

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES**

**TEACHER-INITIATED LEARNER SELF-CORRECTION STRATEGY
OF ACADEMIC WRITING: Wollega University in Focus.**

BY

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May, 2009

Addis Ababa

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A thesis submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, in
partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts (M.A) in Teaching English as
a Foreign Language (TEFL)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

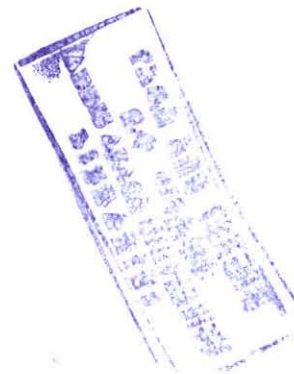
First and foremost, my deepest respect and sincere thanks go to my advisor, Dr. Seime Kebede, whose constructive comments and suggestions kept me on track and helped me to bring this paper to the present shape. His successive comments also made me rethink many of the strategies I had to use to bring the problems in question to light.

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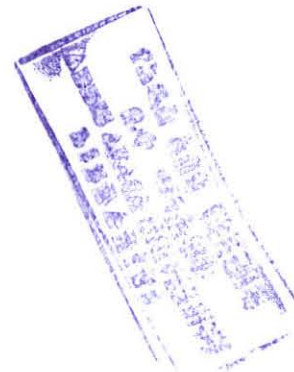


Table of Contents

| Content | page |
|---|------|
| Acknowledgments | i |
| Table of Contents | ii |
| List of Tables | iii |
| Abstract | iv |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION | |
| 1.1 Background to the Study..... | 1 |
| 1.2 Statement of the Problem | 2 |
| 1.3. Objective of the Study | 4 |
| 1.4 Significance of the study | 5 |
| 1.5 Scope of the Study | 5 |
| 1.6 Limitation of the Study..... | 6 |
| 1.7 Definition of Terms and Abbreviations..... | 6 |
| 1.8 Organization of the Study..... | 7 |
| CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE | |
| 2.1 The Nature of Writing..... | 8 |
| 2.1.1. What is writing? | 8 |
| 2.1.2 Why is Writing Difficult?..... | 9 |
| 2.2. The Purpose of Writing..... | 10 |
| 2.3 Teaching Writing | 11 |
| 2.3.1 Approaches to Teaching Writing..... | 12 |
| 2.3.1.1 The control to free Approach | 12 |
| 2.3.1.2 The Free-writing Approach | 12 |
| 2.3.1.3 The Paragraph-Pattern Approach | 13 |
| 2.3.1.4 The Grammar-Syntax-organization Approach..... | 13 |
| 2.3.1.5 The Communicative Approach..... | 14 |
| 2.3.1.6 The Process Approach..... | 15 |
| 2.3.1.7 English for Academic Purpose (EAP)..... | 16 |
| 2.4. The Role of the Writing Teacher..... | 16 |
| 2.5. Responding to Students Writing | 17 |



| | |
|--|----|
| 2.5.1 Feedback and Its Provision | 18 |
| 2.5.1.1 The Function and Nature of Teacher Feedback..... | 18 |
| 2.5.2 Students Feedback Processing and Revision | |
| Strategies of their Written Feedback | 20 |
| 2.5.3 Error Correction | 21 |
| 2.5.3.1 Fundamental Questions in Error Correction..... | 22 |
| 2.5.3.1.1 Deciding Whether to Correct Errors or Not | 22 |
| 2.5.3.1.2 When to Correct Learners' Errors | 23 |
| 2.5.3.1.3 Which Error is to Be Corrected?..... | 24 |
| 2.5.3.1.4. How to Correct Learners' Errors..... | 25 |
| 2.5.3.1.5 Who Should Correct Learners' Errors? | 26 |
| 2.5.4 Written Error Treatment and Analysis | 27 |
| 2.5.5 Different Techniques of Written Error Treatment..... | 28 |
| 2.5.5.1 Teacher Correction | 28 |
| 2.5.5.2 Peer Correction | 28 |
| 2.5.5.3 Self-Correction..... | 29 |
| 2.5.5.3.1The Significance of Self- Correction | 31 |
| 2.5.5.3.2 Necessary Conditions for Self-Correction and Factors Affecting It | 32 |
| 2.5.5.3.3 Method of Employing Self-correction | 34 |
| 2.5.5.3.4 Attitudes towards Self-Correction..... | 35 |

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

| | |
|--|----|
| 3.1 Population and Sampling procedures | 37 |
| 3.1.1 Students | 37 |
| 3.1.2 Instructors' | 38 |
| 3.1.3 Research Site | 38 |
| 3.2 Tools of data Collection | 38 |
| 3.2.1 Composition Writing | 39 |
| 3.2.2 Questionnaire..... | 40 |
| 3.2.3 Interview | 41 |

3.3 Procedures of Data Analysis and Interpretation 41

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULT

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results of Student Compositions 43

4.1.1 Instances of Student Self-correction and Revision..... 53

4.2 Analysis and Discussion of the Result Obtained from the Questionnaire and Interview. 61

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary..... 74

5.2 Conclusion 75

5.3 Recommendations..... 76

BIBLOGRAPHY 78

APPENDIX A 84

APPENDIX B 85

APPENDIX C 86

APPENDIX D..... 87

APPENDIX E 90

APPENDIX F 91

List of Tables

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| Table 4.1: Type and Number of Pre-Feedback Errors (Version 1)..... | 44 |
| Table 4.2: Type and Number of Post-Feedback Errors (Version 2) | 47 |
| Table 4.3: Total Number of Pre-feedback and Post-feedback Errors and Number and Percentage Self-corrected on a Group Basis | 50 |
| Table 4.4: Errors Self-Corrected on Individual Basis..... | 52 |
| Table 4.5: Total Instances of Self-correction and Revision..... | 54 |
| Table 4.6: Students' Reading of Their Commented Papers and Clarity of the Teacher's Comments | 62 |
| Table 4.7: Students' Reaction to Teacher Feedback and Self-correction Technique..... | 65 |
| Table 4.8: Students' Feedback Processing and Revising Strategies..... | 68 |
| Table 4.9: Students' Perceived Ease and Difficulty During Self-correction..... | 69 |
| Table 4.10: Response on Teacher's Usual Approach to Error Correction and Students' Preferences..... | 70 |
| Table 4.11: Students Preferences and Attitude to Error Correction | 71 |

Abstract

The major objective of this study was to investigate teacher –initiated learner self-correcting ability in written composition of third year EFL students at Wollega University taking the course Advanced Composition. Specifically, the study aimed at finding out the extent to which the students can self-correct their written errors, the strategies they use to process and handle the teacher’s written feedback and revise their texts, areas of ease and difficulty for them to self-correct, and their general attitude to the technique.

To achieve these objectives, the necessary data were collected through composition writing tasks, student questionnaire and teacher interview. The students (No. 25) i.e. 100% were made to write four compositions (two original versions and two self-corrections or revisions). Finally they filled in a questionnaire and their instructor was interviewed.

The result of the essay writing revealed that the students successfully self-corrected their composition errors. That is from a total of 1155 errors recorded pre-feedback on both sessions writing tasks, they managed to significantly reduce these to 475 errors self-correcting 680 errors or 58.9% of the errors. This implies that self-correction and rewriting are worthwhile approaches to written error correction. Moreover, it was revealed that the students attended to most (93%) of the teacher’s comments and suggestions in self-correcting and rewriting.

The result of student questionnaire similarly disclosed that they mostly used internal resources like reading the feedback over and over and contextual clues to process and understand the teacher’s comments. They also reported having good initiation and motivation for self-correction and revision. The teacher also noted that he used teacher correction sometimes, peer correction most frequently and self correction rarely.

Finally, it was concluded that self-correction is an indispensable means of dealing with written errors and promoting writing autonomy in EFL classes. However, in order to deal with or overcome the limitations of the technique, proper training and conscious-raising on its benefits and procedures are essential for the students and teachers alike. Teachers are also advised to draw on different correction techniques (peer-correction, etc), depending on the nature of the activities and other situations, giving self-correction the first place in their minds.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

English is by far the most widely spoken foreign language in the world. Besides, it is a language of instruction, business, media, international communication, etc. In our country too English serves a variety of important purposes. In addition to the functions mentioned above, it is mainly used as a medium of instruction generally starting from high school (grade 9) up to higher education level. It is thus evident that these roles played by English for academic and non-academic matters show its significant place in the country's development endeavor.

In spite of this, the proficiency level of high school leavers is extremely low and below the required standard (Teshome, 1995). This low competency level in turn has an adverse effect on the students academic achievement and on the quality of learning in general (Ibid). This is mainly because teachers trained in higher educational institutions are not prepared to manage the complex classroom situations prevailing in the Ethiopia schools (Hailom 1993:10). English language teachers on the other hand, blame this poor proficiency level on lack of motivation on the part of the learners (Felekech, 2007).

Consequently, it is commonly observed that the students' language skills in general and their writing skills in particular seem to be below the desired level (Testaye , 1995; Asres, 2005). However, since writing skill lays a base for students' academic success, it needs special attention of the writing teacher.

In order to address this problem of writing competency, it is important to investigate the current situation of writing instruction and suggest alternative strategies so as to improve the existing practice. To this effect, the researcher is interested in conducting a study on self-correcting abilities in written composition of Wollega University regular third year EFL students, taking Advanced Composition course in the second semester of 2009 academic year.

Wollega University is located in Oromia region, West Wollega Zone 331km from Addis. It is one of the 13 universities established in 2004 as part of the current governments' attempt to expand higher educational institutions in the country. It offers a degree program in social, natural, and humanity fields of studies. The area of study includes biology chemistry, physics, mathematics, engineering, economics accounting environmental studies, geography history, language (English, Afan Oromo Amharic) etc. The department of Foreign Languages and Literature also offers two writing courses: Intermediate Writing Skill (FLEn 204) on second year and Advanced Composition (FLEn 406) on third year, in addition to other required courses for B.Ed degree. Both courses are offered with three credits –hour per week

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The concepts of feedback, error treatment, and error correction are crucial elements and central aspects of EFL/ESL instruction (Chaudron, 1988). These common phenomena in language classes are ways by which students are informed about their performances and get motivated for better success and endeavor (Littlewood, 1981). Thus language class which doesn't take this into account is hardly called a language class (Edge, 1983; Gower, et al 1995).

When it comes to writing, foreign language learners are confronted with a number of problems, some of which are cognitive and linguistic demands it makes on them. That is what contents to include, how to organize them and language needed to express these (Byrne 1988). As a result of such attempt to communicate, inevitably they make mistakes. It is also natural that students want and expect feedback for the betterment of their writing and communication skills.

However, the questions of who and how to correct written errors seem to be controversial and perhaps a matter awaiting intensive research (Chaudron, 1988; Allwright & Bailey, 1991). The problem of who should correct learners' errors is particularly getting complex as research on errors correction is not at all conclusive (Brown, 1994; Lee 1997). Some prefer and use the traditional method where the teacher directly corrects learner's errors. Tudor (1996), for instance, states, "In a traditional method the teacher assumes the role of correcting errors" (P. 214). Others, on the other hand, favor the involvement of learners (peer or self-correction) (Ibid). This side of argument holds the view that learner involvement is strategy leading to a more effective learning of EFL writing.

Scholars in the field of ELT generally seem to be dissatisfied about the effect of the traditional method of error treatment, considering it as a potential danger to writer autonomy. Allwright, (1988: 109), for example, comments:

What worries me is not such feedback procedures [teacher feedback] are inefficient in themselves, but they constitute a large quantity of "spoon-feeding" with the teacher taking virtually all the responsibility for error detection and correction. Such spoon-feeding militates against the development of writer autonomy.

Allwright and Bailey (1991) also share this view. They assert that the manner in which errors are treated i.e. whether by the teacher, the learner himself or peers can influence the students' ability

to detect and correct errors. They, therefore, suggest that before dealing with learners' errors teachers must first decide if learners can employ self-initiated self-repair or other-initiated learner self-repair strategy.

Direct teacher correction, in general, seems unfavorable because when teachers mark students' assignments and return the papers "embleshed with corrections", the students groan, put it away and forget about it (Raimes, 1983). As a result, students rarely get the opportunity to look back at their work and self-correct their own errors. This leaves them passive recipients of correction because the more assistance the teacher offers, the less responsibility the students need to take (Reid, 1994). Hence, "it is perfectly reasonable and pedagogically sound to get them [the students] correct their own mistakes" (Byrne, 1988: 123). The above mentioned scholars seem to argue that learners should actively involve themselves in the correction process of their written composition and look back at their own works so that they can see why they get something right or wrong.

In the Ethiopian context, too the traditional method of error correction is reported to have been used. Teachers in general do not seem to recognize the benefits of self-correction and thus learners are offered no opportunities to take responsibility for their own writing despite the current urge of promoting learner autonomy. Studies conducted by Teshome, (1995); Derib, (2007); for example, have revealed that Ethiopian teachers use direct teacher correction. This way of error treatment, however, seems to have hindered the students' writing ability (Tesfaye 1995; Italo, 1999; Asres, 2005) and their self-correcting ability as well. Students attending college preparatory courses and those joining colleges and universities generally seem to lack the required skills to comment on their own works even if they are given written feedback (Taye 2005).

Though many research pieces have been conducted on various natures of feedback and error treatment, the area of self-correction of written error has not been sufficiently researched. Italo's (1999) study, for example, aimed at investigating the effectiveness of peer versus teacher feedback and it was revealed that the difference between the two techniques was insignificant. Similarly, Felekech (2007) studied the effectiveness of peer review technique and found out that it was generally effective.

To my knowledge, the only studies related to teacher-initiated learner self- correction strategy are Tesfaye's (1995) and Mesfin's (2004) works. Tesfaye's experimental study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of different feedback techniques in helping learners improve their proficiency in written English using teachers direct error correction versus self correction technique. The experimental group received feedback types that let them self-correct their own errors. The control group received direct teacher correction on their writing tasks. The result showed that self-correction techniques are more effective in helping learners to improve the quality of their texts than the techniques where the teacher gives direct correction. Mesfin investigated the effectiveness of peer correction versus self-correction techniques in improving written composition of preparatory school students in Addis Ababa. The study revealed that there is no significant difference between the two methods.

However, there are few local studies conducted to explore areas of learner self- correction of written composition in its own right, particularly teacher- initiated learner self correction. Though the studies reported so far claim the effectiveness of one approach over the other (Tefaye, Ibid) or at least their being equal in effectiveness (Mesfin,2004),they don't tell us much about the effectiveness of teacher-initiated learner self correction strategy in written composition. The current study is therefore aimed at filling this gap by investigating teacher-initiated self correcting ability of EFL students at Wollega University and strategies they use in doing this. Thus students' ability or lack of ability to self correct their written errors through teacher feedback provision is generally not researched to claim its applicability in a writing classroom. The problem in question is also not well-addressed in peripheral universities and colleges in the country.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the self-correcting abilities in written composition of EFL students attending Wollega university. Other specific objectives of the study are to assess:

- a. the extent to which the students can self-correct using the teacher's written feedback.
- b. the strategies students use in processing and utilizing the teacher's feedback and revising their texts during classroom writing activities.
- c. student's motivation and attitude towards the technique.

- d. where the students have ease and difficulty in self-correcting.
- e. the students' writing and self-correction background skills.
- f. the kind of feedback students prefer and for which aspect of composition they need it more.

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- a. Do students self-correct their own written errors using teachers' written feedback? If so to what extent?
- b. What strategies do they use to process or to handle teacher's feedback?
- c. Where do they have ease and difficulty in self-correcting their texts?
- d. What is their attitude towards the technique and how is their motivation?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Learner self-correction technique doesn't seem to have been widely practiced in the Ethiopian language classes. Hence, if this study has been successful it is believed that both teachers and students can benefit from it by applying the technique in their classroom. It also relieves the teacher's marking load by transferring more responsibility to the learner. Moreover, it benefits the learners too by fostering learner autonomy. Through the application of the technique, they develop the self-critical skill to comment on their own work and activate their linguistic competence and creativity. It makes them active participants in written composition by reflecting on their own works. Furthermore, though the paper is specific in its scope, it is expected to give tentative resolution to the problem in question. It can also invite other language scholars to the same line of study to investigate the problem in greater depth and wider scope.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study is confined to a limited scope. As already been mentioned it tries to assess the self-correcting ability in written composition of EFL students attending a university. It is particularly restricted to students taking the course *Advanced Composition* at Wellega University. As dealing with all aspects of composition (e.g. style, register etc) is impractical and unmanageable within the available time, the researcher attempts to treat some elements like mechanics, grammar,

vocabulary, content and organization. These were selected because they are more common in the writing literature and university courses.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

There were two major factors that could affect the manner in which the research was conducted. First, the study was carried out in the face of serious constraint of time. Had it not been for this, the problem in question could have been investigated in greater depth and wider scope by administering more than two writing tasks and self correction sessions to further increase the reliability of the study. Furthermore, even though many decisions regarding the data analysis were jointly and carefully made by the researcher and the students' composition instructor, it was still likely that some element of subjectivity might creep into the composition error analysis. Moreover, the number and nature of the errors identified during the error analysis could also be affected by markers' degree of error perception and/or tolerance. In addition, since the composition writing was an in-class task, it was difficult to know the students feedback processing strategies in out-of-classroom activities.

1.7 Definition of Terms and Abbreviations

- a. **Teacher-initiated learner self-correction** – refers to a technique whereby the teacher prompts learner self-correction through the provision of written clues or feedback. This involves the use of correction symbols or codes like 'SP' for spelling; 'T' for tense, etc.
- b. The available body of literature on error treatment makes distinction between 'error' and mistake. However, this paper does not take the distinction between the two into consideration because of certain inconsistencies usually observed in the definitions of the terms. Thus both terms in this paper are taken to mean the same thing and are used interchangeably.

Abbreviations

AAU= Addis Ababa University.

SE₁ V₁=Student, Essay1, Version1.

SE₂ V₂=Student, Essay2, Version2.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study comprises five chapters and a bibliography as well as appendices section. Chapter one presents statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study, definition of terms and abbreviations and organization of the study. The second chapter, review of related literature, discusses various ideas and viewpoints of professional authorities in the field of writing. The third chapter deals with research design and methodology of the study. Then the fourth chapter presents data analysis and interpretation. The fifth chapter comprises summary, conclusion and recommendations. The bibliography is included at the end followed by appendices.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Nature of Writing

2.1.1. What is writing?

Regarding the concept of writing, Byrne (1988) identifies two levels of existence. On one level, according to her, writing is an act of forming graphic symbols-making marks on a flat surface of some kind. However, still she notes that writing is much more than the production of such graphic symbols. The symbols have to be arranged according to certain conventions to form words, and words to form sentences. Sentences in turn have to be linked together in certain ways to create a coherent whole (text).

Thus writing can either be less demanding or much more complex. In its simplest form, it may be thought of as just copying something from a spoken or written source (Rivers 1981), and for lower grades writing may be sentence completion, substitution, transformation, etc (Raimes (1983) At such levels writing requires minimal composing ability and thus needs a low level cognitive process. This could be categorized as beginning level writing.

However, scholars in the field of writing define writing in a more advanced manner. For example, Zamel (1983:166) states that “writing is not only the presentation of our thoughts in graphic symbols but also a process of discovering and making meaning.” She further explains that through the act of writing ideas are explored, clarified and reformulated and as a result new ideas suggest themselves and become assimilated into the developing pattern of thought. For Biggs (1988) as cited in Boughey (1997), writing is a tool for clarifying and extending thought; an instrument of both communication and self-expression (Pincas 1982:5). This double function of writing as pointed out by Pincas enables individuals to communicate with members of other groups to express themselves and produce ideas in an interaction.

