2003; p. 437). However, only the editing of language errors will be reported in this study. During the training sessions, previous student essays that included the above-mentioned language errors were put on transparencies. With the teacher's help, the students collectively identified and discussed the four types of errors under study after receiving explicit grammar instruction in how to correct these errors. As recommended by Byrd (2003), the teacher taught the students peer-editing through modelling and demonstrated how to handle language errors by underlining them on the first draft and writing their codes. Ferris and Roberts (2001) report that the students' 'most popular feedback choice (48%) was for the teacher to mark the error and label it with an error code' (p. 174). When the errors were identified, they were copied on the editing form along with their line number in the first draft, then they were corrected. The students were urged to try and correct language errors because in Chandler's (2003) study, students' error correction resulted in increased accuracy of subsequent writing. At the end of their training, the students in both groups were asked to write, in class, three graded essays in weeks 6, 8, and 10 respectively. Before the first draft of each essay was written in class, both groups were given an additional practice editing session so as to help them remember editing skills.

In week 6, after writing the first draft of Essay One (causal argument), the students in the experimental group engaged in peer-editing each other's essays. In the next class period, peer-editors swapped papers and edited each other's essays for 50 min. When editors spotted language errors in their colleagues' papers, they discussed them with the writer, negotiated possible alternatives, and filled the editing form like they were taught in the practice sessions since writing down these errors helps students remember and revise them (Min, 2005). In the third class period, the student writers took back their first draft with the respective peer-editing form and proceeded to revise their essays in response to their peers' feedback and according to the knowledge they had gained from teacher instruction in editing argumentative essays. At the end of the third class period, the students in the experimental group submitted their second drafts along with their first drafts and the peer-editing forms. In weeks 8 and 10, the same procedure was repeated for Essay Two and Essay Three respectively. Thus, the experimental group participated in three peer-editing sessions, and in each session the students were asked to choose a different peer to edit the essay, which increased the chance that each student may have been paired off with a competent or a weak editor.

On the other hand, the students in the comparison group followed the same procedure as that of the experimental group except that they engaged in self-editing their essays in light of teacher instruction in editing argumentative essays, which they had received early in the semester; they then filled the self-editing form. The students submitted both drafts and the self-editing form at the end of the third class period. In weeks 8 and 10, the same procedure was repeated for Essay Two and Essay Three respectively.

Table 1
Method.

Stage 1: training	Four sessions of practice editing and grammar instruction for both groups using an editing form and grammar exercises
Stage 2: essay writing	Three essays, each written in two drafts over three class periods; the experimental group engaged in peer-editing first drafts of the three essays; the comparison group self-edited the first drafts of the three essays
Calculation of language errors	Four types of language errors were counted in each draft written by the two groups

Language errors students made in each draft were calculated using the above-mentioned formula adapted from Chandler (2003). However, since the first draft of Essay One was used as pre-test (T_1), only language errors found in Essay Two (the position argument) and Essay Three (the problem/solution argument) were traced in this study (see Table 1 for summary of the method used in this study).

5. Results

To determine whether there was statistically significant improvement in the types of language errors between the second draft of Essay Two (the position argument) written in week 8 and the first draft of the causal argument (T_1) written in week 6, the difference in the percentage of rule-based errors of the comparison and experimental groups was calculated. The percentage of rule-based errors which the comparison and the experimental groups made on the second draft of the position argument was measured according to the above-mentioned formula (see Section 4.2). A univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted. The treatment conditions (comparison versus experimental) were used as an independent variable and the students' percentage of rule-based errors on the second draft of the position argument as dependent variable, and the students' percentage of rule-based errors on the causal argument (T_1) as covariate. Results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the comparison and experimental groups in favour of the experimental group for rule-based language errors made on the second draft of the position argument at alpha level of 0.1: $F(1, 37) = 2.0, p = 0.16$. The mean score and the standard deviation (SD) of the comparison group and the experimental group were (0.51, $SD = 0.38$) and (0.36, $SD = 0.37$) respectively.

Moreover, the percentage of non rule-based errors which the comparison and the experimental groups made on the second draft of the position argument was also measured according to the above formula (see Section 4.2). Results revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the comparison and experimental groups in terms of the non rule-based errors made on the position argument: $F(1, 37) = 1.32, p = 0.25$. The mean score and the standard deviation (SD) of the comparison group and the experimental group were (2.08, $SD = 0.98$) and (1.65, $SD = 1.19$) respectively.