In conclusion, these definitions given by different scholars about writing reflect the different levels of writing skill, its functions, and purposes Authorities in the field generally seem to agree that writing is a means of encoding information or meaning to achieve a desired effect. However, its permanency in the form of graphic symbols makes it difficult and different from other means of encoding meaning.

2.1.2 Why is Writing Difficult?

Writing is frequently considered a difficult task for any language users, and presents a fairly challenging task both for native and non-native speakers. Certain cognitive psychologists have gone to the extent of describing it as the most complex and demanding of all cognitive activities (White and Arndt, 1991). Many educationalists contend that this difficulty emerges from the nature of the writing skill itself (Nunan 1989). It is a multi-faceted activity where a writer is expected to control a number of variables simultaneously (Rybowksi, 1986; Byrne, 1988; Hedge, 1988; Leki 1989; Nunan, 1989; Kroll, 1990). At the sentence level these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, and paragraph and letter formation. Beyond sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into a coherent paragraph (Kroll 1990).

Perhaps the other most common nature of writing that poses difficulty to student writers is that it is a solitary activity (Hedge, (1988, 2000); McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Leki (1989, 1998). Comparison between speech and writing can make this problem clearer. The writer usually writes to an unknown reader or, displaced in time and space which means she/he cannot exploit all the devices available to a speaker: paralinguistic features like gesture, body movement, facial expressions, pitch and tone of voice stress, and hesitation (Hedge, 1988; Byrne, 1988; Reverse and Temperley, 1978; Boughey, 1997) and thus no immediate feedback to the writer whose interlocutor is physically absent (Byrne Ibid). In order to compensate for these disadvantages, sentences are expected to be carefully constructed, punctuated, linked and organized,

Hedge (1988:5) citing Rosen (1981) still eloquently remarks the difficulty writing poses to both to L1 and L2 writers. She holds that due to the nature of writing, even native speakers can not achieve the highest level of expressive power in writing in their L1.

The writer is a lonely figure cut off from the stimulus and correctives of listeners. He must be a predictor of reactions and actions of his predictions. He writes with one hand tied behind his back being robbed off gestures. He is robbed too of the tone of his voice and the aid of clue the environment provides. He is condemned to monologue; there is no one to help out to fill the silence, put the words in him mouth, or make encouraging noises (Hedge, 1988:5).

As Rosen points out writing is detached from a wide range of expressive possibilities that are utilized in speech. Since the writer is unable to exploit these all, she/he totally depends on a written code, using a high degree of accuracy in order to avoid ambiguity of meaning.

Raimes (1983) notes the more general dimensions of the difficulty of a writing program. She states that people normally speak without much conscious effort and freely about matters of interest to them. But writing is learned through instruction and they have to master certain structures which are less used in speech but important for effective communication. Writing, according to her, is also a skill often imposed on writers by circumstance and this has a psychological effect on them, in addition to linguistic and cognitive ones.

In general, the difficulty associated with writing skill mentioned so far are multiple and varied. Most of the problems are due to the nature of writing itself and thus can affect not only beginner writers but also experienced ESL/ELF and L1 writers alike. However, it is usually exceedingly difficult to EFL writers because of the additional linguistic problem.

2.2. The Purpose of Writing

Writing serves a variety of purposes. Leki (1989), for instance, points out two basic reasons for writing. The first, according to her, is to express oneself. That is to say keeping a journal to discover and explore one's thought. In short, writing to one self. The other is to communicate with others whereby the writer's intention is to accomplish different tasks like showing one's knowledge on a subject (as in exams), informing or explaining something to someone, persuading someone to agree or disagree, sharing information with other people, entertaining others etc..

However, the fact that people frequently write to communicate with each other in writing is not the only reason to include writing as part of ESL/EFL syllabus. It goes beyond this and serves other important academic purposes (Raimes, 1983). Firstly, it reinforces grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that we teach. Secondly, writing gives students the chance to be adventurous with the language and take risks. Thirdly, when they write, the students necessarily become very involved with the new language, as a result of the constant use of eye, hand and brain in a unique way to reinforce learning.

Thus the aforementioned discussion has been concerned with the various purposes for which people usually write. It is clear to see that writing serves personal, professional and pedagogical purposes. What makes writing of particular concern for students is that it reinforces their academic studies. Particularly the close relationship between writing and thinking makes writing

a valuable means of learning by helping learners be adventurous and discover something new. It creates a real need to struggle with the language and learn the skill and other aspects of language.

2.3 Teaching Writing

As has been noted above, the teaching of writing is obviously important mainly because of its pedagogical and non-pedagogical purposes and functions it offers. However, there are a few problems that educators face in the course of their instructional processes. One of these is how to make learners see the purpose of writing and make measurable progress through realistic and relevant tasks (Byrne 1988). The other is how to maintain a fair balance between content and form in responding to students writing (Ur, 1996:163). Another related problem is how effectively students can learn writing since, due to its very nature, it is considered difficult.

Regarding these problems scholars in the field of composition generally seem to agree that writing skill develops through continuous practice which implies that students need to get ample practicing time for this to be achieved (Byrne, 1988; Ur, 1996; Leki, 1998).

However, in many language classes we see the tendency to relegate writing to homework to save time for the practice of other skills like *aural-oral* (Hedge 1988, 2000; McDonough and Shaw 1993). As a result, writing takes place in unsupported conditions and students miss valuable opportunities for improving it through discussion and collaboration (Hedge 2000). In many other cases too writing has a consolidating function to the teaching of other elements of language like vocabulary and structure (Hedge 1988).

Consequently, students tend to think that writing is less important than the other language skills and thus give little attention to it (Ibid). Nevertheless educationalists in the field like Zamel, (1983); Hedge, (1988) and many others advise teachers to devote a reasonable class time to writing in order to help students to gain sufficient practice through the teachers' assistance and peer collaboration.

The suggestion provided above reminds us of the need of working together with peers and the teacher in order to enhance ones writing skill which is usually considered difficult if such collaboration and support is not obtained. Therefore, in addition to these suggestions, once the decision to teach writing is made, it seems advisable to be conscious of the different approaches to teaching writing that have evolved across the history of language teaching.

2.3.1 Approaches to Teaching Writing

Since 1945, the beginning of the modern era of L2 teaching in the US, the history of ESL/EFL has seen a succession of different approaches to L2 writing (Silva, 1990). It is a period when a particular approach gains dominance and then fades but never disappears completely. Raimes (1983); Silva, (1990); Jordan (1997); and Paltridge, (2000) thus identify these approaches by classifying them in to different influential periods.

2.3.1.1 The Control to Free Approach

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the audio lingual method dominated L2 teaching/ learning with its underlying notion that language was speech and writing was mainly to serve and reinforce speech, grammar, spelling and punctuation teaching (Leki, 1991; Jordan, 1997). Sometimes those grammar exercises were disguised as composition writing and other times students were given short texts and asked to make certain changes like changing plural to singular simple present tense to past etc. In short, it is a vehicle for language practice (Silva, 1995). Students were also made to copy paragraphs, combine sentences and manipulate grammar etc (Ibid). They were not required to create a text themselves because traditional philosophy persuaded teachers that students were not ready for practical and real writing (Leki, *ibid*; Silva, 1990).

It is only after reaching a high-intermediate or advanced level of proficiency were students allowed to practice some free composition where they were required to express their own ideas (Ibid). This approach stresses three features of language: grammar, syntax and mechanics. It emphasized formal accuracy rather than fluency, employing a rigidly controlled method of teaching in order to avoid errors (Silva, *Ibid*) and learning to write in L2 is seen as an exercise in habit formation (Paltridge 2000). The writer is merely a manipulator of previously learned structures (*ibid*). Even though addressed infrequently, this approach to L2 writing still exists in many ESL composition classrooms.

2.3.1.2 The Free-Writing Approach

The mid-Sixties brought an increasing awareness of ESL students' needs with regard to a relatively extended written discourse. This awareness led to suggestions that controlled composition was not enough and that there was more to writing than copying sentences, combining sentences or manipulating grammatical structures (Silva, 1990; Paltridge, 2000).

Thus in this writing approach, teachers are required to assign a vast amount of a free-writing activity on given topics, with minimal error corrections i.e. quantity rather than quality is stressed (Raimes 1983). As a result, intermediate level students are expected to put content and fluency first without worrying about forms (Ibid). To emphasize fluency further, some ESL teachers ask students to write freely on any topic of their interest without worrying about errors of spelling and grammar, and do not correct such pieces of writing. They simply read them and perhaps comment on the ideas the writer expresses (Ibid). Alternatively, some students might volunteer to read their own compositions aloud to the class and concern for audience and content are considered important.

2.3.1.3 The Paragraph-Pattern Approach

This approach to L2 writing came up with a relatively better view of ESL/EFL writing. Raimes (1983) notes that instead of accuracy of grammar and fluency of content it stresses another major feature of writing- organization. The students are therefore made to copy paragraphs, analyze the form of model paragraphs and imitate model passages (Silva, Ibid; Raimes (Ibid). They are also required to put scrambled sentences into paragraphs, identify general and specific statements, choose or invent appropriate topic sentences, insert or delete sentences (Byrne Ibid). This approach is based on the principle that in different cultures people construct and organize their communication with each other in different ways. Thus, even if students organize their ideas well in their L1, they still need to see, analyze and practice the particular English features of a piece of writing (Ibid).

Thus this approach generally stresses on getting students to express themselves effectively in writing at a level beyond a sentence and the focus is therefore on a text.

2.3.1.4 The Grammar-Syntax-Organization Approach

This approach links the purposes of a piece of writing to the forms that are needed to convey them. Thus, Raimes (ibid) notes that writing cannot be seen as composed of separate skills which are learned one by one. For this reason, writing tasks should help students pay attention to organization while working on the necessary grammar and syntax. For instance, one who needs to write a clear instruction needs more than the appropriate vocabulary. He needs the simple form

of verbs, an organizational plan based on chronology like 'first,' 'next', 'finally'. This helps students to see the connection between what they are trying to write and what they need to write.

2.3.1.5 The Communicative Approach

The Communicative approach is a general and major paradigm shift in the teaching of language in the 1970s. This major change has also influenced L2 composition teaching/ learning. It is particularly interested in the purpose of a piece of writing and audience for it (Raimes 1983) because partly the rhetorical context and partly the content of student writing is determined by the audience of the writing and its purpose of writing (Leki, 1991). Thus student writers are encouraged to behave like writers in real life and ask themselves the crucial questions, "Why am I writing this?" and, "Who will read it? This gives them a sense of direction and focus, a sense of control over the slippery and new linguistic code (Leki Ibid).

Traditionally the teacher alone has been the audience for student writing. But recently it is felt that writers do their best when writing is a truly communicative act, with the writer writing for a real reader (Raimes, Ibid). Regarding this, Leki (1991:9) points out the real danger of the teacher being the only audience for students writing:

If the students are writing for the teacher, there is the risk that they will simply try to guess what the teacher wants and deliver that without committing themselves intellectually to what they are writing.

This amounts to saying that students will complete the assignment without caring about what they are to write, and thus are not encouraged to take risks with the language. They will never expand the horizons of their writing ability in L2.

Leki (ibid) further suggests another very legitimate and available audience for student writing—their fellow classmates or other students in the school. Similarly, Raimes (ibid) reminds the potential benefit of extending readership beyond the teacher. She notes that this gives them not only a real audience but also it helps them to respond, rewrite, it in a different form, summarize or make comments. Extending readership beyond classroom also helps students to get a context for appropriate content, language and level of formality as in the case of writing to a penpal, for example. They also develop a reader-based text instead of a writer-based one. Thus, this approach to L2 writing helps student writers to get motivation to write and see how writing is a form of communication.

2.3.1.6 The process Approach

In the 1990s, methodology for the teaching of writing in ELT classrooms made further departure from the traditional approach. Thus the process approach during this period emerged in reaction to controlled composition and other product-oriented approaches to L2 writing. Many teachers began to feel that the prevailing approach to teaching writing ignored individual thought and expression, restricting students to what they could write and how they could write (Jordan, 1997). It became more important, then, to guide rather than control learners and to let content, ideas and the need to communicate determine form, rather than start with the form of a text (Silva 1990). This made the teacher's role less central. Thus, classroom practices become more learner-centered.

Classroom activities in this approach focus on the stages writers typically go through in producing texts such as finding a topic, brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, editing and proofreading. (Raimes, 1983; Hedge 1988; Silva, 1990; Jordan, 1997; Leki, (1989, 1998). Hence writers ask crucial question like "How do I write, "How do I get started?". The emphasis in this approach is therefore "less on the product and more on the wandering path that students use to get to the product" (Leki 1991:10), and L2 writers are taught the strategies that would help them reach a product. Even though still grammatical accuracy and product are important, the writing class is more exploratory and less punitive, less demoralizing and student writers are less alone (ibid). There is a great deal of collaboration between and among students and with the teacher in the form of giving and getting feedback on what to say and how to say. This drives the students through the writing process and eventually to the end product (Leki 1990).

Another new emphasis on L2 writing is that it is not a linear process. As Tylor (1981) in Kroll (1990:15) notes, "Writing is not straightforward plan-outline-write that many believe it to be." But the composing process is seen as a non-linear, messy, recursive, exploratory and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning (Zamel 1985; Spack and Sadow; Raimes, 1985). However, some composition experts like Reid, (1984) question whether the process approach realistically prepared students for the demand of writing in academic contexts. In their view, the process approach gave students a false impression of what is required of them in university settings, particularly its special socio-cultural context and expectations. This led to a focus on a genre approach, EAP.

2.3.1.7 English for Academic Purpose (EAP)

As the name suggests, EAP focuses on teaching particular academic genre, such as essays, research reports, and theses and dissertations. This might include a focus on language and discourse features of the texts, as well as the context in which the text is produced (Silva, 1990) and aimed at socializing students into the academic context and behaviors dictated by that academic community. This involves the close examination and analysis of academic discourse formats and writing tasks (Ibid). I.e. it conforms to what is expected and appropriate standard in that context.

A number of studies have researched the effect of EAP and genre-based pedagogy and come up with positive results which suggest that the approach is useful in helping learners improve their writing (Reppen 1995; Mustafa, 1995; and Rose berry, 1998, all cited in Paltridge, 2000).

Even though EAP has got such attractions, some call its emphasis on writing in various disciplines into question. These critics see a humanities-based approach with a primary focus on general principles of inquiry and rhetoric as more viable and appropriate (Silva, 1990).

2.4. The Role of the Writing Teacher

In section 2.1.2 we discussed the difficulties associated with writing, particularly writing in ESL/EFL settings. These difficulties that students face in writing seems to call for a great deal of teacher intervention and involvement during the writing process. The teacher's roles are not limited like in the traditional product oriented writing classes whose roles are merely to control the writing activities and to evaluate after it has been produced in order to diagnose weaknesses and strengths or to give grades. Teachers are expected to create favorable environment for students to practice writing skills (Hedge, 1988).

Hedge (1988) further stresses the problems writers, even skilled L1 writers, have with a writing skill. This suggests that EFL writer in particular need help with grammar, sentence structure, organization of texts, etc. Similarly, Raimes (1983) points out the need of teacher's intervention during the processes of composition to support ESL students with ideas of their texts.

The most important question here is in what way writing teachers can discharge these responsibilities. In line with this, Hedge (1988:24) devised tasks which are based on six basic principles and writes:

1. *Teachers can play a valuable part in raising awareness of the process of composition by talking explicitly about the stages of writing as well as by structuring tasks to take account of this.*
2. *Teacher can play a support role during the early stages of the composition process by helping students to get their ideas together.*
3. *The teachers can also provide good models for writing.*
4. *Planning activities structured by the teacher can help students to develop a sense of direction in their writing.*
5. *Teachers can encourage the drafting process by creating a workshop atmosphere in their classrooms*
6. *Students need opportunities to engage in writing as a holistic process of composition. This means that they need practice in writing whole piece of communication, not just bits and pieces of it.*

In general, teachers are expected to create a good writing classroom atmosphere in which students can experience being writers, think about purpose and audience, draft a piece of writing, revise it and share it with others. This is what Hedge suggests that could help student writers to get the most out of the learning environment.

2.5. Responding to Students Writing

The preceding sections of this paper are concerned with half of the writing teacher's preoccupations. The other half constitutes his/her response to students' writing which is very much central to the process of writing. This and subsequent sections take up this issue and present it in some detail.

Recently, considerable attention has been paid by researchers to issues surrounding response to writing (Zamel, 1985; Cohen, 1987; Cohen and Cavalcanti, 1990; Ferris, 1995). Traditionally, teacher response to students' writing is only to the finished product which is kept to the end of the teaching sequence. This is considered as a last chore for teachers and meant for evaluative purpose not to influence a piece of writing (Raimes 1983). This approach, however, limits the students' involvement in writing. Dheram (1995) thus advises teachers to step out of such traditional roles and assume the role of consultant, facilitating the learners' step by step creation of a text. The advent of the process approach to writing has also made teacher intervention particularly important at different stages of the writing process (Hyland, 1990).

But how do teachers respond to students composition? The available body of literature on L2 writing shows that responding to student composition can be done in two major ways. The first.

according to Lee, (1997); Hill and Holden, (1990); James, (1998) is by using indirect correction and the second is direct correction. The former refers to the provision of feedback and latter refers to the teacher providing the correct forms or structures in students' faulty sentences.

2.5.1 Feedback and Its Provision

Feedback is a general term applicable to any instruction and its study in learning situations has a long history closely related to behaviorist theory of reinforcement (positive or negative). However, from language teaching point of view feedback is a means by which teachers inform learners of the accuracy of their formal target language production and their other classroom behavior and knowledge (Chaudron, 1988:133). Similarly, from the writing class point of view, feedback refers to the input from a reader to a writer with an effect of providing information to the writer for revision (Keh, 1990:294). In general, literature review on written feedback reveals that scholars who have studied it seem to agree that feedback is a drive which steers the process of writing on to the end product and thus making it a crucial aspect of a writing classroom. The primary aim of feedback is generally to bring about self-awareness and improvement by drawing students' attention to areas of weaknesses though it can also be used to inform areas of strengths as well.

2.5.1.1 The Function and Nature of Teacher Feedback

In a cognitive view of learning the function of feedback is not only to provide reinforcement (unlike behaviorist view) but to provide information which learners can use actively in modifying their behavior (Chaudron 1988). These functions include reinforcement, information and motivation (Ibid, p. 134). Several models of L2 acquisition now include this process of hypotheses testing in L2 teaching context (Ibid). The information available in feedback allows learners to confirm, disconfirm and possibly modify the rules of their developing grammars (ibid). In the field of L2 writing too researchers have looked at the function of written feedback in helping students reflect on their work. Gower et al,(1995), for instance, note that by providing ongoing feedback we can help our students evaluate their success and progress (p.163).

Moreover, giving feedback to students gives them a sense of audience which they usually appear to lack (Boughey, 1997). The aim of using writing questions is thus not to instruct them but to prompt them to reflect on what they have written and to show the possible existence of view

points other than their own (Ibid). Feedback also helps to challenge unsupported claims or assumptions which usually appear in unskilled writers' texts and make them aware of error and other writing problems which they failed to notice (Frankenberg-Gracia, 1999). However, to make effective use of it, proper examination of the nature of feedback is worthwhile.

Regarding its nature, research has also looked at the type and substance of teachers' feedback. Study conducted by Zamel (1985), for example, revealed that teachers respond to most writing as if it were a final draft, thus reinforcing an extremely constricted notion of composing. She reports that their comments usually take the form of abstract and vague prescriptions and directives that students find difficult to interpret. Her study further disclosed that teachers' comments are mainly language-specific, often confusing, arbitrary and inaccessible. Her subject teachers also rarely seem to expect students to revise their texts beyond surface level, which she says, gives students a limited and limiting notion of writing. Teachers both misread the text and consequently give misguided feedback (Zamel 1985).

Sommerse (1982) in Fathamn and Whalley (1990) also found that most teachers' comments are vague and contradictory and do not provide specific reactions to what students have written. Because of this, she says, students' revisions show little improvement, and some revised essays even seem worse than the originals. Cohen & Cavalcanti's (1990) study also uncovered teachers' dominant use of criticism in their comments. Connors and Lunsford, (1993) in Reid (1994) researching a large number of teacher written responses to L1 student writers of English also found "a large number of short, careless, exhausted or insensitive comments" p.280. They then concluded that the job the teachers felt they were supposed to do was, it seemed, overwhelmingly a job of looking at papers rather than the student who is isolated from the social context of the classroom.

In general, as discussed so far, many instances of vague and negative comments and feedback are reported by several language educators and researchers. The problems associated with such comments are also discussed. Hence teachers are advised to reflect on their written feedback to students and learn how to improve such defects to help students develop their writing skills. They should provide constructive comments which alert the students to specific problems in their writing.

2.5.2. Students Feedback Processing and Revision Strategies of Their Written Texts

The central role feedback plays in composition writing has been emphasized elsewhere in this paper. It is also obvious that writing teachers are observed investing enormous amount of time and energy in giving written feedback to students in an attempt to help them improve their compositions. However, its significance may be questioned if students fail to interpret and make use of it.

Researchers who have looked into revision behavior of L1 and L2 student writers report discouraging results even in L1 writing situations. For example, the results of studies conducted by various researchers cited in Kroll (1990:257) revealed that:

1. *Sometimes students fail to read the comments on their papers, attending only to grade (Burkland and Grim 1986)*
2. *Sometimes they do not understand or indeed misinterpret the written comments, and find themselves unable to make appropriate improvement in their drafts (Hayer and Daiker 1984).*
3. *Sometimes they use comments to pick out a particular teachers personal agenda, only hoping to make the teacher happy (Freed-man 1987)*
4. *Sometimes they become hostile at the teacher's appropriation of their texts (Leki 1990).*

A similar scenario may be paralleled in L2 writing contexts because of many of the similarities of the two writing situations. In ESL writing context, for example, Zamel (1985:82) reports, "Students may read the comments on their papers, but they rarely write subsequent drafts in which they can act up on the comments, and improvements desired by their teachers rarely occur." The other times students misinterpret the comments or correction codes and eventually make ineffective revisions (Cohen 1987). They don't keep track of errors, nor are interested in knowing about them.

Recent research on teacher response to student writing has also revealed that even though students value their teacher's feedback and attempt to utilize it in their revisions, sometimes they avoid or ignore it, or use teacher suggestions to changes that actually weaken their revisions (Radecki and Swales 1988; Chaudron, 1988; Ferris, 2001).

A study conducted by Cohen (1987) examined students' perceptions of their teachers' focused comments in responding to their essays, whether they read, understood, and paid attention to it,

and the strategies they used to apply the comments to their subsequent revisions. The result was generally disappointing. Although most of the students claimed to have read their papers and attended to the comments, 20% did not. Furthermore, the students in general, reported a limited repertoire of strategies for processing teacher feedback. He concluded that teacher feedback as it was constituted and realized might have a more limited impact on the learners than that the teachers would desire.

Later studies by Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990), however, reported a more positive result. The students in general were happy with the teacher feedback they received and claimed that they paid attention to it and found it helpful.

Thus taking students' problems in handling written feedback and making revisions into consideration, researchers in the field recommend that both teachers and students should work more closely in establishing what to comment on and how to do so. They all agree that clear understanding and agreement of both teachers and students on feedback procedures and student training in strategy for handling feedback could lead to a more productive and enjoyable composition.

2.5.3. Error Correction

In section 2.5.1, we discussed one way of responding to a written text-feedback provision which is not a correction in its own right but an aid by which we involve students in correction. In this section, however, we look at correction which is another direct way of responding to student composition.

Error correction is a rather more direct and narrower concept than feedback provision. Error correction, also called "error treatment", is used to refer to any teacher behavior to inform the learner about his/her error (Chaudron 1988). The issue of error correction is generally a subject of lively debate in L2 context (Lee 1997). Attitudes to error correction have evolved from the strict avoidance of error and quick and direct error correction before the 1960, to the condemnation of error correction as harmful and unnecessary in the late 1960s, and to a more critical view of the need and value of error correction in the 1970s and 80s. The controversy over the topic 'error correction' has also remained unsolved in the 1990s (Lee 1997; Raimes, 1983). Hence, the next section takes on this issue.

2.5.3.1 Fundamental Questions in Error Correction

Decision making in error correction is so much complex as there is no current standard on whether, which, when, who and how error is to be corrected. Without considering these issues treating students' errors would be losing the basic principles of teaching (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Hendrickson, 1978). In line with this, Chaudron (1988); and Allwright & Bailey (Ibid) address five fundamental questions:

1. *Should errors be corrected?*
2. *If so, when should they be corrected?*
3. *Which errors should be corrected?*
4. *How should they be corrected?*
5. *Who should correct them?*



2.5.3.1.1. Deciding Whether to Correct Errors or Not

When we notice errors in learners' work, we may be torn between two conflicting options: to correct or not to correct. Regarding this question the views of language scholars are also at variance. These divergent views seem to have been motivated as a result of the coming of foreign language teaching under the influence of theories and research (Cardelle & Corno 1981). There also seems to be gradual shift of perspectives with regard to teachers' approach to correction.

According to the tenets of audio-lingualism, learners' production is not allowed to contain errors and thus should be immediately corrected to minimize their recurrence (Taron & Yule 1989). Chenoweth et al (1993); Cathcart & Olsen (1976) in Chaudron (1988) also report strong learner preference for correction of all errors. Norish (1983) and Byrne (1983) also hold that since written expressions are closely and readily accessible to careful inspection, errors in written texts are intolerable. Further argument also comes from evidence of fossilization and it is claimed that without correction, some learners can not progress beyond a certain stage (Taron & Yule, ibid).

Most language experts who value the effect of correction thus advise teacher to carry it out wisely based on the learning situation, importance of the error to the current pedagogical focus, learner type and purpose and nature of the lesson. Allwright & Bailey (1991), for example, argue that the decision to correct or not to correct depends on whether the error is within the learners' grasp as they are not expected to be corrected on items they haven't learned.

Furthermore, many argue for the importance of correction within a communicative context. Murphy (1986: 146) states:

In communication activities learners' attention is usually focused on fluency, or use of the language. There are different errors of communication, so there are more things to correct than grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and correcting these may help mastering fluency.

Similarly, Brown (1994) argues that error correction and focus on form appear to be most effective when incorporated into communicative learner-centered curriculum and least effective when error correction becomes dominant pedagogical feature.

In recent years, however the value of error correction has been questioned by second language theories and researches. This line of argument seems to stem from Krashen's suggestion of his observation of L1 acquisition process. Thus Hendrickson (1978) points out that neither correction of all errors nor systematic selective correction made any significant improvement in students' written and spoken production. Ellis (1990) also argues that it is pointless to correct errors which are inevitable and integral part of a learning process. The avoidance of error correction in language classes in general seems to rest on the assumption that learners' progress faster with meaningful practice in a rich linguistic environment and with an informed policy of error correction on the part of teacher (Hedge, 2000).

Even though different arguments and counter arguments are reported, teachers are advised to keep the balance between the two and help their students. Whatever is the case, teachers are expected to remind themselves that error correction is part of feedback provision. Thus, depending on the activity, situation and learner type, correction has to be given to inform the learner of his/her progress.

2.5.3.1.2 When to Correct Learners' Errors

The answer to this question is again debatable. Long (1977) in Brown (1994) for example notes that the question of 'when' and 'how' to correct errors is difficult to decide. But Harmer (1991); Gower et al (1995); Doff (1988); Tennant (2001) maintain that the possible answer to this question depends on the aim of the lesson. They assert that correction is necessary when accuracy is needed but not during fluency.

However, despite its aim many language specialists favor immediate correction of errors. It is argued that feedback must be immediate as its effect decreases when the time between the making of error and its correction increases (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). Similarly, Lightbown & Spada (1993: 114) claim, "Learners errors should be corrected as soon as they occur in order to prevent the formation of bad habits"

However, there are occasions when pointing out errors and thereby interrupting the flow of communication or activity can be counter productive. In such a case it is considered advisable to note the errors and deal with them at a more suitable time (Norris, 1983; Edge, 1989). Hendrickson (1978) in Krashen (1985), for example suggests that error correction should be given during the stage of practice, and it is to be tolerated during communication or fluency. When learners are trying to express their ideas, correction at this time destroys their confidence. Similarly, with regard to writing, Cross (1991: 269) holds, "If writing is viewed as a learning and communicative medium rather than testing one, it [correction] becomes largely unnecessary anyway."

From the above discussion it seems clear that the time of error correction depends on the nature, aim and pedagogical focus of the activity. When the language is used as a tool of communication, for example, correction may not be of much help for language learning.

2.5.3.1.3 Which Error is to be Corrected?

The question of which errors to correct is again another important question a teacher should ask himself/herself before dealing with them. Though correction can be necessary, it is impractical and times consuming to correct all errors learners make (Wajnryb 1992). Hence it is recommended that only global errors that interfere with meaning are to be corrected (Krashen 1985; Norris 1983; Edge 1991; Ur 1996; Hedge 2000). Krashen (1985: 118) adds, "Errors that are most stigmatized, that cause unfavorable reaction, and errors that occur most frequently should be given top priority". White (1991) also has this view. To use his words,

"It is quite unlikely that students will make a number of different types of errors, but it will be fruitless to concentrate on all of them, either when marking or in remedial or correction lessons. Priority is given to those which cause confusion" (P.08).

In some cases, teachers however, are advised to correct errors which the students are likely to face in their future performance (Ellis 1990). Krashen (1983); Lee (1997) also advise teachers to

establish their own scale of priorities based on the students' envisaged need for the language they are learning. Recent theory on language acquisition and teaching methodologies also supports the position that not all errors should be corrected, and those that are corrected should not be done immediately (Krashen 1987; Doff 1988; Ur 1996).

Generally, teachers should be selective in the correction of learners' errors; otherwise more of the class time is going to be devoted to correction. They are, therefore, advised to differentiate between errors which need immediate attention and errors which should be ignored for the time being or altogether. This is because all errors, even during their indication, are not equally important. Now once the errors are identified, the next question is how to correct them.

2.5.3.1.4. How to Correct Learners' Errors

How to correct learners' errors is another contentious subject of L2 writing research. According to traditional methodology, direct teacher correction is favored.

Though it is difficult to establish the superiority of one method over the other, studies have shown that direct correcting is not particularly effective (Krashen 1983). Krashen (Ibid) further claims that the strategy of self-correction is more useful as it helps the students to make inference and formulate concepts about the target language. When using the techniques, he adds, teachers should identify the type of error and give a chance to the error maker to try to improve it again. If self-correction fails, depending on the condition or the type of the activity, the teacher can also use peer correction (Ibid). For peer correction and self correction see also sections 2.5.5.2 and 2.5.5.3.

During error treatment teachers are also advised not to correct all the errors the learners make. Byrne (1988) for example suggests selective treatment (treating certain areas like tense, articles, where students particularly need help) and indication of some of the errors so that students can correct themselves.

Teachers are also advised to use a system of abbreviations in the margin of the student's paper or above the errors to indicate the place and the kind of errors during writing classes (Norish, 1983, Byrne 1988; Raimes, 1983).

Though there is no absolute method of dealing with errors, teachers are advised to correct learners with great care and attention in a way that can foster their curiosity to learn writing. To

this effect, the employment of discovery method appears to be helpful as it develops learners' writing skill and autonomy. Whatever technique teachers use they should make sure that they use correction positively to support learning.

2.5.3.1.5 Who Should Correct Learners' Errors?

When serious communicate breakdown occurs several questions run through our minds one of which is "Who should correct the errors?" The apparent answer to this question seems *the teacher*. However, the possible alternatives could be the teacher, peers, the learner him/herself, or any combination of these depending on the condition and the type of activity the teacher is dealing with.

Several educators from observation and experience report that the most common feedback in a language classroom is the feedback given by the teacher. Traverse (1970: 213), for example, states, "The classroom teacher is the first person to become aware of the students' problems and thus he has the responsibility of attempting an early diagnosis and planning remedial program." Teachers generally seem to be dominant figures at the forefront of language classes.

The traditional model of teaching in general has assumed that the target language norm is developed only by receiving final evaluation from the teacher (Chaudron 1984); Cathcart & Olsen (1976) in Brown (1994). They also note that students in classroom generally want and expect error to be corrected and if the teacher is reserved from giving correction, many adult learners may also feel that the teacher is not doing his/her work (Allan 1991) as cited in Wondwosen (1992).

Reports from recent findings, however, advocate the involvement of learner themselves in error correction. Thus as of the midsixties, there seems to be a general tendency to shift from teacher correction to learner-correction. This technique is considered fit and effective for writing composition especially when we deal with large classes (see also techniques of error correction section 2.5.5).

In conclusion, unlike the traditional methodology, modern view holds that the role of error correction should rest not only on the shoulder of the teacher rather more responsibility should be given to the learners. This could be peer correction or more importantly self-correction, because the trend of language teaching is moving towards learner autonomy and independence. It is also

because the goal of instruction is to empower learners and improve their ability to monitor their own language skills (Chaudon 1988).

2.5.4 Written Error Treatment and Analysis

One of the key means to successful learning lies in the nature of feedback and error treatment. As a result, the kind of feedback teachers provide and the way they treat learners' errors, in one way or another, can affect the students' learning. It is also error and its treatment that shows how the learners react to the new language and teachers are therefore advised to take proper care when dealing with learners errors.

The question of error treatment has exceedingly become important as the focus on classroom instruction has shifted from emphasis on language forms to attention to functional language within communicative setting (Brown, 1994). Thus the most important question is what technique teachers should use to correct learners' errors or to provide effective feedback. Research on error treatment has shown that though teachers have various techniques of dealing with errors, they don't make full use of them (Allwright Bailey, 1991). They seem to use exclusively one technique (for example teacher correction) throughout, regardless of the nature and type of the lesson or activity in question.

Research has also looked at ways of correcting or marking writers errors. Norish (1983: 81), for instance, identifies two approaches in this regard. The first and the most common he suggests is to establish one's categories of errors on the basis of the preconceived writing problem. The other is to allow the errors categorize themselves as the students' papers are seen. According to him, the administrative advantage of the first is that it is easier and quicker to carryout since errors are simply indicated as ticks on a list of categories. The advantage of the second is that the categories eventually define themselves.

He also suggests the use of absolute frequency of error (the number of times the error occurs), and the number of times the error could have occurred relatively to the length of a piece of writing. This helps, he further clarifies, to avoid the tendency to penalize a longer piece of writing for having more mistakes than the shorter one.

The main point behind these suggestions seems that error treatment should not be haphazard, unplanned and unsystematic. If proper care and attention is taken, error and its treatment will

definitely benefit the learners. It helps them move along the right track towards the desired goal of learning.

2.5.5 Different Techniques of Written Error Treatment

Teacher can treat errors using various techniques. The main and possible ones are teacher correction, peer-correction and self-correction. The following sections consider these techniques.

2.5.5.1 Teacher Correction

Teacher-correction is a technique in which the teacher himself/herself directly corrects learners' errors. It is usually favored by traditional methods which claim the teacher to be the sole authority in the classroom, and who should take the charge of error detection and correction (Chaudron, 1984). Research on ESL writing has also shown that ESL students want and appreciate teacher correction (Leki 1991). Similarly, Kroll (1990) further elaborates:

Since the job of the writing teacher is to teach writing the teacher is constantly forced away from the content of the writing towards the way the content is presented. L2 students in particular expect and require greater intervention than that of a real reader- intervention offering suggestions, options, or other ways of looking at what they have said (Kroll 1990: 59)

This approaches work in many traditional classes although learner involvement in learning is the order of the day since the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This is mainly because teachers do not want to abandon their traditional styles of teaching. However, research has shown that overt correction has harmful effect on both the quality of students' subsequent compositions and on their attitude toward writing (Lee 1997).

Thus, today there is a tendency to shift from the traditional role of a teacher as an authoritative to a facilitator and consultant of student writers. Therefore, it is recommended that teacher correction be used as a last resort when peer or self-corrections strategies fail.

2.5.5.2 Peer Correction

Peer-correction is another way of dealing with learners' written errors. It can be done in pairs or groups. If self-correction fails the teacher usually falls on this method as an alternative and it is proved to be effective more for written than oral errors. Peer correction can be useful for many purposes. It encourages a tone of mutual support and cooperation among and between students.

As a result, students are not overwhelmed by excessive teacher correction (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). The students' common problems can also be used for remedial teaching (Harmer 1991).

Similarly, Reid (1993) identifies one of the greatest benefits of peer-correction- the presence of real-world reader as a potential audience to give honest reaction about the text. Reid adds that peer correction helps students to develop critical thinking skills such as analytical reasoning and problem solving. When they peer correct, students will also be able to discover that their peers have similar problems as their own (ibid).

Peer-correction is also useful in that it gives rise to heated discussion among the learners by reducing teacher domination, making them open to discussion (Chaudon, 1984; Edge, 1991). In the course of discussion they also involve in activities that use all language skills (Norrish 1983). Peer- correction is especially useful for large classes where student-teacher interaction is limited (Byrne 1988); Cross, 1991). It also reinforces error detection and correction as two heads are better than one (Edge 1989).

However, the problem with this technique is that students may not be comfortable when their work is given over to their classmates for inspection (D' Rourke,n.d.). Furthermore, they may "feel that they are being criticized by people who have no right to criticize them" (Edge 1989: 26). For this reason, Edge (1991) suggested that peer correction should be introduced gradually. He also gives useful advice on organizing peer correction in groups, in whole class and even correction competition.

But, on the whole, peer correction is an effective technique to deal with learners' errors in that it has a potential to help learning. The collaboration between and among classmates reduces the feeling of being isolated. It also offers a real-world reader to give constructive feedback.

2.5.5.3 Self-Correction

Self-correction is another technique of error correction strategies in which students are made to correct their own errors. A number of findings have shown that involving the earners themselves is an indispensable means of learning language. Edge (1989) for example argues that self correction is the best of all error treatment approaches. Its significance has particularly increased as teaching has come to be seen as letting learners learn and making them self-dependent, not

only on areas of correcting but also on other matters of learning, like planning and decision making (Dickinson 1987).

Though the traditional methodologies hold that correcting learners errors is the main responsibility of the teacher, this approach seems to have lost ground as early as the 1960s, giving the way to learner involvement in learning in general and correction in particular. Therefore, it is claimed that it is pedagogically sound and helpful to let L2 writers discover and correct their own errors than be directly corrected by the teacher (Corder, 1967; Byrne, 1988). Citing authorities, Tesfaye (1995:4 also writes:

What have been found advantageous are giving learners more time to formulate what they want to write (Lavezzo & Dunford 1993; Harmer 1991, involving students in feedback process (Gardner 1990) and letting students correct their own errors (Makino 1993).

This implies the need to give learners the opportunity to reflect on their own works, give feedback to themselves and correct their errors to enhance their self-critical skill in writing. Allwright & Bailey (1991) also argue, "We should be pleased to see learners be able to apply the rules they had learned to correct their own mistakes. We want our students be able to make self-initiated self-repairs". Similarly, Byrne (1988) underlines the significance of involving learners in error correction. "We need to stress once again the importance of getting the learners themselves to identify and correct mistakes. Ultimately, they will have to examine, evaluate and improve their own work. This is part of the process of drafting, correcting and writing final versions" (p.124)

The ideas presented above by different language specialists have a lot in common. They stress the need to involve learners themselves in correcting their written texts. In other words, learner self-correction is a strategy that has been effective in improving their writing skills and self dependence in general.