In order to triangulate the above results, the same tests were repeated for the problem/solution argument to determine whether there was a statistically significant improvement on the rule-based and non rule-based language errors between the second draft of Essay Three (the problem/solution argument) written in week 10, and the first draft of the causal argument (T_1). The percentage of rule-based errors which the comparison and the experimental groups made on the second draft of the problem/solution argument was measured for the problem/solution argument according to the above-mentioned formula. A univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted. The treatment conditions (comparison versus experimental) were used as an independent variable and the students' percentage of rule-based errors on the second draft of the problem/solution argument as dependent variable. The students' percentage of rule-based errors on the causal argument (T_1) was used as covariate. Results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the comparison and experimental groups in favour of the experimental group in terms of the percentage of rule-based language errors at alpha level of 0.1: $F(1, 37) = 2.16, p = 0.15$. The mean score and the standard deviation (SD) of the comparison group and the experimental group were (0.82, $SD = 0.86$) and (0.53, $SD = 0.64$) respectively.

Similarly, the percentage of non rule-based errors which the comparison and the experimental groups made on the second draft of the problem/solution argument was also measured according to the above formula. Results reveal that there was no statistically significant difference between the comparison and experimental groups in terms of the non rule-based errors made on the problem/solution argument: $F(1, 37) = 0.69$, $p = 0.41$. The mean score and the standard deviation (SD) of the comparison group and the experimental group were (2.08, SD = 0.72) and (1.90, SD = 1.21) respectively.

Moreover, a sample of seven randomly chosen essays from each group was analysed to look for error patterns. In the seven essays written by the experimental group, a total of 13 S/V Agr errors appeared. Peer-editors managed to correct around half of them, with the exception of one editor who corrected only 1 S/V Agr error out of six such errors found in one essay. Interestingly, however, peer-editors were unable to spot any of the 3 Pr Agr errors found in the seven essays. In terms of non rule-based errors, there were a total of 49 WW errors and 24 SS errors in the seven analysed essays. Only one peer-editor was able to correct four out of eight WW errors in one essay, another corrected the only WW error in another essay, while the other editors could not spot any WW errors. However, sentence structure (SS) errors were the most difficult to notice and correct. Only two editors attempted to edit such errors. Of these two students, only one was able to spot and correct a couple of sentence structure errors, while missing the remaining seven in the essay. The other student corrected one sentence in another essay, but the sentence stayed awkward. Moreover, peer-editors sometimes misidentified some errors and considered them S/V Agr errors when they were actually number agreement errors (for example, 'coats' instead of 'coat') or labelled them W.W. when they were errors of tense or word form.

On the other hand, in the seven essays written by the comparison group, a total of 6 S/V Agr errors appeared. Only one writer corrected the only S/V Agr error in an essay. On the other hand, out of the eight Pr. Agr errors present in these essays, not one of them was spotted and corrected, as was the case with the experimental group. With respect to non rule-based errors, there were a total of 26 WW errors in the seven analysed essays and 17 SS errors. Of the 26 WW errors, only three WW errors were corrected by three students, one of whom also spotted another WW error but could not correct it. In terms of SS errors, only one student was able to spot and correct one such error. Another two students spotted but could not correct two SS errors; two other students corrected two already correct sentences. Also one student misidentified a sentence fragment as SS error, while another misidentified preposition errors as Pr. Agr. errors.

Given the above findings, it seems that both groups had difficulty noticing and correcting Pr. Agr and SS errors. Pr. Agr error may be hard to spot and correct because it refers to an antecedent that may be placed further away from it in a sentence. Moreover, noticing and correcting S.S. errors may be difficult because the features students would need to notice are spread out in the sentence and, hence, less easily spotted (see Section 6 below).

6. Discussion

With respect to the language results of question 1, the rule-based errors that the experimental group made in the second drafts of both the position argument and the problem/solution argument were significantly fewer than those made by the comparison group. The experimental group's ability to reduce rule-based errors seems to be the result of peer interaction when editing each other's essays. Since students' attention was drawn to certain rule-based language errors during FFI sessions, student collaboration during the editing sessions seemed to have increased student awareness of these errors, allowed them to negotiate possible alternatives and to arrive together at correct linguistic forms, thus constructing new knowledge and reducing language errors in their essays. Since the students in the comparison group were not able to achieve the same results despite receiving FFI, one can conclude that peer-editing has allowed students to achieve together what each could not accomplish alone.