However, James (1998:236), points out limitations with self correction strategy. He comments:

Self-correction is an intriguing phenomenon in that for some in explicable reason we seem to be more capable of correcting other people's errors than our own as any one who has done some proofreading will testify. The reason probably is that self-editing a text one has composed calls for ability to clear one's mind of one's intended meaning at the time of writing and interpret one's own text with just the information actually in the words.

James here notes that we, as self-editors, have a temptation to read in to our own meaning established at the time of writing not out of it and hence we tend to interpret the words accordingly.

2.5.5.3.1 The Significance of Self- Correction

Before looking at the various self-correction techniques, we will see the importance of getting students to self-correct their written compositions. The technique can be beneficial to both students and teachers alike in some ways. First, it helps the teacher by reducing the marking load and the time he/she takes to deal with each student's errors. In Tesfayes words, "Active involvements of students in the process of dealing with errors militates less focus on the teacher" (Teskaye 1995:5). It also makes it possible for the teacher to identify the general areas of difficulty and thereby take remedial action (Harmer, 1991; White, 1990).

However, the use of self-correction technique is considered more useful to the students. It equips them with the skill of identifying and correcting errors by themselves rather than receiving the correct form straightaway from the teacher. They also develop curiosity to struggle to get something right, a sense of critical thinking and self-confidence (Allwright, 1988; Wood, 1993). It helps them reflect on their own work (Makino 1993), monitor themselves, Gower et al (1995). The students are also more likely to retain what they have learned when they self-correct than when they are corrected by someone else (Krashen, 1987). As Edge (1989) states, "self correction is easier to remember, because someone has put something right in his/her mind" (p.24.) Moreover, it offers the learners an opportunity for real use of the language (Cross 1991), improves motivation (Hyland, 1990) activates their linguistic competence so that they can be active participants in composition rather than being passive recipients of feedback (Makino 1993). It helps to focus students' attention and to reduce reliance on the teacher thereby encouraging learner autonomy (Tennant, 2001).

Hyland (1990) also reports that he applied the technique and found it effective. His subjects reported that it helped them avoid the same problem later. He also found that the technique revealed those patterns or rules that individual students misunderstood. The 'minimal marking' technique he used also avoided the disheartening abundance of red ink for the students. He concluded that the method is both productive, giving the students more of the work and attractive

to the busy teacher (P.282). Lalande (1984) as cited in Hill and Holden (1990) has also a very similar view.

Allwright (1988) also believes that self correction makes learners autonomous and responsible for their own learning. From pedagogical point of view, therefore, it can be seen as part of an education for an autonomous learning. Allwright further argues that self- correction enables the students focus on fundamental issues of composition, identifying their own weaknesses and strengths. Similarly, Wood 1993 (38-39) further elaborates.

Besides providing students with opportunities to develop both fluency and accuracy in written language, self-correction and rewriting helps "wean" students from dependency on the teacher for correction... putting more of the responsibility on the students for correction develops a sense of self-sufficiency. It boosts their confidence particularly when they compare their rewrites to their originals and can clearly see the improvement they have made. Students become more active participants in their learning.

The argument behind this discussion is that self-correction has pedagogical, linguistic and psychological implications. Pedagogically, self-correction makes students autonomous; linguistically, it enhances their motivation and self-correcting ability. Its psychological implication is what the students feel when they self-correct, or mental processes that accompany the procedure. Green and Hecht (1993) also note that self-correction is a cognitive strategy that leads to more effective language learning.

Hence, it is not difficult to see the various benefits attached to self-correction strategy of written errors. The scholars all seem to stress that the technique is highly beneficial in enhancing students learning and writing autonomy, problem-solving and self-reflection skills.

2.5.5.3.2 Necessary Conditions for Self-Correction and Factors Affecting It

The efficiency of self-correction depends on certain factors and conditions under which it is implemented; otherwise, it would not bring the desired result. First, ahead of the task, students are to be given sometime to look through the written comments, give some thought to it, and also be introduced to the correction symbols or codes (Edge, 1889; Makino, 1993). This is because, Makino notes that, the success of self-correction depends on the quality of guidance the learners receive. The students should be able to understand how to handle the written feedback before

rewriting. To this effect, teachers are thus advised to provide detailed and informative feedback (Reid 1993)

Krashen (1987) also notes that individual variation affects the efficacy of self-correction. This is because, he adds, people are different in their degree and ability of monitor use. He further adds that variation on which aspects of language the student attempts to self-correct will also affect self-correction. Krashen (1987) citing Houck, Robert and Krashen (1978) also identifies the following conditions that affect self-correction: (1) During free writing, since the writer focuses on meaning not on form, he has little care for grammatical accuracy. (2) The second is when the writer attempts to speak or write more consciously, (3) in the third condition the learner is informed of only the existence of error (s) but not the place (4) in the fourth condition the error is simply indicated and (5) in the fifth it is both indicated and its nature described.

Thus Krashen finally concludes that the more we move from condition (1) to the (5), the more conscious monitoring (self-correcting ability) is predicted. He summarized this as in the following table.

Self Correction Conditions in Second Language Performance

| Instruction | (1) none | (2) Rewrite | (3) correct the error | (4) correct this error | (5) correct this error, use this rule |
|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Includes error: Existence | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Location | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Rule broken | No | No | No | No | Yes |

- **Condition (1) Free speech or free writing**
- **Condition (2) careful speech or careful writing**

Krashen also indicates that the efficiency of self-correction can be affected by several factors. Some are individual variations with respect to the efficiency of self-correction (Variations arising from individual differences in degree of and ability for monitor use) aspects of the output (language) the performer (student) attempts to correct and the condition under which it is applied.

From his study Krashen concluded that though self-correction is applied under such meticulous care, it may not be perfect or may not give what teachers consider acceptable performance. Or it may not tell us efficiency of learning /the learners' ability to apply what they consciously know.

2.5.5.3.3 Method of Employing Self-correction

The key question teachers often ask themselves is how to give the best feedback to help their students improve their compositions. When teacher uses self correction through the provision of written feedback, they are advised to develop an appropriate way of responding to students' compositions in order to encourage self correction. Reid (1993:243, for example, recommends, "Correction of error is effective when the feedback concerning the error is clear. That is, the response must adequately describe the problem, and suggest methods of correction." Edge (1989) also recommends that written feedback can be provided either by writing only the correction code in the margin or both by underlying the error and indicating its nature above the error. He adds, full description is of more help to the student. Byrne 1988; Harmer (1991); White and Arndt (1991); Makino (1993); Hedge, 2000 etc) all support this approach. Fathman and Whaley (1990) and Makino (1993) particularly underline its effectiveness for grammatical errors.

These researchers and educators note that under this situation, symbols such as "S", for spelling, "P", for punctuation, T, for tense, 'WW, for word order, etc are useful. Furthermore, Cohen (1987) recommends the use of checklist, or correction sheet to refer to when the students fail to understand how to handle the feedback. The other way of providing corrective feedback to students' writing is to provide them with written comments, to draw their attention to areas of their weaknesses and strengths using a combination praise and criticism (Dixon 1986). Dixon further suggests a flexible and multifaceted response to writing.

Students can also self-correct their written errors by reading their papers aloud to themselves. This time they don't need further help or comment from their teachers. Raimes (1983:150) states:

Urge students to write a draft and then put the draft for day or so before looking at it again then they read it aloud to themselves. Students report that when they do this, they often catch inconsistencies, muddled and incomplete sentences, omitted words, misspellings, and grammatical errors.

Research has also looked at the effectiveness of the method of self-correction. Referring to Lalande (1982) Kroll (1990) reports that indication of error significantly improved the students' compositions than directly correcting it.

2.5.5.3.4 Attitudes Towards Self-Correction

Different attitudes towards self-correction have been reported both from teachers and students perspectives. Several studies have revealed that self correction is an indispensable method of teaching and learning L2 composition. Wood (1993) who employed the technique on his students, for example, reported, "I have found it [self-correction] not only educational but also motivational as well" (p.38). He adds, "In some cases teachers even compiled students' favorites in a 'memory book' which was presented at the end of the term" (Ibid).

His subject students also reported to have a positive attitude towards self-correction. He stated that as a result of the technique they got a wonderful opportunity for learning and improving their written language. Likewise, Raimes (1983:149) reports:

What students need more than anything else is to develop the ability to read their own writing and to examine it critically to learn how to improve it, to learn how to express their meaning fluently, logically and accurately, They need to be able to find and correct their own mistakes.

The students in this study seem to have developed different skills as a result of their involvement in self-correction: the ability to read their own texts and its critical analysis, in addition to their ability to find and correct errors. Makino (1993) reveals a combined or mixed reaction. While teacher correction was found to be helpful to some students, self-correction was more worthwhile to others.

A study conducted on Italian school children by Gardner (1990) showed the reverse side of the coin. The majority of the subjects preferred teacher correction where the teacher supplies the correct form.

Nevertheless when we see the overall attitudes of people in the field of language teaching, we realize its special position in composition classes. Dominant section of the students, teachers and researchers seem to consider self-correction as a preferable technique of dealing with learners' written compositions.

In this section different techniques of written error correction were treated and due attention is given to learner self-correction. However, this does not mean that one method is exclusively superior to the others and should be used always. Byrne (1983:127) for example concludes this concept as:

In general, however, although it is important to give the students opportunities to self-correct their written work so that they develop a self-critical attitude, it does not mean that one approach is so intrinsically superior that it can be used all the time and you should therefore draw on the various approaches to suit the needs of your of students.

In conclusion, teachers should be able to identify the appropriate technique for a given time, lesson and situation giving self-correction the first place in their minds.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this study was to investigate teacher-initiated learner self-correcting ability in written composition of third year EFL students at Wollega University. Specifically, it attempted to find out: the strategies the students used in processing and handling the teachers' writing feedback to revise their texts; their general attitudes towards self-correction of written work; and main areas of ease and difficulty they encountered in this regard.

To achieve these objectives sources of data were determined, and data collection tools and analysis procedures were decided. This chapter thus presents the population and samples of the study, data collection tools, their analysis and interpretation.

3.1 Population and Sampling Procedures

3.1.1 Students

As stated above, the major target population of this study was third year, regular EFL students taking *Advanced Composition* in the second semester of 2008/09 academic year. The selection was made on two major premises. The first reason had to do with the course and the second was related to the students themselves.

Regarding the nature of the course, the students were taking *Advanced Composition* which requires advanced writing skills that the study wanted to address and investigate in the first place. The second reason for selecting this group was that they were the only group in the university taking this course during the second semester and hence to serve as sources of data for the study. Moreover, advanced EFL students were chosen for the purpose of the study in order to examine the extent to which their self-correcting and revising abilities can be compared to the level expected of them or skilled writers identified by previous studies.

Concerning the sampling procedures, the total number of third year EFL students at the university in the semester the data was collected was 25 (only one section). This number was a manageable size for the present study and all of them 25 students (100%) were taken to be the subjects of the study. However, since two students didn't work on one or two of the

compositions, which was the main source of data, they were excluded and the 23 students' data were analyzed and interpreted.

3.1.2 Instructors

The involvement of composition instructors as subjects in the study was also important because of their day to day experience of their student writing behaviors and correction practices, abilities and preferences. However, as stated earlier the limited number of sections of EFL students limited the number of instructors to only one. Thus as with the student subjects, no further sampling procedure was carried out and the only instructor was included in the study. The instructor was an experienced teacher who served at different higher institutions for 10 years. He has an M.A degree in EFL and taught composition for the same length of time.

3.1.3 Research Site

For the present study Wollega University was purposely selected for two main reasons. The first reason was that the university is one of the recently established universities in the country and as a result has got little research attention. Thus it was felt that many research studies that have been conducted on AAU and high schools in the city might not give us a full picture of conditions prevailing in peripheral universities found elsewhere in the country. It was also felt that the finding of the study would essentially reveal and contribute to minimizing problems associated with correction practices of written compositions at this university.

The second reason had to do with the proximity of the university to the researcher's working place. This opportunity was thought to have facilitated data collection and analysis procedures. In order to get quick access to data and subsequent analysis of them in the limited time available it was felt wise, therefore, to select this university. It was also true that such an easy access to information immensely contributed to the quality of the study.

3.2 Tools of Data Collection

In order to obtain reliable information, three tools of data collection were employed. These were composition writing, student questionnaire and teacher interview. These multiple data tools were used to ensure triangulation and derive a reliable conclusion which is impossible through the examination of a single data source. The data were collected towards the mid of second semester

while the course was in progress and as the students were thought to have acquired writing skills desired by the study (like content-related matters and organizational skills).

Before actually using the data collection tools, they were piloted on eight students of a similar field and educational level in AAU to detect any unforeseen practical problems in using them. This was done both for the composition writing and the questionnaire. Close observation of the pilot study revealed that the instruments were effective except some two problems. The first problem was with the writing task where the time allowed was found to be insufficient. Thus additional 15 minutes was added and a total of 75 minutes was given. The students also remarked that "Item 7" of the questionnaire was not clear for them because of a single phrase. This was also modified by adding its more familiar synonym. Hence information obtained from the pilot study helped me to further refine the instruments and make final adjustments.

3.2.1 Composition Writing

Composition writing was used as a principal method of data collection. The subject students wrote two different compositions on two different topics and self corrected these two different compositions. This means $23 \times 2 = 46$ pre-feedback composition (original) and $23 \times 2 = 46$ post-feedback composition (revised texts). This is because it was felt that in order to draw a reliable conclusion, at least two sets of composition were to be administered and both be self-corrected. The main purpose of administering the same composition twice was also to see if the students were able to self-correct their own errors using the teacher's feedback.

The composition was administered indirectly through the students' composition teacher without informing them of the objective of the study. This was done in the hope that the students would take the task of writing more seriously and thoughtfully if the writing was done for evaluative purpose than otherwise. The researcher then furnished the instructor with the necessary materials and information necessary for the study.

Before actually embarking on the composition writing, the instructor and the researcher discussed on appropriate topics of the essay the students were to write on and a fair length of time needed to accomplish the task. This was because time is a key factor in the ability to produce a text (Raimes, 1985; Shin, 1986; Kroll, 1990) and selection of topic can affect students' performance (Kroll, *ibid*; Friedlander, 1990). Research has shown that topic knowledge is important in correcting errors and lack of it can affect correction (Lee, 1997). Giving familiar and similar

topics to all the students was based on the assumption that it could ease the procedures of indicating and categorizing errors and comparing the students' performance.

Thus through joint decision between the instructor and the researcher two topics which were thought to be familiar to the students were chosen and shown to other experienced instructors teaching in the university if they were of average level of difficulty and familiar to the students in the study. These two topics were (1) "Qualities of a Good Teacher" and (2) "The Advantage of Learning English as a Foreign Language". The first topic was selected because it is related to a day to day experience of the students and the second is a topic related to their specific field of study. It was also a topic discussed in Grade 12 English Textbook and they were expected to have some memory of it. All in all, it is thought that the students could handle it and generate as many ideas as they could.

Regarding time a similar agreement was jointly reached between the researcher and the instructor. As the composition was an in-class task, it was felt that the students should be given adequate amount of time for planning, drafting, writing and editing. Thus, for the composition of about 300 words they were given 75 minutes.

3.2.2 Questionnaire

To substantiate or compensate for the possible gaps that could be left unattended by the result obtained from the essay writing, 23 copies of 21- item anonymous questionnaire was set and distributed to the students who worked on both essays. Most of the questions were adapted from Chohen (1987) in line with the purpose of the study, and 5 items were designed by the researcher. Cohen had established the reliability of the items by testing their internal consistencies. As the students were all third year EFL degree candidates, translating in their L1 was in fact unnecessary. The questionnaire consisted of 18 close ended items and 3 open ended items and grouped into five categories (For full version see Appendix D). All were filled and returned giving a 100% return rate.

It is administered right after the second self-correction session while everything was fresh in the students' minds and to avoid the possibility that the questionnaire would influence the students handling of the teacher's comments-a retrospective approach. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit information regarding the students' writing and self-correction background, the way they handled or processed the teacher's feedback, strategies they used to self-correct and write

the second version, and to evoke their overall attitude towards the approach. The close-ended questions required students to show their agreement by putting a tick (✓) in the boxes provided in front of each question; whereas, the open-ended questions invited students to express their ideas freely.

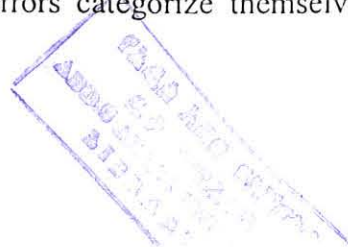
3.2.3 Interview

Another data collection tool to supplement the above two was interview that was conducted with the composition instructor at his convenience. It contained 8 semi-structured items (questions). The structured question was designed to assess the teacher's approach to teaching composition and correction strategies he usually used. Based on his response additional questions were put to him to further investigate how often he gave the students the chance to self-correct their errors. Factors impeding the implementation of the technique, and his general attitude towards self-correction were also areas aimed at.

3.3 Procedures of Data Analysis and Interpretation

In analyzing and interpreting the students' composition, utmost care was taken to minimize subjectivity and maximize reliability. First, the students were told to write only their ID numbers and not their names. Their anonymity was preserved because it was felt that the quality and tone of discussion would be better when markers do not know whose paper they are discussing. Secondly, in the indication of the errors two individuals were involved. This was made possible by first producing two photocopies of each student's paper. The researcher kept one copy, and the second was given to the instructor. The instructor was introduced to the purpose of the study and the correction codes in advance. For the correction codes see Appendix-B, p.85. After having carefully gone through the papers first individually indicating the errors using pencil, both of us came together and reached agreement about the place, nature and types of the errors.

In the marking and categorizing the errors the researcher used the error analysis method which Norish (1983) calls "the most common method" i.e. categorizing the possible errors into preconceived elements of composition. In the composition literature these are identified as content, organization, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics. These five major elements were further subdivided into subelements (see Table 1). This division is based on Norish's (1983) second principle of error analysis. That is the errors categorize themselves not identified or



categorized ahead of marking the papers. This model was selected as it is simple, convenient and suitable for the data analysis. Prior to the indication of errors i.e. as soon as the papers were handed in, for the sake of analysis and interpretation, they were assigned codes as $S_1E_1V_1$, $S_2E_1V_1 \dots S_{23}E_1V_1$ (for the first essay). The same procedure was followed for the second essay.

In categorizing and distributing the errors, first the errors were counted and entered into the major elements and subelements. Since correction symbols were used in the indication of the errors, the counting was made by counting each symbol and entering it into its respective element and subelement. Then the papers were given back to the individual writers and the meaning of every symbol was carefully introduced to the students. Each student was given a copy of the correction codes. They were asked if they had any doubts regarding the codes and their uses and every confusion was cleared up in advance. Then they were told to self-correct and rewrite the essay using the teacher's feedback (comments). During all sessions the students were made to work on their own. The papers were then collected along with the original and seen for the second time to see if any self-correction had taken place. Again the errors were recorded as with the first version and compared with the original.

Similarly, the results of the questionnaire was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted to backup the information obtained from the composition. The teacher's response was audiotaped and then analyzed and interpreted to supplement and countercheck the result of the two.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULT

As has been mentioned elsewhere in this paper, this study was primarily aimed at investigating the self-correcting abilities in written composition of third year EFL students. Specifically, it also attempted to see to what extent the students were able to self-correct their written errors using the teacher's feedback; strategies they used to process and handle the feedback; areas of ease and difficulty they had in self-correcting, and their general attitudes towards the strategy.

Thus in order to achieve these objectives, the researcher employed three different data collection tools. These were composition writing, questionnaire and interview. This chapter hence presents the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained through these tools.

4.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results of Student Compositions

As noted in the methodology part of this paper, the subject students (No. 23) were made to write two pre-feedback and two post-feedback compositions on two different topics i.e. a total of four compositions on four sessions ($E_1V_1, E_1V_2, E_2V_1, E_2V_2$). Thus a total of $23 \times 4 = 92$ student compositions were written, analyzed, and discussed on different elements and subelements like content, organization, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics. These were again subdivided into their respective subelements (see Appendix B&C). Their division and categorization was based on a taxonomy developed by Villamil & Guerrero (1998: 509) with some modification (see Appendix C.p.86).

After the students had written the compositions, their pre and post feedback errors were recorded and distributed into the elements and sub-elements of composition and were finally compared to see instances of self-correction. Thus the number and type of pre-feedback errors are indicated in Table 1. Similarly, results of post-feedback errors are shown in Table 2. After the results of both sets of composition were compared the students self-correcting abilities were discussed from two perspectives: First from the whole class success (Table 3) and then from individual student's effort (Table 4). In each case, the researcher tried to see the student's errors, their self-correcting abilities and finally the areas in which the students were more successful/unsuccessful. How many of the errors were self-corrected and an investigation of instances of students' revision strategies was also other areas of concern.

Table 4.1: Type and Number of Pre-Feedback Errors (Version 1)

| Student code | | ELEMENTS OF COMPOSITION | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|-------------------------|----|--------------|-------|----|----|---------|---|---|----|------|----|------------|----|---|----|-----|-------|-----------|----|-----|-------|
| | | Content | | Organization | | | | Grammar | | | | | | Vocabulary | | | | | | Mechanics | | | Total |
| | | NRW | NM | IS | Parag | CD | CS | SVA | N | T | Vf | frag | WC | WW | SW | Λ | WF | Unw | OW/tw | cap | SP | Pun | T |
| S1 | E1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | - | 3 | 3 | - | 2 | 19 |
| | E2 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | 4 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 18 | |
| | T | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | 3 | - | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | - | - | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 37 |
| S2 | E1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 3 | - | 4 | - | - | 5 | 3 | 3 | 24 | |
| | E2 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 19 | |
| | T | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | 5 | - | 1 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 43 | |
| S3 | E1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 5 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 38 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 28 | |
| | T | 5 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 1 | - | - | 9 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 66 | |
| S4 | E1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 4 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 22 | |
| | E2 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 21 | |
| | T | 3 | 1 | - | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 4 | - | 2 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 43 | |
| S5 | E1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 6 | 1 | - | 5 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | - | 1 | 29 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | 3 | - | 15 | |
| | T | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 5 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 6 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | - | 44 | |
| S6 | E1 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 2 | - | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 28 |
| | E2 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 20 | |
| | T | 4 | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | 5 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 48 | |
| S7 | E1 | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 3 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 2 | 26 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | 1 | 4 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 2 | 3 | - | 3 | 22 | |
| | T | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 5 | 3 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | - | 7 | 4 | 4 | 3 | - | 5 | 48 | |
| S8 | E1 | 3 | 2 | - | 1 | 4 | - | 4 | 1 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 41 | |
| | E2 | 3 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | 3 | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 25 | |
| | T | 6 | 2 | - | 1 | 5 | - | 6 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 7 | - | 7 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 66 | |
| S9 | E1 | 3 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 3 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | 25 | |
| | E2 | 4 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 20 | |
| | T | 7 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | 5 | - | 1 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 45 | |
| S10 | E1 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 35 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | - | 1 | - | - | 3 | - | 3 | - | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 20 | |
| | T | 3 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | 8 | 2 | 5 | - | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 55 | |
| S11 | E1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | 3 | - | 3 | 22 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 4 | 3 | 1 | 20 | |
| | T | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 4 | 3 | 5 | - | 1 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 42 | |
| S12 | E1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 5 | - | 4 | 3 | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | 26 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 20 | |
| | T | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 6 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 8 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 46 | |

Table 4.1

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|----|-----|----|------|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|------|----|-----|----|-----|------|----|------|----|----|----|------|
| S13 | E1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | 4 | - | 2 | 23 |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | 2 | 2 | - | 3 | 2 | 18 |
| | T | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | 6 | - | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 41 |
| S14 | E1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 27 |
| | E2 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 20 |
| | T | - | - | 3 | - | 1 | - | 4 | 2 | - | 1 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 47 |
| S15 | E1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 25 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 22 |
| | T | 2 | - | - | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 4 | - | 3 | 1 | 2 | 5 | - | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 47 |
| S16 | E1 | 4 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 21 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 4 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 3 | - | 3 | - | 2 | - | 3 | - | 1 | 21 |
| | T | 5 | - | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | - | 6 | - | 4 | 2 | 5 | - | 3 | 42 |
| S17 | E1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | 19 |
| | E2 | 2 | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 15 |
| | T | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | 2 | - | 6 | - | - | 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | - | 4 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 34 |
| S18 | E1 | - | - | - | 4 | 4 | - | 5 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | - | 2 | 4 | 36 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | - | 4 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | 33 |
| | T | 1 | - | - | 8 | 8 | - | 7 | 4 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 3 | - | 5 | 7 | 69 |
| S19 | E1 | - | - | - | 1 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 31 |
| | E2 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 4 | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 21 |
| | T | - | 1 | - | 1 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | 4 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 52 |
| S20 | E1 | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 6 | 31 |
| | E2 | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 4 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 4 | - | - | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 29 |
| | T | 6 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 6 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 9 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 60 |
| S21 | E1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 5 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 36 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | - | 4 | 3 | - | 4 | - | 4 | 1 | 4 | - | - | - | 2 | 29 |
| | T | 3 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 4 | - | 9 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 9 | - | 2 | 2 | 4 | 65 |
| S22 | E1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 7 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | - | 2 | 5 | - | 1 | 31 |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | 2 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 30 |
| | T | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 6 | - | 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 61 |
| S23 | E1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | 35 |
| | E2 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 19 |
| | T | 4 | 1 | 1 | - | 4 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 7 | - | 5 | 3 | 6 | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | 44 |
| Total | E1 | 34 | 12 | 9 | 19 | 34 | 13 | 50 | 42 | 12 | 25 | 15 | 13 | 62 | 17 | 59 | 33 | 41 | 28 | 47 | 34 | 51 | 650 |
| | E2 | 28 | 5 | 3 | 15 | 29 | 10 | 20 | 35 | 8 | 18 | 14 | 5 | 58 | 8 | 51 | 16 | 36 | 22 | 44 | 46 | 35 | 505 |
| Grand T. | | 62 | 17 | 12 | 34 | 63 | 23 | 70 | 77 | 20 | 43 | 29 | 18 | 120 | 25 | 110 | 49 | 77 | 50 | 91 | 80 | 86 | 1155 |
| | | 79 | | 132 | | | 257 | | | | | 431 | | | | | 257 | | | | | | |
| % | | 6.8 | | 11.4 | | | 22.2 | | | | | 37.3 | | | | | 22.2 | | 100% | | | | |

Key: S= Student E1= Essay1 E2= Essay2 T= Total

For the abbreviations of the subelements used above see Appendix B

Table 4-1

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|----|-----|----|------|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|------|----|-----|----|-----|------|----|------|----|----|----|------|
| S13 | E1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | 4 | - | 2 | 23 |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | 2 | 2 | - | 3 | 2 | 18 |
| | T | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | 6 | - | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 41 |
| S14 | E1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 27 |
| | E2 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 20 |
| | T | - | - | 3 | - | 1 | - | 4 | 2 | - | 1 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 47 |
| S15 | E1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 25 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 22 |
| | T | 2 | - | - | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 4 | - | 3 | 1 | 2 | 5 | - | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 47 |
| S16 | E1 | 4 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 21 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 4 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 3 | - | 3 | - | 2 | - | 3 | - | 1 | 21 |
| | T | 5 | - | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | - | 6 | - | 4 | 2 | 5 | - | 3 | 42 |
| S17 | E1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | 19 |
| | E2 | 2 | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 15 |
| | T | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | 2 | - | 6 | - | - | 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | - | 4 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 34 |
| S18 | E1 | - | - | - | 4 | 4 | - | 5 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | - | 2 | 4 | 36 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | - | 4 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | 33 |
| | T | 1 | - | - | 8 | 8 | - | 7 | 4 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 3 | - | 5 | 7 | 69 |
| S19 | E1 | - | - | - | 1 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 31 |
| | E2 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 4 | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 21 |
| | T | - | 1 | - | 1 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | 4 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 52 |
| S20 | E1 | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 6 | 31 |
| | E2 | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 4 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 4 | - | - | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 29 |
| | T | 6 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 6 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 9 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 60 |
| S21 | E1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 5 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 36 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | - | 4 | 3 | - | 4 | - | 4 | 1 | 4 | - | - | - | 2 | 29 |
| | T | 3 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 4 | - | 9 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 9 | - | 2 | 2 | 4 | 65 |
| S22 | E1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 7 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | - | 2 | 5 | - | 1 | 31 |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | 2 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 30 |
| | T | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 6 | - | 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 61 |
| S23 | E1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | 35 |
| | E2 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 19 |
| | T | 4 | 1 | 1 | - | 4 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 7 | - | 5 | 3 | 6 | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | 44 |
| Total | E1 | 34 | 12 | 9 | 19 | 34 | 13 | 50 | 42 | 12 | 25 | 15 | 13 | 62 | 17 | 59 | 33 | 41 | 28 | 47 | 34 | 51 | 650 |
| | E2 | 28 | 5 | 3 | 15 | 29 | 10 | 20 | 35 | 8 | 18 | 14 | 5 | 58 | 8 | 51 | 16 | 36 | 22 | 44 | 46 | 35 | 505 |
| Grand T. | | 62 | 17 | 12 | 34 | 63 | 23 | 70 | 77 | 20 | 43 | 29 | 18 | 120 | 25 | 110 | 49 | 77 | 50 | 91 | 80 | 86 | 1155 |
| | | 79 | | 132 | | | 257 | | | | | 431 | | | | | 257 | | | | | | |
| % | | 6.8 | | 11.4 | | | 22.2 | | | | | 37.3 | | | | | 22.2 | | 100% | | | | |

Key: S= Student E1= Essay1 E2= Essay2 T= Total

For the abbreviations of the subelements used above see Appendix B

This table presents pre-feedback errors of student compositions which were analyzed and recorded on two separate sessions of the writing tasks (E1 and E2) given to them. During both sessions a total of 1155 errors of the different aspects of composition were identified and recorded. On the first session (E1) a total of 650 errors, and during the second 505 errors were noted. From a total of 1155 errors, 431 were errors of vocabulary. This figure is the highest of all of the errors recorded on the other elements of composition, perhaps showing that the students have more problems with this particular aspect than with others. This accounts for 37.3% of all errors identified. This is followed by errors of grammar and mechanics, where in both cases equal number of errors (257) were noted. For organization 132 errors and for content 79 errors were recorded.

From the subparts of vocabulary, the highest number of errors was errors of word choice (WW), (120 errors) which reveals that the students have difficulties with using appropriate words to express their ideas. Such errors tended to deviate the meaning of the sentences in which they were placed. This is closely followed by word omission (^) where the students committed a total of 110 errors on both writing sessions. They frequently excluded words which had significant meanings to the entire sentence. Both of these (ww and ^) were components of vocabulary implying the students problems of word usage. As far as this particular problem is concerned, it should be noted that effective use of words essentially contribute to effective communication of the intended message.

On the other hand, relatively fewer number of content errors 79(6.8% of the total errors) were identified. However, this should not be taken to mean that the students have little problem on it. It is rather due to the fewer number of the subparts of this main aspect of composition where only two divisions (NRW and NM) were considered.

When the two writing tasks are compared, it was observed that more errors were recorded on the first session than^{on} the second. This would imply that the students were used to the demand of the writing task or improved their skills somehow. It could also be due to the difference in familiarity or simplicity of the topics to the students, though the degree of these is difficult to establish.

Table 4.2: Type and Number of Post-Feedback Errors (Version 2)

| Student code | | Content | | Organization | | | | Grammar | | | | | | Vocabulary | | | | | | Mechanics | | | Total |
|--------------|----|---------|----|--------------|-------|----|----|---------|---|---|----|------|----|------------|----|---|----|-----|-------|-----------|----|-----|-------|
| | | NRW | NM | IS | Parag | CD | CS | SVA | N | T | Vf | frag | WO | WW | SW | Λ | WF | Unw | OW/tw | cap | SP | Pun | T |
| S1 | E1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | 4 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 6 | |
| | T | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 10 | |
| S2 | E1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 4 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | 8 | |
| | T | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | 12 | |
| S3 | E1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 12 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 9 | |
| | T | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | - | - | 3 | - | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 21 | |
| S4 | E1 | - | 1 | - | - | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 11 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | - | 3 | - | 1 | 10 | |
| | T | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 4 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 21 | |
| S5 | E1 | 1 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 34 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | - | 2 | 16 | |
| | T | 2 | 1 | - | 5 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 3 | - | 2 | - | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 50 | |
| S6 | E1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 16 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | 10 | |
| | T | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 3 | - | - | 1 | - | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | - | 1 | 4 | - | 26 | |
| S7 | E1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 14 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | 8 | |
| | T | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | 3 | 1 | 5 | 22 | |
| S8 | E1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 4 | 1 | 17 |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 3 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 4 | 1 | 1 | 16 | |
| | T | 2 | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | 5 | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | 5 | 5 | 2 | 33 |
| S9 | E1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 10 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | 8 | |
| | T | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 4 | 4 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | - | - | 1 | - | 4 | 18 | |
| S10 | E1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 4 | 13 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 13 | |
| | T | 3 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 3 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 3 | 6 | 26 | |
| S11 | E1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 3 | - | - | 14 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 3 | - | - | 7 | |
| | T | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 3 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | 6 | - | - | 21 | |

Table 4.2

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|-----|---|----|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| S12 | E1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 5 | |
| | T | 2 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 12 | |
| S13 | E1 | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 7 | |
| | T | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 14 | |
| S14 | E1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 17 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 8 | |
| | T | 3 | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 25 | |
| S15 | E1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 9 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 8 | |
| | T | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 17 | |
| S16 | E1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 7 | |
| | E2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 5 | |
| | T | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 12 | |
| S17 | E1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 7 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | 6 | |
| | T | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 | 3 | - | 3 | - | 1 | 13 | |
| S18 | E1 | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | 3 | - | - | 2 | 15 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 5 | |
| | T | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 2 | 2 | - | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 20 | |
| S19 | E1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9 | |
| | E2 | 2 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 13 | |
| | T | 3 | 1 | - | 4 | 6 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 22 | |
| S20 | E1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | 9 | |
| | E2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 3 | 11 | |
| | T | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 6 | 20 | |
| S21 | E1 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 10 | |
| | E2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 8 | |
| | T | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 4 | 4 | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 18 | |
| S22 | E1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 12 | |
| | E2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 9 | |
| | T | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | 4 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 21 | |
| S23 | E1 | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 10 | |
| | E2 | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 | |
| | T | 2 | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 4 | 3 | 21 | |
| Total | E1 | 22 | 10 | 3 | 7 | 18 | 6 | 23 | 13 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 18 | 7 | 19 | 18 | 14 | 8 | 16 | 27 | 21 | 268 |
| | E2 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 7 | 10 | 14 | 4 | 8 | 3 | - | 22 | - | 19 | 13 | 10 | 5 | 26 | 15 | 15 | 207 |
| | T | 31 | 14 | 4 | 13 | 28 | 13 | 33 | 27 | 7 | 17 | 8 | 3 | 40 | 7 | 38 | 31 | 24 | 13 | 42 | 42 | 36 | 475 |
| Grand | T | 45 | | | | 58 | | | | 95 | | | | 153 | | | | 120 | | | | 475 | |

The above table depicts the students' post-feedback composition errors. As can be seen, the total number of errors with respect to the five aspects of composition is 475 i.e. errors in E₁V₂ and E₂V₂ (Essay1 Version1 and Essay2 Version2) respectively. The errors sharply dropped from 1155 (pre-feedback) to 475 (post-feedback) and as a result a total of 680 errors of different types were corrected by the students when feedback was provided to them. The table also reveals that errors in E1 were reduced from 650 to 268 and that of E2 dropped from 505 to 207. It is also evident that more error reduction was observed during E₁V₂ (382 error were reduced) than E₂V₂ (298 errors were reduced). This difference could be attributed either to the simplicity of the comments or the size of the text of the topic.

Specifically errors of content were reduced from 79 to 45; organization, from 132 to 58; grammar from 257 to 95; vocabulary from 431 to 153, and mechanics from 257 to 120. Here too most error reduction occurred with vocabulary (431-151=278) perhaps because of the reason stated above. It is also important to note that more errors were recorded during E1V2 than E2V2. This overall reduction of errors in student's compositions generally improved the quality of the students' papers and clarity of their messages. This result goes in agreement with Hendrickson's (1978) study. He found that locating errors in essays, having the essay rewritten and then correcting them led to a significant improvement of the papers. This is a good way of creating, discovering and shaping meaning. However, some errors that could have little effect on meaning sometimes emerged in the students revisions. These were observed on areas of content and organization as they need rewriting beyond sentence level. But as the comments given were on these major meaning-carrying aspects, the emerging errors weren't considered. It was also meant not to penalize the students twice on the same mistake. Moreover some errors that appeared in the students first versions also reappeared in the second versions. This happened perhaps when the students had no idea of going about the correction of the indicated errors, or when they thought it was already correct.