These findings agree with the findings of previous research studies. A study by Holunga (1994) investigated the effects of metacognitive strategy training on the oral accuracy of verb forms. Results revealed that verbalizing the language errors that the students spotted allowed them to 'become more aware of their problems, predict their linguistic needs, set goals for themselves, monitor their own language use,

and evaluate their overall success' (p. 109). Likewise, Ohta (2001) reported a similar finding in a study which traced the effects of peer interaction on seven students learning Japanese. She concluded that peer mediation and interaction allows learners to notice and focus their attention on specific linguistic aspects of the language under study and to develop their language ability.

In contrast to the findings regarding rule-based errors, there was no significant decrease in non rule-based errors (WW; SS) found in the revised drafts of the two groups in the position and problem/solution essays. This finding may be explained by the fact that peer-editing is a communicative approach to learning writing and 'Communicative approaches to learning give input, time-on-task and opportunity for relating form to function' (Ellis, 2002, p. 175). However, FFI on non rule-based structures which students received early in the semester may be considered as complex input. Ellis (2002) argues that 'there may be more complex associations that require more conscious explicit learning and hypothesis testing to acquire' (p. 174). One example may be the non rule-based W.W. Word choice errors may require complex associations between the connotation of a word and its context so as to convey the intended meaning. Similarly, S.S. errors also require complex processing because the features which student editors need to notice and correct are spread out in the sentence, as stated earlier. Accordingly, learners who are 'cognitively overloaded ... cannot pay attention to all meaningful differences at once' (Schmidt, 2001, p. 7). Perhaps in addition to the FFI sessions that students received, they may have needed a larger number of practice editing sessions as well as sessions that are longer than the 50-min ones provided in this study to allow editors to notice the faulty word choice and sentence structures, develop associations between the intended meaning and the written form, discuss the errors with the student writer then correct these forms.

The study has limitations. To start with, its results may not be generalised to the wider population because the sample is small and not representative. Still, should repetition of this study with a larger and more representative sample of comparable university students yield similar findings, then its results may be generalised to similar level university students taking similar writing courses. A further limitation is that the instructor is also the researcher and the only one to count the language errors in student essays, which could have influenced the reliability of the results.

7. Conclusion

Results of this study revealed that the students who engaged in peer-editing reduced their rule-based language errors in revised drafts more than those who self-edited their essays. These findings stress the role collaborative dialogue plays in mediating second language learning. Error feedback provided by peers allowed students to notice faulty linguistic structures and to arrive at the correct rule-based linguistic forms through negotiations with their peers. Such peer feedback increases students' awareness about the relationship between meaning and form. On the other hand, from a cognitive perspective, peer feedback allows learners to notice the gap between their erroneous language productions and the input provided by the peer (Swain and Lapkin, 2002) and enables them to restructure their linguistic information (McLaughlin, 1987) in light of peer feedback to produce correct grammatical structures. In a review of L2 writing in the US, Reichelt (1999) argues that despite their differences, ESL and FL writing have much in common and can gain from each other's successes. She recommends that ESL writing teachers find ways in which writing can promote second language acquisition (p. 195). The findings of this study show that peer-editing is one such method as it can be used to improve students' language ability by reducing the frequency of their errors. By encouraging students to give error feedback to their colleagues, teachers will be helping them to think about language as they are producing it and to construct new knowledge. This study has pedagogical implications in the writing classroom as it encourages teachers to adopt the technique of peer-editing to help their students develop their language abilities. Future research should look into methods to draw students' limited and selective attention (Schmidt, 2001) to non rule-based language structures in order to facilitate their acquisition. Also, it would be interesting to examine whether or not longer peer-editing time, more peer-editing sessions, and more practice of non rule-based linguistic structures investigated in this study may result in student reduction of these errors in their revised essays.

Appendix A

Questionnaire

Student's Name: _____ Age: _____
 Native Language: _____ Nationality: _____

1. How long have you studied writing in English?
 (a) 1-4 years (b) 5-8 years (c) 9-12 years (d) 13-16 years

2. What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in English? (Circle as many as apply.)
 - a- We read and imitated examples of famous writers.
 - b- We read and imitated examples of student writers.
 - c- We re-copied examples.
 - d- The teacher lectured.
 - e- We wrote in class.
 - f- We discussed writing.
 - g- We read a book about writing.
 - h- We learned patterns of organization.
 - i- We practiced our handwriting.
 - j- We peer-edited each other's essays.
 - k- We wrote letters to other people.
 - l- We wrote research papers.
 - m- We read our papers out loud.
 - n- We wrote journals or diaries.
 - o- We studied grammar and did grammar exercises.
 - p- We memorized writing done by famous people.
 - q- We gave speeches.