Table 4.3: Total Number of Pre-feedback and Post-feedback Errors and Number and Percentage Self-corrected on a Group Basis

| Types of errors | | No. of pre-feedback errors | | | No. of post-feedback errors | | | No. of errors self-corrected | | | % self-corrected | | |
|-----------------|-------|----------------------------|-----|------|-----------------------------|-----|-----|------------------------------|-----|-----|------------------|-------|------|
| | | E1 | E2 | T | E1 | E2 | T | E1 | E2 | T | E1 | E2 | T |
| Content | NRW | 34 | 28 | 62 | 22 | 9 | 31 | 12 | 19 | 31 | 35.2 | 67.9 | 50 |
| | NM | 12 | 5 | 17 | 10 | 2 | 12 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 16.6 | 60 | 29.4 |
| | Total | 46 | 33 | 79 | 32 | 11 | 43 | 14 | 22 | 36 | 30.4 | 66.7 | 45.6 |
| Organization | IS | 9 | 3 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 66.7 | 66.7 | 66.7 |
| | Parag | 19 | 15 | 34 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 12 | 6 | 18 | 63.2 | 40.0 | 52.9 |
| | CD | 34 | 29 | 63 | 18 | 10 | 28 | 16 | 19 | 33 | 47.0 | 65.5 | 55.6 |
| | CS | 13 | 10 | 23 | 6 | 7 | 13 | 7 | 3 | 10 | 53.8 | 30.0 | 43.5 |
| | Total | 75 | 57 | 132 | 34 | 27 | 61 | 41 | 30 | 71 | 54.7 | 52.6 | 53.8 |
| Grammar | SVA | 50 | 20 | 70 | 23 | 10 | 33 | 27 | 10 | 37 | 54.0 | 50.0 | 52.9 |
| | N | 42 | 35 | 77 | 13 | 14 | 27 | 29 | 21 | 50 | 69.0 | 54.2 | 64.9 |
| | T | 12 | 8 | 20 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 13 | 75.0 | 50.0 | 65.0 |
| | Vf | 25 | 18 | 43 | 9 | 8 | 17 | 16 | 10 | 26 | 64.0 | 55.6 | 60.4 |
| | Frag | 15 | 14 | 29 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 21 | 66.7 | 78.6 | 72.4 |
| | WO | 13 | 5 | 18 | - | 3 | 3 | 13 | 2 | 15 | 100.0 | 40.0 | 83.3 |
| | Total | 157 | 100 | 257 | 53 | 42 | 95 | 104 | 58 | 162 | 66.2 | 58.0 | 63.0 |
| Vocabulary | WW | 62 | 58 | 120 | 18 | 22 | 40 | 44 | 36 | 80 | 71.0 | 62.0 | 66.7 |
| | SW | 17 | 8 | 25 | 7 | - | 7 | 10 | 8 | 18 | 58.8 | 100.0 | 72.0 |
| | A | 59 | 51 | 110 | 19 | 19 | 38 | 40 | 32 | 72 | 67.8 | 62.7 | 65.5 |
| | Wf | 33 | 16 | 49 | 18 | 13 | 31 | 15 | 3 | 18 | 45.5 | 18.8 | 36.7 |
| | UnW | 41 | 36 | 77 | 14 | 10 | 24 | 27 | 26 | 53 | 65.9 | 72.2 | 68.8 |
| | OW/tw | 28 | 22 | 50 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 20 | 17 | 37 | 40.0 | 77.3 | 74.0 |
| | Total | 240 | 191 | 431 | 84 | 69 | 153 | 156 | 122 | 278 | 65.0 | 65.7 | 64.5 |
| Mechanics | Cap | 47 | 44 | 91 | 16 | 26 | 42 | 31 | 18 | 49 | 66.9 | 40.9 | 53.8 |
| | SP | 34 | 46 | 80 | 17 | 15 | 32 | 17 | 31 | 48 | 50.0 | 67.4 | 60.0 |
| | Pun | 51 | 35 | 86 | 21 | 15 | 36 | 30 | 20 | 50 | 58.8 | 57.1 | 58.1 |
| | Total | 132 | 125 | 257 | 64 | 56 | 120 | 68 | 69 | 137 | 51.5 | 55.2 | 53.3 |
| Grand T | | 650 | 505 | 1155 | 268 | 207 | 475 | 382 | 298 | 680 | 58.7 | 59.0 | 58.9 |

*** Percentages have been rounded**

The table above indicates the students' self-correction abilities on a group basis. As can be observed, they were, to a considerable degree, able to self-correct their own written errors after they had been given feedback. The errors which were recorded during the pre-feedback sessions were significantly reduced revealing the students were clearly successful in self-correction of

Table 4.3: Total Number of Pre-feedback and Post-feedback Errors and Number and Percentage Self-corrected on a Group Basis

| Types of errors | | No. of pre-feedback errors | | | No. of post-feedback errors | | | No. of errors self-corrected | | | % self-corrected | | |
|-----------------|-------|----------------------------|-----|------|-----------------------------|-----|-----|------------------------------|-----|-----|------------------|-------|------|
| | | E1 | E2 | T | E1 | E2 | T | E1 | E2 | T | E1 | E2 | T |
| Content | NRW | 34 | 28 | 62 | 22 | 9 | 31 | 12 | 19 | 31 | 35.2 | 67.9 | 50 |
| | NM | 12 | 5 | 17 | 10 | 2 | 12 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 16.6 | 60 | 29.4 |
| | Total | 46 | 33 | 79 | 32 | 11 | 43 | 14 | 22 | 36 | 30.4 | 66.7 | 45.6 |
| Organization | IS | 9 | 3 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 66.7 | 66.7 | 66.7 |
| | Parag | 19 | 15 | 34 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 12 | 6 | 18 | 63.2 | 40.0 | 52.9 |
| | CD | 34 | 29 | 63 | 18 | 10 | 28 | 16 | 19 | 33 | 47.0 | 65.5 | 55.6 |
| | CS | 13 | 10 | 23 | 6 | 7 | 13 | 7 | 3 | 10 | 53.8 | 30.0 | 43.5 |
| | Total | 75 | 57 | 132 | 34 | 27 | 61 | 41 | 30 | 71 | 54.7 | 52.6 | 53.8 |
| Grammar | SVA | 50 | 20 | 70 | 23 | 10 | 33 | 27 | 10 | 37 | 54.0 | 50.0 | 52.9 |
| | N | 42 | 35 | 77 | 13 | 14 | 27 | 29 | 21 | 50 | 69.0 | 54.2 | 64.9 |
| | T | 12 | 8 | 20 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 13 | 75.0 | 50.0 | 65.0 |
| | Vf | 25 | 18 | 43 | 9 | 8 | 17 | 16 | 10 | 26 | 64.0 | 55.6 | 60.4 |
| | Frag | 15 | 14 | 29 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 21 | 66.7 | 78.6 | 72.4 |
| | WO | 13 | 5 | 18 | - | 3 | 3 | 13 | 2 | 15 | 100.0 | 40.0 | 83.3 |
| | Total | 157 | 100 | 257 | 53 | 42 | 95 | 104 | 58 | 162 | 66.2 | 58.0 | 63.0 |
| Vocabulary | WW | 62 | 58 | 120 | 18 | 22 | 40 | 44 | 36 | 80 | 71.0 | 62.0 | 66.7 |
| | SW | 17 | 8 | 25 | 7 | - | 7 | 10 | 8 | 18 | 58.8 | 100.0 | 72.0 |
| | A | 59 | 51 | 110 | 19 | 19 | 38 | 40 | 32 | 72 | 67.8 | 62.7 | 65.5 |
| | Wf | 33 | 16 | 49 | 18 | 13 | 31 | 15 | 3 | 18 | 45.5 | 18.8 | 36.7 |
| | UnW | 41 | 36 | 77 | 14 | 10 | 24 | 27 | 26 | 53 | 65.9 | 72.2 | 68.8 |
| | OW/tw | 28 | 22 | 50 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 20 | 17 | 37 | 40.0 | 77.3 | 74.0 |
| | Total | 240 | 191 | 431 | 84 | 69 | 153 | 156 | 122 | 278 | 65.0 | 65.7 | 64.5 |
| Mechanics | Cap | 47 | 44 | 91 | 16 | 26 | 42 | 31 | 18 | 49 | 66.9 | 40.9 | 53.8 |
| | SP | 34 | 46 | 80 | 17 | 15 | 32 | 17 | 31 | 48 | 50.0 | 67.4 | 60.0 |
| | Pun | 51 | 35 | 86 | 21 | 15 | 36 | 30 | 20 | 50 | 58.8 | 57.1 | 58.1 |
| | Total | 132 | 125 | 257 | 64 | 56 | 120 | 68 | 69 | 137 | 51.5 | 55.2 | 53.3 |
| Grand T | | 650 | 505 | 1155 | 268 | 207 | 475 | 382 | 298 | 680 | 58.7 | 59.0 | 58.9 |

*** Percentages have been rounded**

The table above indicates the students' self-correction abilities on a group basis. As can be observed, they were, to a considerable degree, able to self-correct their own written errors after they had been given feedback. The errors which were recorded during the pre-feedback sessions were significantly reduced revealing the students were clearly successful in self-correction of

written errors. The pre-feedback errors were correspondingly much higher and during the two sessions (E_1 & E_2) a total of $650 + 505 = 1155$ errors were recorded. However, when the students received written feedback or clues, this figure dropped to 268 and 207 respectively. This amounted to 475 errors. This means 58.9% i.e. more than half of the pre-feedback errors were successfully self-corrected.

When we consider the five aspects of composition, errors of vocabulary were most effectively self-corrected by the students. When they were given feedback, the students self-corrected 278 of the 431 errors in their original versions which accounts for 64.5% of the total errors of this particular aspect. This is closely followed by errors of grammar where 63% were self-corrected. Similarly, 53.3% of errors of mechanics 52.9% of errors of organization and 45.6% of errors of content (below half) were more or less dealt with.

A possible explanation for this is that the students seem to be more successful in self-correcting errors of vocabulary, grammar and mechanics than errors of content and organization. This result shows a good fit with Radecki & Swales' (1988) finding where one group of students, non-Receptors, rejecting input from their instructor preferred to be much more concerned with surface level grammatical matters. It may also imply that the students can not easily discover errors of content and organization. Or perhaps they were least concerned about meanings of their compositions, or may not have enough practices on this aspect of writing.

When it comes to the sub-elements of the above major elements, the students seem to be most successful in self-correcting their word order (WO) errors. From a total of 18 errors originally noted the students self-corrected 15 and this makes up 83.3% of the errors of this subpart. This may mean that if it is indicated to them, the students can detect the order of words in a sentence. Similarly, they managed to correct their faulty separation or connection of words which should be written otherwise (Ow/tw). The students have serious problems of writing one word (usually a compound word) as two words and two separate words as one (see Table 1). This could possibly be due to limited writing practice or lack of extensive reading ability. However, when they were given clues, they successfully corrected them. As a result, they self-corrected 74% of such errors reducing their errors from 50 to 13.

Next comes errors of fragment in which the students self-corrected 21 errors of the original 29 errors noted for this sub-element, and this accounts for 72.4% of the errors of this type. However,

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the least successfully self-corrected sub-element was observed on word form (Wf). The students self-corrected only 18 of the 49 errors recorded pre-feedback, and this accounts for only 36.7% of the errors. This may suggest that the students appear to have difficulty in using the appropriate form of words and self-correcting them even if they were provided with feedback.

In general, the discussions made so far are on errors corrected by the subject students taken as a whole (group). However, this tells us very little about each individual's success or failure. Hence, it seems wise to see their self-correcting abilities on individual basis. The following table presents this issue.

Table 4.4: Errors Self-Corrected on Individual Basis

| Student | No. of pre-feedback errors | No. post-feedback errors | No. of errors self-corrected | % self-corrected |
|---------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 | 37 | 10 | 27 | 73.0 |
| 2 | 43 | 12 | 31 | 72.1 |
| 3 | 66 | 21 | 45 | 68.2 |
| 4 | 43 | 21 | 22 | 51.2 |
| 5 | 44 | 44 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 6 | 48 | 26 | 22 | 45.8 |
| 7 | 48 | 22 | 26 | 54.2 |
| 8 | 66 | 33 | 33 | 50.0 |
| 9 | 45 | 18 | 27 | 60.0 |
| 10 | 55 | 26 | 29 | 52.7 |
| 11 | 42 | 21 | 21 | 50.0 |
| 12 | 46 | 12 | 34 | 73.9 |
| 13 | 41 | 14 | 27 | 65.9 |
| 14 | 47 | 25 | 22 | 46.8 |
| 15 | 47 | 17 | 30 | 71.4 |
| 16 | 42 | 12 | 30 | 71.4 |
| 17 | 34 | 13 | 21 | 61.8 |
| 18 | 69 | 20 | 49 | 71.0 |
| 19 | 52 | 22 | 30 | 57.7 |
| 20 | 60 | 20 | 40 | 66.7 |
| 21 | 65 | 18 | 47 | 72.3 |
| 22 | 61 | 22 | 40 | 65.6 |
| 23 | 44 | 21 | 23 | 52.3 |

As can be seen from the table, the majority of the students are on a good level of self-correcting abilities. Twenty of the students (87.0%) managed to effectively self-correct more than half of

the least successfully self-corrected sub-element was observed on word **form** (Wf). The students self-corrected only 18 of the 49 errors recorded pre-feedback, and this accounts for only 36.7% of the errors. This may suggest that the students appear to have difficulty in using the appropriate form of words and self-correcting them even if they were provided with feedback.

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| 5 | 44 | 44 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 6 | 48 | 26 | 22 | 45.8 |
| 7 | 48 | 22 | 26 | 54.2 |
| 8 | 66 | 33 | 33 | 50.0 |
| 9 | 45 | 18 | 27 | 60.0 |
| 10 | 55 | 26 | 29 | 52.7 |
| 11 | 42 | 21 | 21 | 50.0 |
| 12 | 46 | 12 | 34 | 73.9 |
| 13 | 41 | 14 | 27 | 65.9 |
| 14 | 47 | 25 | 22 | 46.8 |
| 15 | 47 | 17 | 30 | 71.4 |
| 16 | 42 | 12 | 30 | 71.4 |
| 17 | 34 | 13 | 21 | 61.8 |
| 18 | 69 | 20 | 49 | 71.0 |
| 19 | 52 | 22 | 30 | 57.7 |
| 20 | 60 | 20 | 40 | 66.7 |
| 21 | 65 | 18 | 47 | 72.3 |
| 22 | 61 | 22 | 40 | 65.6 |
| 23 | 44 | 21 | 23 | 52.3 |

As can be seen from the table, the majority of the students are on a good level of self-correcting abilities. Twenty of the students (87.0%) managed to effectively self-correct more than half of

their own errors. One student (S_{12}) particularly succeeded in self-correcting 73.9% of his pre-feedback errors, hence reducing his errors from 46 to 12. Similarly, other students (S_1) self-corrected 73% of his errors S_2 , 72.1% of his errors originally noted. Only 3 students (13%) self-correct below half, and 1 student (S_5) was not able to self-correct any of his errors. Since the data was taken anonymously, it was difficult to know particular problems of this student. A possible explanation is that he probably felt much of his original version, even though commented, was already correct (because few students reported this in the questionnaire), or he did not know how to improve it. Those students who failed to self-correct some of the errors also indicated that they found, especially some aspects like content and organization, difficult.

However, this case was observed on an insignificant minority and a rare one as the students essay analysis and questionnaire results revealed that when their errors were indicated to them, they noted to have easily detected their own errors and self-corrected them.

In general, though individual differences were in fact there, on the whole the students seem to have encouraging self-correction abilities. The fact that the students have such variations in their performance confirms Krashen's (1987) assertion that self-correcting ability is very much affected by individual differences.

4.1.1 Instances of Student Self-correction and Revision

In the preceding sections the students' written errors and their self-correcting abilities were analyzed and interpreted. However, the students were not only asked to self-correct their own errors, but they were also required to revise their texts in the light of their teacher's feedback or comments using various strategies to produce their second versions. This section, therefore, takes on this issue and discusses it in some detail.

In an attempt to determine the students' strategies a cautious comparison between their first and second versions was made. To this effect, the students' responses to the teacher's comments were carefully traced, searched and coded as comments incorporated (CI), comments not incorporated or ignored (CNI), self revisions (SR) i.e. revisions without teacher comments, and then counted and categorized. The comparison of both versions also helped to see if there were some changes in the light of the comments and how the changes were brought about i.e. if there were changes because of the comments (CI) or self-revision without input from the teacher (SR).

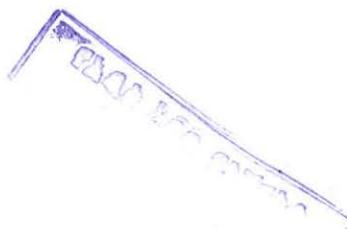
Interestingly a pattern emerged when these changes were compared. These changes appeared to coincide with the strategies the students used in revising their first versions. For instance, the comparison revealed that there were 1155 instances of self-correction and revision reflecting three different patterns: the students incorporated the teacher's comments, they incorporated but made ineffective revisions and they ignored them altogether (i.e. they didn't address the comments or deleted part of the material that contained the comments). Contrary to expectations, these students made very few self-revisions.

Table 4.5: Total Instances of Self-correction and Revision

| Language aspects | Comments incorporated | | | | Comments not incorporated | | Total instances of revision | |
|------------------|-----------------------|------|------------------|------|---------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|------|
| | Effective Rev. | | Ineffective Rev. | | No. | % | No. | % |
| | No. | % | No. | % | | | | |
| Content | 34 | 43.0 | 41 | 51.8 | 4 | 5.0 | 49 | 43.0 |
| Organization | 74 | 53.8 | 46 | 34.8 | 12 | 9.0 | 132 | 53.8 |
| Grammar | 162 | 63.0 | 85 | 33.0 | 10 | 3.8 | 257 | 63.0 |
| Vocabulary | 278 | 64.5 | 121 | 28.0 | 32 | 7.4 | 431 | 64.5 |
| Mechanics | 137 | 53.3 | 102 | 39.6 | 18 | 7.0 | 257 | 53.3 |
| Total | 682 | 58.9 | 395 | 34.2 | 76 | 6.6 | 1155 | 58.9 |

- This revision patterns were adapted from Mendonca & Johnson (1994).

The total number of self-correction and subsequent revision in the students' second versions was divided by the total number of revision instances to obtain the percentage of comments incorporated or not incorporated. Thus as shown in the table, from a total of 1155 teacher comments, the students self-corrected and made 682 instances of effective self-correction and revisions on the different aspects of composition. Hence, they made the most successful revision on vocabulary which comprises 278 corrections and revisions or 64.5% of the total errors of



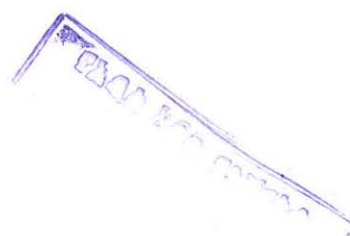
Interestingly a pattern emerged when these changes were compared. These changes appeared to coincide with the strategies the students used in revising their first versions. For instance, the comparison revealed that there were 1155 instances of self-correction and revision reflecting three different patterns: the students incorporated the teacher's comments, they incorporated but made ineffective revisions and they ignored them altogether (i.e. they didn't address the comments or deleted part of the material that contained the comments). Contrary to expectations, these students made very few self-revisions.

Table 4.5: Total Instances of Self-correction and Revision

| Language aspects | Comments incorporated | | | | Comments not incorporated | | Total instances of revision | |
|------------------|-----------------------|------|------------------|------|---------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|------|
| | Effective Rev. | | Ineffective Rev. | | No. | % | No. | % |
| | No. | % | No. | % | | | | |
| Content | 34 | 43.0 | 41 | 51.8 | 4 | 5.0 | 49 | 43.0 |
| Organization | 74 | 53.8 | 46 | 34.8 | 12 | 9.0 | 132 | 53.8 |
| Grammar | 162 | 63.0 | 85 | 33.0 | 10 | 3.8 | 257 | 63.0 |
| Vocabulary | 278 | 64.5 | 121 | 28.0 | 32 | 7.4 | 431 | 64.5 |
| Mechanics | 137 | 53.3 | 102 | 39.6 | 18 | 7.0 | 257 | 53.3 |
| Total | 682 | 58.9 | 395 | 34.2 | 76 | 6.6 | 1155 | 58.9 |

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vocabulary in the first versions. The students also incorporated the teacher's comments and made effective revisions. However, even though they incorporated the comments, in some 395 (34.2%) instances the students made ineffective revisions. In their attempt to self-correct and revise their texts, they made other mistakes or even worsened their compositions.

In other instances the students also ignored the teacher's feedback altogether in spite of the fact that the feedback required revision. In other words, they didn't utilize the teachers' comments to improve their compositions. In a few cases even the students deleted or avoided materials that had been in their first versions and about which the teachers had made suggestions. The students' response to the questionnaire revealed that 3 of the 5 students who did this reported that they didn't know what to do with the comments, or how to improve or modify these problematic sections (mainly content errors) according to the teacher's comments. One student also said he didn't understand the comment, and another one said he felt the commented part was already correct and didn't need improvement. This could be due to the students' perception of correctness.

These two strategies (ignoring the comments and writing the material as it was, and avoidance strategy) were instances where the students didn't utilize the teacher's feedback to revise their texts. Such cases were in fact relatively fewer and comprise 76 errors (6.6%) of the total revision instances. Thus the most problematic comment leading to ineffective revision was on 'content' (51.8%), and comments mostly not incorporated or avoided was on 'organization' 9%. Most of these changes were beyond sentence level that could affect meaning.