3. Which three criteria from the list below did your teachers emphasize when they graded your essays? (Circle as many as apply.)
 - a- Beauty of language
 - b- Clarity of main idea
 - c- Correct grammar and spelling
 - d- Expressing your true feelings honestly
 - e- Length of paper
 - f- Neatness and handwriting
 - g- Originality and imagination
 - h- Organization
 - i- Persuasiveness
 - j- Quoting experts and other sources
 - k- Truth of my ideas
 - l- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas
 - m- Other _____

Most important _____
 Second most important _____
 Third most important _____

4. At high school, did you rewrite your English essays? (Circle one.)
 (a) Always (b) Usually (c) Sometimes (d) Never

5. When you rewrote essays, what sort of changes did you make?
 (a) Changes in content (b) Changes in organisation (c) Changes in Language (d) None

6. If you were asked to evaluate a student's essay, how would this practice make you feel?
 - (i) Worried about offending the writer
 (a) Always _____ (b) Often _____ (c) Sometimes _____ (d) Never _____
 - (ii) Eager to please the writer with kind words
 (a) Always _____ (b) Often _____ (c) Sometimes _____ (d) Never _____
 - (iii) Confident of your ability to point out the essay's strength and weakness
 (a) Always _____ (b) Often _____ (c) Sometimes _____ (d) Never _____
 - (iv) Unsure of your ability to peer-edit
 (a) Always _____ (b) Often _____ (c) Sometimes _____ (d) Never _____

7. Do you trust your colleague’s comments about your writing?

- (a) Always_____ (b) Often_____ (c) Sometimes_____ (d) Never_____

8. Peer-editors, when properly trained, may correct each other’s language errors.

- (a) Strongly Agree_____ (b) Agree_____ (c) Disagree_____ (d) Strongly Disagree_____

9. To improve your language _____ ability, you will depend on

- (a) teacher’s help_____ (b) colleague’s help_____ (c) a grammar book_____ (d) yourself_____

10. Rate your language ability.

- (a) Excellent_____ (b) Good_____ (c) Average_____ (d) Poor_____

Adapted from: Liebman, (1992)

Appendix B

Editing Form

Writer’s Name: _____
 Editor’s Name: _____

I. Tabulate errors in subject/verb agreement (S/V Agr.), pronoun agreement (Pr. Agr.), and wrong word choice (W.W.) and correct these errors to the best of your ability.

Error	Type of Error	Line Number	Correction

II. Below, copy the awkward sentence structure(s) found in the essay, state the line number(s) then correct the awkward structure(s).

References

Allaei, S.K., Connor, U., 1990. Using performative assessment instruments with ESL student writers. In: Hamp-Lyons, L. (Ed.), *Assessing Second Language Writing in Academic Contexts*. Ablex, Norwood, NJ, pp. 227–240.

Berg, C.E., 1999. The effects of trained peer response on ESL students’ revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8 (3), 215–241.

Byrd, D., 2003. Practical tips for implementing peer editing tasks in the foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals* 26 (3), 434–441.

Carson, J.G., Nelson, G.L., 1996. Chinese students’ perception of ESL peer response group interaction. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 5 (1), 1–19.