Nevertheless, many of the changes that led to successful revision were comments on vocabulary (64.5%). This suggests that the student writers were most effective at utilizing teacher comments when the changes required to address the feedback were fairly simple, requiring minor or word level revisions. These word-level changes had little effect on meaning. Previous studies have also consistently shown that students revise at a rather superficial level failing to make any changes in meaning (Sengupta, 2000:98). That is they tend to correct at word or sentence level, overlooking or failing to correct errors beyond the confines of the sentence (Ferris, 2001).

It may come as a surprise that the students made very few self-revisions. Analysis of their papers revealed that the students responded only to the particular comments made by the teacher without making their own revisions. All the revisions were, in general, made in relation to the teacher's

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It may come as a surprise that the students made very few self-revisions. Analysis of their papers revealed that the students responded only to the particular comments made by the teacher without making their own revisions. All the revisions were, in general, made in relation to the teacher's

comment. However, in the questionnaire, 7 students (30.4%) reportedly revised and expanded their texts adding their own words.

To illustrate this fact, it seems convincing to use some of the students' excerpts from their first and second versions.

Effective Self-corrections and Revisions

Content:

Clarity of ideas and meaning

S₃E₁V₁ (first version):

The teacher who has good mission and vision for his students as well as his country is characterized by good teacher(NRW).

S₃E₁V₂ (second version):

Having good mission and vision for his students and his country is a character of a good teacher.

Organization:

Most instances of effective organization require students to supply introductory or concluding sentences, or to divide their ideas in to paragraphs. However, because of space limit, it is difficult to print the full text of the students' excerpts here. But I have one instance of this aspect on the use of connecting (linking) devices and one from IS (missing introductions).

S₄E₂V₁: *so far, if we have to speak more, we communicate for their country* (The sentence is also unclear).

S₄E₂V₂: *Thus, if we have to communicate with other countries, we have to speak in English* (clearer). *The student changed 'so far' to 'thus' and clarified the idea better.*

Another common problem observed in students' papers regarding organization is missing introductory sentences that are used as signposts and direct the reader. The following extract is taken from the first paragraph, first sentence of the student paper.

S₁₃E₁V₁: *A good teacher recognizes individual differences of students. He treats each child as unique. He enables the child to learn for himself (IS).*

S₁₃E₁V₂: *A good teacher has a number of qualities. For example, he recognizes individual differences of students. He treats each child as unique .He enables the child to learn for himself.*

Grammar:

Grammar is the second aspect most dealt with by the students and thus they made many effective revisions.

S₅E₁V₁: *A good teacher **tolerate** problems. (SVA)*

S₅E₁V₂: *A good teacher **tolerates** problems.*

S₆E₁V₂: *He [A good teacher] **advise** his students*

S₆E₁V₂: *He **advises** his students.*

S₁₇E₁V₁: *When we explain the qualities of a good teacher (**Frag**). He has...*

S₁₇E₁V₂: *When we explain the qualities of a good teacher, he has a good relationship with his students. (Though the sentence is a bit unclear, the fragment is corrected).*

S₂E₁V₁: *Secondly, to go and interact with the target language speakers (**Frag**).*

S₂E₁V₂: *Secondly, English is used to interact with the target language speakers.*

Vocabulary: With vocabulary the students made many effective revisions. Here are some excerpts.

S₁E₁V₁: *There are a number of qualities that a teacher **forms** in his students. (WW)*

S₁E₁V₂: *There are a number of qualifies that a teacher **develops** in the students.*

S₁₈E₂V₁: *A good teacher shows the behavior of **fatherity** (SW).*

S₁₈E₂V₂: *A good teacher shows the approach of a **father**.*

S₂E₁V₁: *Good teacher is a model not only in the school but also the society with whom he lives. (word omission).*

S₂E₁V₂: *A good teacher is a model not only in the school but also **in** the society with whom he lives.*

Mechanics: Punctuation and spelling

S₁₃E₂V₁: *When we learn English as a foreign language we get familiarity with many **features** of the language.*

S₁₃E₂V₂: *When we learn English as a foreign language, we get familiarity with many **features** of the language.*

Ineffective Self-correction and Revisions

A number of teacher comments led to revisions that were not skillfully executed and consequently weakened the students' papers, or did not improve them much. The student writers in the sample attempted to address the vast majority of the teacher comments, at least to some degree. However, it did not necessarily follow that the changes made in response to the comments improved the texts. Perhaps either they were not competent enough to incorporate the comments or they did not know what the teacher was asking.

Content:

S₂E₂V₁: *English is a positive modern approach that stresses the power words, the range and variety of English (**unclear**).*

S₂E₂V₂: *English is a modern approach that stress the power of words, the range and variety of English (**unclear**).*

Organization: paragraph transition (**CD**).

S₈E₂V₁: *English helps students to understand the ideas of written material. Many people do not know the advantage of English (**CD**)*

S₈E₂V₂: *English helps students to understand.... **Also** many people do not know the advantage of English.*

Grammar:

S₁₉E₁V₁: *A good teacher hate never students. (**WO**)*

S₁₉E₁V₂: *A good teacher equally treats students.*

S₈E₂V₁: *Many years ago, the educational policy of the country is teacher-centered approach.
(Tense)*

S₈E₂V₂: *Many years ago, the educational policy of the country are teacher centered approach.*

Vocabulary:

S₈E₁V₁: *A teacher should be **honesty** and responsible (WF).*

S₈E₁V₂: *He should be **honst** for his work.*

S₁₄E₁V₂: *A good teacher should listen and attend student problems as doctors follow the **healthy**
of their patients (WF).*

S₁₄E₁V₂: *A good teacher ...as doctors follow the **healthiness** of their patients.*

Mechanics: (SP & PUN)

S₁₄E₂V₁: *Different books magazins etc are written in English*

S₁₄E₂V₂: *Different books megazens etc are written in English.*

Comments not Incorporated

Unlike the preceding sections, in this instance of self-correction and revision, the students did not incorporate the teacher's feedback. Instead they rewrote their original texts as they were, making no changes in the revisions. In other instances, they also deleted or avoided the commented material altogether. Both of these instances account for 6.6% of the total revision instances.

Content:

S₂E₂v₁: *Knowing the command of English and the **internal consistency** of it increases one's job
opportunity (NM).*

S₂E₂V₂: *Knowing the command of English increases one's job opportunity (The student deleted
the commented material "internal consistency").*

Organization

One major problem in the students' text organization is bringing the ideas to an abrupt end and without signaling that they were finishing. Example,

S₁₃E₁V₁: *A good teacher creates a cordial atmosphere in the classroom. He is loving, kind and affectionate (CS).*

S₁₃E₁V₂: *A good teacher creates a cordial atmosphere in the classroom. He is loving, kind and affectionate (No change-comment not incorporated).*

Grammar:

S₈E₂V₁: *And also to **cooprate** with the society through communication. (Frag & SP)*

S₈E₂V₁: *And also to **cooprate** with the society through communication.*

S₁₁E₁V₁: *A good teacher has many characteristics. Such as being humorous, creative ,etc(Frag).*

S₁₁E₁V₂: *A good teacher has many characteristics. Such as being humorous, creative ,etc*

Vocabulary:

S₁₂E₁V₁: *There are many characters or features which make good teacher **differ** from teachers (^ & Wf).*

S₁₂E₁V₂: *There are many characters or features which make good teacher **differ** from other teachers. (Comments ignored)*

S₁₉E₁V₁: *Punctuality, patriotism and **honest** will be expected from a good teacher (Wf).*

S₁₉E₁V₂: *Punctuality and patriotism will be expected from a good teacher. ('honest' avoided).*

In general, comments ignored or commented materials avoided were not only the ones mentioned above. A good number of different major and specific elements of composition that were commented by the teachers were also not utilized by the students for revisions.

Thus from what has been discussed so far on students' composition it was evident that they used various strategies of self-correction and revision such as incorporating teacher comments, ignoring teachers comments, deleting materials that contained the comments etc. In most cases (58.9%) the students incorporated the comments given to them and made effective revisions .In some cases (34.2%) they incorporated but made ineffective revisions. In relatively few cases (6.6%) they did not make use of teacher comments. However why and how they did these cannot be described from the composition data analysis. Therefore, these gaps can be filled by the result

obtained from student questionnaire. This leads us to the results of second data gathering tool- the questionnaire.

4.2. Analysis and Discussion of the Result Obtained from the Questionnaire and Interview.

As stated earlier, the purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain some information on the gaps left unfilled by the essay writing tasks. It was also used to back up and confirm/disconfirm the result of the students' compositions.

Similarly, the result obtained from the interview was used to supplement the result obtained from the two data collection tools (composition and questionnaire). Below is, therefore, the analysis and interpretation of the results of questionnaire and interview.

The discussion on self-correction ability of written texts logically begins with the students' reading or not reading of the commented papers. Kreizman (1984) in Cohen (1987) notes that students usually fail to self-correct because they don't reread the entire text and the teacher's comments. Similarly, Zamel (1985) claims that students would rarely read through their comments more than once and they rarely wrote subsequent drafts incorporating their teachers' feedback. The following table presents this basic issue in self-correction and rewriting.

Table 4.6: Students' Reading of Their Commented Papers and Clarity of the Teacher's Comments

| No. | Item | Response | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|-----|------|-----|
| | | All | | Most | | Some | | Little | | None | |
| | | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 1 | How much of the essay did you read over when you got back your paper to self-correct it? | 16 | 69.6 | 3 | 13 | 3 | 13 | 1 | 4.3 | - | - |
| 2 | How much of the teacher's feedback did you give thoughtful attention to? | 12 | 52.1 | 9 | 39 | 1 | 4.3 | 1 | 4.3 | - | - |
| 3 | If you attended to the teacher's feedback how much of the feedback regarding the following aspects were clear for you? | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Content | 5 | 21.5 | 10 | 43.7 | 4 | 17.4 | 3 | 13 | 1 | 4.3 |
| | Organization | 7 | 30.4 | 9 | 39 | 4 | 17.4 | 3 | 13 | - | - |
| | Grammar | 14 | 60.9 | 5 | 21.7 | 4 | 17.4 | - | - | - | - |
| | Vocabulary | 12 | 52.1 | 7 | 30.4 | 2 | 8.7 | 1 | 4.3 | 1 | 4.3 |
| | Mechanics | 10 | 43.7 | 9 | 39 | 2 | 8.7 | 1 | 4.3 | - | - |

- Percentages have been rounded

The students were asked if they read over their papers and refreshed their memories to be able to give the teacher's comments a meaningful context for interpretation. Thus as shown in the table, the majority of them 16 (69%) reported reading over 'all', and three students (13%), 'most' of their papers when they received for self-correction. Yet there were still three students who reportedly read 'some' and only one who said he/she read 'little' of it. No one reported not reading at all. Hence, the larger proportion of the students claimed to have read 'all', 'most' or 'some' of their texts. This result shows a good fit with Cohen's (1987) and Ferris (1995) findings whose subject students reportedly read either 'all' or 'some' of their commented papers.

Thus we can be convinced that most of the students read through their entire essays in order to see their errors in the light of the teacher's comments. This clearly shows that basic steps in processing comments were generally going on. This would help to keep track of errors they had

made while reading through each line of their papers. They were also expected to meet the written comments (correction codes) which would assist them to associate the codes with the indicated errors and detect the problems.

However, reading alone is not an end in itself for successful self-correction, and therefore giving thoughtful attention is necessary too. Regarding the degree of attention given to the teachers' feedback, we also see a similar distribution of responses. Hence 21 students (91.3%) noted to have given intensive and thoughtful attention to 'all' or 'most' of the feedback, and one student (4.3%) attended to 'some', another student to 'little'. No students reported 'none'. Therefore, the proportion of students who claimed to have read and attended to the comments is much higher than those who didn't.

Thus two explanations can be made about this result. Firstly, the vast majorities of the students seem to have been keen about the teacher's comments and read through their papers seriously to know where and why they were wrong. Secondly, having put the effort to write their first versions, the student wanted to know how their efforts had been received by the teacher.

Nevertheless, the fact that the students paid considerable attention to the comments may not guarantee full comprehension of the feedback. Therefore, clarity of the comments on the different aspects of composition is another basic step towards self-correction. Thus the students reported a great deal of but slightly varying range of understanding of the five aspects (All of these aspects were defined for the students. See Appendix D Item 3). Accordingly, five students (21.7%) indicated that they understood 'a lot', 10 students (43.7%) 'most', four (17.4%) 'some', three students 'little' and one student 'none' of the feedback on content. Thus the students seem to have little difficulty in understanding this particular aspect of composition.

Regarding organization, seven (30.4%) the students noted to have understood 'a lot', nine (39%) 'most', 17% 'some', and 13% little of the feedback on it. No students reported 'none'. Here we also note a similar level of understanding to 'content' discussed above. With grammar we see the highest degree of understanding of 'all' the feedback given on it which was reported by 14 students (60.9%). Similarly, five students (21.7%) reported to have understood 'most' and two students 'some'. This again shows a good deal of understanding on feedback concerning grammar.

The students' understanding of teacher's feedback on vocabulary ranges from complete understanding to no understanding. Hence, 12 (52.1%) indicated to have understood 'all', seven (30.4%) most, two students 'some', one student 'little' and another one student 'none'. On the whole, the majority seem to have been clear with comments on vocabulary.

Finally, the clarity of teacher comments to the students on the mechanics of their writing is not completely different from the other aspects mentioned above. It was thus revealed that the significant section of the students (91.3%) reported to have understood 'all' or 'most' of the feedback given on it.

On the whole, seen in this light it seems evident that most of the students did not have trouble understanding the comments given on the five aspects discussed so far. It is also clear that much more clarity and understanding was observed on grammar, vocabulary and mechanics where 19 students (82.6%) in each aspect indicated good understanding of 'all' and 'some' of the comments given on these areas. This result conforms to Cohens (1987) finding where most of students reported similar responses (i.e. 'all' or 'most'). This would imply that comments given on such lower order concerns of compositions are usually simple, straightforward, requiring self correction or revision at micro-level (word or phrase level) unlike their higher order concern counterparts. Thus, classroom composition teachers need to be aware of this problem and modify their feedback practices by making comments clear, detailed and informative to guide students to the self-correction and revision proper.

Clarity of teachers' comments and students reading or not reading of the comments are major steps in feedback processing, self correction and revision. However, it is usually observed that students don't read comments (Cohen, 1987) or feel comfortable when attention is drawn to their errors. The following table presents this issue.

Table 4.7: Students' Reaction to Teacher Feedback and Self-correction Technique

| №. | Item | Response | Respondents | |
|----|---|--------------------------------------|-------------|------|
| | | | No. | % |
| 4 | How do you feel when attention is drawn to your errors? | I am rather confused | 2 | 8.7 |
| | | I am irritated | 1 | 4.3 |
| | | I feel comfortable to know my errors | 20 | 86.9 |
| | | I am indifferent | - | - |
| 5 | The teacher's feedback helped me to reduce my composition errors | I strongly agree | 13 | 56.5 |
| | | I agree | 8 | 34.5 |
| | | I disagree | 2 | 8.7 |
| | | I strongly disagree | - | - |
| | | I am indifferent | - | - |
| 6 | What is your reaction to a paper with only comments for self-correction as compared to the one with only grade on it? | I like it | 14 | 60.9 |
| | | I don't like it | 7 | 30.4 |
| | | I am indifferent | 2 | 8.7 |
| 7 | Did you find any points that emphasized negative points (criticism)? | Yes | 10 | 43.5 |
| | | No | 13 | 56.5 |
| 8 | If your response to number "7" is "Yes" what is your reaction to such comments? | I like them | 6 | 60 |
| | | I don't like them | 3 | 30 |
| | | I am indifferent | 1 | 10 |
| 9 | What do you think you have benefited as a result of self-correction? | It increased my performance | 6 | 26 |
| | | It increase my motivation | 4 | 17.4 |
| | | It did both | 12 | 52.2 |
| | | I have benefited nothing | 1 | 4.3 |
| 10 | On which aspect of composition do you need feedback most? | Content | 4 | 17.4 |
| | | Organization | 5 | 21.7 |
| | | Grammar | 9 | 39 |
| | | Vocabulary | 4 | 17.4 |
| | | Mechanics | 1 | 4.3 |

As illustrated in the table, a significant part of the students (86.9%) reported that when attention is drawn to their errors, they feel comfortable to know their mistakes. Two students noted to have been confused and one student said he/she was irritated but no one reported 'indifference'. This implies a general feeling of the students to have been positive when errors are indicated to them. This may also mean that they are interested in knowing why they were right or wrong. This finding confirms Radecki & Swales' (1988) result which revealed that most of their subjects

expressed satisfaction at getting back marked papers. They also expressed approval of marking symbols used.

If the students liked such feedback provision, how do they view this assistance? Again it is clear to see from the table that by far the largest group remarked that they strongly agreed to have benefited from the teacher's feedback. By the same token, eight students (34.8%) indicated that they 'agree' and only two students expressed disagreement to the question put to them. No student reported 'strong disagreement' or 'indifference'. Hence, it is reasonable to argue that the students have strong preference and respect for the teacher's feedback. That is, on the whole, the students' response to this question is generally affirmative.

This again clearly goes in agreement with their composition results of the second version in which the number of errors on the first version were drastically reduced (See Table 2). Errors which amount to 1155 in the first two prefeedback versions were minimized to 475, giving rise to 58.9% self-correction of the errors.

In order to look into their initiation for self-correction, an attempt was made to compare the students' reactions to commented papers against graded papers. Here too, the students' response to the question showed a great deal of variation. Most of them (60.9%) indicated that they liked papers with comments which would help them self-correct; whereas, 30.4% didn't like this. Only one student noted 'indifference'. However, the result seems to imply that the greater number of students had keen interest for self-correction, a result that appears to support Radecki & Swales' (1988) finding. Their subjects reportedly liked heavily marked papers. If they are more interested in the comments than the grade, it is more likely that they pay attention to the comments and self-correct them.

If the students noted that they liked commented papers, a logical question to follow is what kind of comments they think they like. First, 10 students (43.5%) indicated the existence of negative points or criticism while, 13 students (56.5%) responded negatively (i.e. there were no negative points). However, it was evident that some correction codes implied criticisms. The purpose of asking this question was to investigate their reactions to such feedback provision which would affect self-correction. If the students like criticism equally useful as praise, it is more probable that they have good initiation and attitude for teacher-initiated self-correction.

Thus six of the 10 students who indicated the existence of such comments (60%) said they liked the comments; whereas, three students (30%) expressed dislike and only one student reported indifference. Therefore, the students seem to appreciate not only praises which emphasize their strengths, but also criticisms which point out their limitations.

This generally leads us to the benefit they think they got as a result of self-correction they did during the two writing sessions. As shown in the table (Item 9), the significant portion of the students responded affirmatively. Hence, 26% remarked that self-correction increased their performance, 17.4% said it increased their motivation and 12(52.2%) reported both. One student said he/she benefited nothing as a result of self-correction.

On the whole, however, the general attitude appears to be positive. Almost all of them seem to welcome self-correction because of the benefit they appear to have got from it. Their response 'It increased my performance' is justifiable because their self-corrected compositions also showed good improvement upon feedback provision and revision.

Similarly, according to their teacher's oral report, the students seem to have good initiation and attitude to self-correction. He noted that whenever they discover their own errors, they seem motivated and self-correct or at least try to self-correct and as a result enjoy the techniques. He added, "It [self-correction] is a means of arriving at their own errors through their own efforts." However, he further pointed out that self-correction is difficult to apply because it involves various procedures and rewriting on the same topic. He concluded, it is time consuming for the students and less practicable for the teacher in the face of large class size we are currently experiencing. To make self-correction effective, however, learners and teachers should develop awareness about its challenges in order to appreciate its opportunities.