- Chandler, J., 2003. The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 12, 267–296.
- Connors, R.J., Lunsford, A.A., 1988. Frequency of formal errors in current college writing, or ma and pa kettle research Reprinted in: Ede, Lisa, Lunsford, Andrea A. (Eds.), 2003. *Selected Essays of Robert J. Connors*. Bedford/St. Martin's, New York.
- De Guerrero, M.C.M., Villamil, O.S., 2000. Activating the ZPD: mutual scaffolding in L2 peer revision. *The Modern Language Journal* 84 (1), 51–68 (Spring).
- Donato, R., 1994. Collective scaffolding in second language learning. In: Lantolf, J.P., Appel, G. (Eds.), *Theoretical Framework: an Introduction to Vygotskian Approaches to Second Language Research*. Ablex Press, Norwood, NJ, pp. 33–56.
- Ellis, R., 2002. Does form-focused instruction affect the acquisition of implicit knowledge? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 24, 223–236.
- Ellis, R., Sheen, Y., Murakami, M., Takashima, H., 2008. The effects of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback in an English as a foreign language context. *System* 36, 380–353.
- Fathman, A.K., Whalley, E., 1990. Teacher response to student writing: focus on form versus content. In: Kroll, B. (Ed.), *Second Language Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 178–190.
- Ferris, D.R., 1997. The influence of teacher commentary on student revision. *TESOL Quarterly* 31 (2), 315–339.
- Ferris, D.R., 1999. The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: a response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8 (1), 1–11.
- Ferris, D., 2006. Does error feedback help student writers? New evidence on the short- and long-term effects of written error correction. In: Hyland, K., Hyland, F. (Eds.), *Feedback in Second Language Writing: Contexts and Issues*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 81–104.
- Ferris, D., Roberts, B., 2001. Error feedback in L2 writing classes. How explicit does it need to be? *Journal of Second Language Writing* 10, 161–184.
- Hamp-Lyons, L., 1991. *Assessing Second Language Writing in Academic Contexts*. Ablex Publishing Corporation, New Jersey.
- Holung, S., 1994. The Effect of Metacognitive Strategy Training with Verbalization on the Oral Accuracy of Adult Second Language Learners. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Toronto (OISE), Toronto.
- Kepler, C.G., 1991. An experiment in the relationship of types of written feedback to the development of second-language writing skills. *The Modern Language Journal* 75, 305–313.
- Leki, I., 1991. The preferences of ESL students for error correction in college-level writing classes. *Foreign Language Annals* 24 (3), 203–218.
- Liebman, J.D., 1992. Toward a new contrastive rhetoric: differences between Arabic and Japanese rhetorical instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 1 (2), 141–165.
- Lunsford, A.A., Lunsford, K.J., 2008. Mistakes are a fact of life: a national comparative study. *College Composition and Communication* (4), 781.
- Mangelsdorf, K., Schlumberger, A.L., 1992. ESL student response stances in a peer-review task. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 1 (3), 235–254.
- McGroarty, M.E., Zhu, W., 1997. Triangulation in classroom research: a study of peer revision. *Language Learning* 47 (1), 1–43.
- McLaughlin, B., 1987. *Theories of Second Language Learning*. Edward Arnold, London.
- Min, H., 2006. The effects of trained peer review on EFL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 15, 118–141.
- Min, H.-T., 2005. Training students to become successful peer reviewers. *System* 33, 293–308.
- Norris, J., Ortega, L., 2000. Effectiveness in L2 Instruction: a research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning* 50, 417–528.
- Ohta, A.S., 2000. Rethinking interaction in SLS: developmentally appropriate assistance in the zone of proximal development and the acquisition of L2 grammar. In: Lantolf, J.P. (Ed.), *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 51–78.
- Ohta, A.S., 2001. *Second Language Acquisition Processes in the Classroom: Learning Japanese*. Laurence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.
- Reichelt, M., 1999. Toward a more comprehensive view of L2 writing: foreign language writing in the US. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8 (2), 181–204.
- Schmid, L.M., 1999. *The Effects of Peer Response on Essay Drafts*, Unpublished MA Thesis in TESOL, Department of English, California State University, Sacramento.
- Schmidt, R., 2001. Attention. In: Robinson, P. (Ed.), *Cognition and Second Language Instruction*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 3–32.
- Stanley, J., 1992. Coaching student writers to be effective peer editors. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 1 (3), 217–233.
- Swain, M., Lapkin, S., 2002. Talking it through: two French immersion learners' response to reformulation. *International Journal of Educational Research* 37, 285–304.
- Truscott, J., 1996. The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning* 46, 327–369.
- Truscott, J., 2004. Evidence and conjecture on the effects of correction: a response to Chandler. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 13, 337–343.
- Truscott, J., 2007. The effect of error correction on learners' ability to write accurately. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 16, 255–272.
- Villamil, O.S., de Guerrero, M.C.M., 1996. Peer revision in the L2 classroom: social-cognitive activities, mediating strategies, and aspects of social behavior. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 5 (1), 51–76.
- Zhang, S., 1995. Thoughts on some recent evidence concerning the affective advantage of peer feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8, 321–326.