With regard to an aspect of composition where they need more feedback, by far the largest group (39%) declared preference of their grammar errors to be commented, 21.7% organization, 17.4% content, 17.4% vocabulary and 4.3% mechanics. The students' composition instructor oral report similarly shows a good match here. He indicated giving considerable attention to a grammatical aspect of the students' writing in giving feedback. He further pointed out that this area of language is the one students of EFL seem to prefer most. Surprisingly, this result seems to echo earlier findings of Cohen (1987), Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990), Leki (1991) and Ferris (1995). However, this implies that the students do not seem to be aware of the current shift of priority

from grammatical concern to content as the primary purpose of developing writing skill is to communicate message.

Table 4.8: Students' Feedback Processing and Revising Strategies

| No. | Item | Response | Respondents | |
|-----|---|--|-------------|------|
| | | | No. | % |
| 11 | What strategy did you mostly use to process and utilize the teacher's comments to rewrite your version 2? | I asked the teacher for help | 1 | 4.3 |
| | | I read the commented part over and over to understand | 11 | 47.8 |
| | | I used contextual clues | 6 | 26 |
| | | I ignored the words or sentence that contained the comment | 3 | 13 |
| | | I ignored the comment altogether | 2 | 8.7 |
| 12 | What did you do when you went over the teacher's comments and wrote the second version? | A. I only incorporated the teacher's comments | 11 | 47.8 |
| | | B. I revised and expanded adding my own words | 7 | 30.4 |
| | | C. I ignored the teacher's comments | 5 | 21.7 |
| 13 | If your respond to "12" is "C" please give your reason. | I couldn't understand it | 1 | 4.3 |
| | | I understood but didn't know how to improve it | 3 | 13 |
| | | I felt it was already correct | 1 | 4.3 |

As shown above, the strategies the students used in processing the teacher's comments were various. However, a significant number of them (47.8%) noted that they read the commented part of their papers to understand it when the comment seems unclear. The next largest group indicated using contextual clues in their texts to arrive at the desired form or meaning. Four students (though such option was not given) reported using the combination of these two as their sole strategies, and 13% of them ignored or deleted part of the commented text (used avoidance strategy) and two students ignored the teacher's comments and rewrote their second versions as they were. Only one student said he asked the teacher for help. This result suggests that the students have a repertoire of strategies to process or handle teacher's comments.

Analysis of the students' papers also revealed a fairly similar result here. It was found out that 6.6% of the students didn't incorporate the teacher's feedback on the different aspects of composition and the questionnaire result showed that 8.7% of the students did not do this either.

13% of them also reported that they had avoided the sentences, phrases or words that contained the comments. This was especially true for unclear and ungrammatical sentences in which the students were required to rewrite a sentence(s).

When they went over the teacher's comments and re-wrote (Item 12), 47.8% of the students noted that they had only incorporated the teacher's comments without adding their own. However, the result of composition analysis showed that this figure is correspondingly much higher (93.1%) because it includes effective and ineffective revisions. 30.4% of the students also reported revising and expanding their original versions, adding their own words. Similarly here, the essay result showed very few instances of such revisions. According to the students' report, instances of teacher feedback ignored were 21.7% which is again much higher than the actual comments ignored in the composition (6.6%).

The students were also asked why they ignored some of the teacher's comments. Hence, one student out of the five who ignored said he/she didn't understand the comments, three students reported that they understood but didn't know how to improve further. One student indicated that he felt what he did was already correct. This seems to support the argument of Mendonca & Johnson (1994) which says writers do not usually accept others suggestions.

Table 4.9: Students' Perceived Ease and Difficulty during Self-correction

| No. | Item | Response | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|-----|-------|------|
| | | Cont. | | Org. | | Gram. | | Voc. | | Mech. | |
| | | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 14 | Which aspect of the composition did you find the simplest to self-correct? | - | - | 2 | 8.7 | 15 | 69.2 | 2 | 8.7 | 4 | 17.4 |
| 15 | Which aspect did you find the most difficult? | 5 | 21.2 | 11 | 47.8 | 3 | 13 | 3 | 13 | 1 | 4.8 |

With regard to areas of ease and difficulty of self-correction, most of the students (69.2%) found grammatical elements to be the easiest followed by mechanics 17.4%, organization (8.7%), and vocabulary (8.7%). Similarly, 47.8% of the subjects indicated that organization was the most difficult part to self-correct followed by content (21.7%). Three students said 'grammar' and other three reported 'vocabulary' to be the most difficult for them. Only one student indicated

that he found mechanics to be the most difficult for him. However, this goes contrary to the composition result in which vocabulary was the one the students self-corrected the highest percentage of their errors, followed by grammar.

Regarding area of difficulty, however, it runs contrary to their composition results, where content was revealed difficult to self-correct. The result of the interview also supports the result obtained from composition analysis. The instructor pointed out that though the students were not always expected to be successful in the other aspects, content seems to be difficult for them to correct.

Thus, the possible reason for the discrepancy of the students' response and the essay analysis was that they didn't appear to have clearly taken into consideration where they had ease and difficulty on the writing tasks. As a result, what they thought to be simplest turned out to be the most difficult for them to self-correct.

Table 4.10: Response on Teacher's Usual Approach to Error Correction and Students' Preference

| No. | Item | Response | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|----------|----|------------|------|--------|------|-------|-----|
| | | Always | | Some times | | Rarely | | Never | |
| | | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 16 | How often does your teacher let you self-correct your written errors? | - | - | 17 | 73.9 | 4 | 17.4 | 2 | 8.7 |
| 17 | If he/she does, does the teacher give you written feedback on your papers? | - | - | 15 | 71.4 | 5 | 23.8 | 1 | 4.3 |
| 18 | If he/she gives you written feedback, do you give thoughtful attention to it? | 5 | 25 | 13 | 65 | 2 | 10 | - | - |

These questions (Items 16-18) were addressed to students because it is obvious that their exposure or lack of exposure to self-correction can influence their abilities to detect and correct errors. Thus as shown above, more than half (73.9%) reported that they had been exposed 'rarely' and two students noted 'never' at all. Thus we can safely conclude that the students did not get frequent opportunities to look back at their own written errors. This result exactly matches the teacher's oral report. He indicated that he used the combination of self-correction, teacher correction and peer correction, giving more attention to peer correction.

Parallel to this, an important question is whether the teacher gives the students written feedback (using correction symbols) to guide them along the correction process. In line with this, most of the students (71.4%) noted that he sometimes gives them feedback, 23.8% said 'rarely' and one student said 'never'. The instructor also underlined that he sometimes provided the students with written feedback using correction symbols like 'gram' for grammar, 'Sp' for spelling, etc. This may imply that the student were used to self-correction strategy and correction symbols, and thus had some background skills about them.

Moreover, the students indicated that most of them (65%) of those who reported that they were given written feedback noted that they sometimes gave thoughtful attention to it. Five students (25%) responded that the attended 'always', two students 'rarely' to the comments given by the teacher. No student reported 'never'. Thus it seems that the students were keen about written feedback and made genuine attempt to get their erroneous forms and meanings right.

Table 4.11: Students Preferences and Attitude to Error Correction

| No. | Item | Response | Respondent | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|------------|------|
| | | | No. | % |
| 20 | Which of the following approaches to error correction do you prefer most? | Teacher correction | 5 | 21.7 |
| | | Peer correction | 7 | 30.4 |
| | | Self-correction | 9 | 39 |
| | | All of them | 2 | 8.7 |
| | | I don't like all of them | - | - |

As indicated above, the students showed variation in their preference of approaches to written error correction. However, the majority (39%) preferred self-correction; the second largest group (30.4%) were in favor of peer-correction, and 21.7% of them teacher correction and the smallest group preferred "all". Mesfin's (2004) study, however, disclosed that most of the students preferred teacher correction (37.5%). This response confirms the result obtained in Item '9' discussed earlier where the students pointed out that self-correction mainly increased their performance and motivation. Stressing its difficulty of application, in large classes and many teaching loads, the instructor also underlined the motivational value of self-correction.

He furthermore indicated that he usually used peer- correction and sometimes teacher- correction strategies alternating them in written error correction, giving less room for self-correction. He

was also of the opinion that peer correction creates an opportunity where learners learn from one another.

Most of the students also justified their responses in 'Item 20'. The commonest ideas are summarized as:

- Self-correction helped them to reflect on their written composition, motivated them to be critical about the quality of their written composition.
- Peer correction encourages discussion, and collaboration, helps them to learn from each other, etc.

The students also expressed their overall reactions to self-correction strategy (The open ended Item 21) as a method of dealing with written errors.

The students' actual written responses are printed below without modification or improvement.

S1- It is better to increase my performance in all the future of my works.

S2- It is somewhat good but since the idea is strange to me I need some support.

S3- It helps me to increase self-confidence and to develop my knowledge.

S4- It is interesting and makes a critical reader.

S5- Self-correction strategy makes the individual person creative and experimental to remove those errors.

S6- Self-correction is very necessary and it helps me to evaluate myself and to know my mistake in every day of my life.

S7- It is so interesting.

S8- It is the strategy I like most. I will use it for my students just after my graduation.

S9- It is an excellent way of dealing with writing.

S10- I strongly agree with self-correction

Others had different attitudes

S15- Self-correction is only the idea of yourself. So it is better to add other personal comments.

S16- Self-correction strategy may not help us in correcting mistakes. Because I make wrong which seems right for me. So if I am going to correct it by myself, I may repeat that mistake. It is difficult to use.

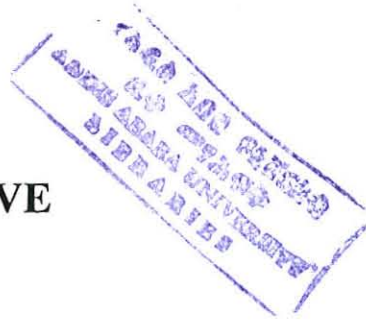
S17- Peer correction is better because your friend can see mistakes you cannot see.

S18- I prefer teacher correction because he is well-experienced and more qualified.

S19- I like all because each approach has its own weakness

The data gathered through students' questionnaire and teacher interview revealed that the subject students in this study had limited exposure to self-correction strategy of a written composition prior to this study. Thus though it may seem difficult to derive reliable conclusion from such data, at least one thing is certain. In addition to the self-correction the students did during this study, they were able to relate this limited exposure to their theoretical concept they had acquired and give sound judgment on this matter.

Therefore, as can be seen from students' quotes most of them seemed to prefer self-correction technique as the best strategy of dealing with written errors. The students also indicated this tendency in various sections of the questionnaire and now reaffirmed it in their free response to the open ended questions. The majority underlined that it is a motivational and educational technique of promoting writer autonomy in EFL writing pedagogy.



CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

This study attempted to investigate the self-correcting ability in written composition of students at university level with particular reference to third year regular degree students of EFL at Wollega University. To this effect, relevant data were gathered through classroom composition writing tasks, student questionnaire and teacher interview. The results are summarized as follows.

The result of the study revealed that the subject students were found to be at a good level self-correcting ability in dealing with their written errors. When feedback was provided to them, they successfully self-corrected more than half (58-9%) of their prefeedback errors noted in their texts.

In addition, it was discovered that the students were most successful in self-correcting their errors of vocabulary and least successful with their content area problems of their compositions. In their response to the questionnaire they also indicated that they need more feedback on their grammatical errors than on other aspects of their compositions. However, this notion goes contrary to the current state of writing pedagogy where content and organization are given priority.

Furthermore, in their response to the questionnaire the students reported to have used various strategies in processing and utilizing the teachers' feedback to write their second versions. They stated that they mostly read their texts over and over until they understood the teacher's intended comment and discovered the correct form of the errors. Some also noted that they used contextual clues around the feedback. The result of the composition analysis also showed that the students only incorporated the teacher's comments in revising their texts as their sole revision strategy instead of adding their own ideas, thus making micro (word) level changes in the revision. They also remarked that they found self correction technique educational and motivational to use it in writing classrooms. However, they further noted that they were exposed to it very rarely and got little opportunity to reflect on their own texts.

5.2 Conclusion

From the results of the study the following conclusions that have pedagogical implications can be drawn.

First, the study uncovered that the provision of written feedback for student writers assisted them to self-correct their composition errors, reduce their overall written errors and improve the quality of their papers. This implies that feedback provision and self-correction are extremely effective means of improving students' writing skills. The approach also forms an essential part of the writing pedagogy. Encouraging learners to self-correct their written errors by identifying the location and types of errors also appears to be an effective means of helping learners to be self-critical writers. This again suggests that minimal teacher intervention (mere feedback provision) can bring about a good result in EFL writing. It can also sensitize learners to their own errors, helping them to develop an objective and evaluative approach to their texts. Hence we can safely conclude that if effective feedback is in operation, learners can successfully correct their own errors and see the improvement they have made.

Besides revealing the students self-correcting abilities the study also disclosed the various strategies they employed to handle the teacher's feedback and revise their texts. This may give the writing teacher an insight into the various strategies learners use in processing and utilizing written feedback to self-correct and rewrite their texts. This in turn may necessitate the need of training effective strategies that would help learners to handle and make use of teacher feedback for successful revision.

The fact that the students in the study least self-corrected their content and organization errors may also imply that the basic and the most important aspects of composition are neglected and thus needs to be worked on. The students seem to lack adequate skills of making, discovering and shaping meanings through writing and rewriting. This also suggests that revision strategies have not received adequate instructional attention in the writing classroom. Zamel (1985) also criticizes EFL teachers for paying excessive attention to grammar problems.

The result of the data obtained through questionnaire also revealed that the students seem to have strong preference and initiation for self-correction. They tend to appreciate and welcome a correction strategy whereby the teacher points out their written errors by locating the nature and place of the errors. In general they appear to value the contribution of discovery approach to

written error correction. However, It is important to point out that the effectiveness of the technique depends on proper practice, training and awareness raising on the part of the learners and teachers.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the findings of this study, the following suggestions can be recommended.

1. In order to help student writers develop self-critical and evaluative approaches to their writing, writing teachers should give learners the opportunity to self-correct their own errors. However, if teachers immediately jump to correction, such valuable opportunities may be lost. This doesn't mean that teachers should always stick to self-correction. They are supposed to fall back on the various approaches such as peer correction, or sometimes teacher correction, giving a considerable scope for self-correction. This choice, however, should depend on the nature of the activity, the existing classroom conditions and other related factors.
2. When teachers make use of self-correction technique, they are also advised to play a supportive role by indicating the place and type of errors using a system of abbreviations or correction symbols and writing them above the erroneous forms or in the margin of students' papers (Doff, 1988; Byrne, 1988, etc). Moreover, written comments teachers use need to be clear, detailed and informative enough in such a way that they can guide the learners, and provide them an inherent reason of the need to correct and revise. This is a basic step in writing as the research to date has revealed that unskilled writers lack strategies for processing and handling teacher feedback.
3. As stated in the literature section of this paper, many teachers tend to focus on lower order concerns of students' composition errors in their feedback provision. However, they are supposed to realize the paradigm shift in writing pedagogy and communicate this clearly to their students and change the attitude. They should inform their students the current status of writing research on writing and the general trend currently in use. To this effect, teachers should assist students by seeking situations in which the students are encouraged to discover and shape meanings through revisions. This could also be effected through explicit teaching of

revision strategies so as to improve the students' writing proficiency and perception about revision. In an effort to improve the overall quality of their students' writing, teachers can also structure their writing classes so that students are given the opportunity to rewrite drafts in a way that will improve the content of their papers (Chenoweth 1987).

4. Teacher trainers and curriculum designers are also recommended to include topics on how trainees can effectively apply the technique in dealing with written errors in writing classes. To this end, self-correction and revision techniques might require some learner and teacher training in order to raise their awareness of the opportunities and challenges of the technique. Students particularly need to be oriented and familiarized with the correction symbols and other necessary procedures in order to fully appreciate the need for and the purpose of self-correction and revision. There is also a need of strategy training so as to help students know what skilled writers do when they revise, or strategies they use in rewriting (Leki; 1995).

5. Student writers on their part are also advised to make unreserved effort to improve their writing skills through making constant and continuous practice in and out of classes on academic and non-academic matters. They should be critical about the quality of their compositions and need to know why and how they get something right or wrong.

6. A great deal of research needs to be conducted to clearly see the effectiveness and applicability of self-correction at various educational levels to substantiate or confirm this study.

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APPENDIX A

Operational Definition of the Terms

Needs rewriting – statements or phrases whose meaning is not clear or obscured because of faulty grammatical or technical arrangements.

NM- grammatical but meaningless, non-sense or irrelevant

Paragraphing- dividing ideas into meaningful units (paragraphs)

Introductory sentence(s) - giving an introduction to an essay to direct the reader.

Connective/linking devices – wrong or missing cohesive devices

Concluding sentence(s) – a closing remark for an essay

Subject –Verb Agreement- the act of coping up of the subject and the verb of a sentence in number or person.

Number- singular or plural usage

Tense – appropriate tense usage

Verb form – the use of the right form of the verb

Fragment-the use of incomplete sentences

Word order- putting words or phrases in their proper order in a sentence

Wrong word – the use of inappropriate word(s) in a certain context

Word omission – the act of missing or excluding a necessary word from a sentence whose absence affects the meaning of the sentence

Strange word – a word which doesn't exist or appear in the dictionary and cannot be guessed

Word form – the different parts of speech used in accordance with the environment position and service

Unnecessary word – the use of extra word that doesn't contribute to the meaning of the entire sentence(s)

Word separation/connection – the separation of a word which is written as one or the connection of two words which are two

APPENDIX B

Key For the Correction Symbols

NRW- Needs Rewriting (rephrase or rewrite it to make the meaning clear)

NM- No Meaning. Elaborate it

Parag- Paragraphing (divide your ideas in to paragraphs)

IS- Give introductory sentences(s)

CD- add a connective device/change it

CS- Give concluding sentence(s) or remarks

SVA- The verb should agree with the subject

N- Singular or plural usage

T- Use the appropriate tense

Vf- Use the appropriate form of the verb

Frag-the sentence is incomplete

WO- put the words in their right order

WW- Replace word(s) by a more appropriate word.

A- There is a missing word(s)

SW- The word doesn't exist

Wf- Use the appropriate part of speech (N, adj, adv, v. etc)

Unw- The word is unnecessary

Ow/tw- Make it one word /them two words

Cap- capitalize it

Sp- Spelling

Pun- Punctuation

APPENDIX C

Descriptors of Language Aspects

Content: elaboration of ideas, clarity of ideas and meaning, ideas related to one main point, relevance of ideas to topic, details to recreated event, dialogue, message, setting, title, and length.

Organization: parts of composition (beginning, middle, end, introduction, body, conclusion), ideas connected chronologically, placement of ideas within parts of composition, logical sequence of events, transition words, paragraphing, overall structure

Grammar: movement from sentence to sentence, well-formedness of sentences, subject-verb agreement, complete sentences, morpho- syntactic fluency, verb tense and word forms (if word is used as noun verb, adv, adj etc) number (plural/singular), gender, word order, negation, 'there' structure.

Vocabulary: variety of diction, avoidance of repetition, appropriateness of diction, effectiveness in expressing meaning, accuracy of word choice using, idiomatic usage.

Mechanics: punctuation, contractions, spelling, capitalization, handwriting, other conventions (use of words for numbers, parentheses, symbols etc), indentation of paragraphs.

Source: Villamil & Guerrero, (1998: 506)



APPENDIX D

Student Questionnaire

Dear Students:

I am conducting research on “**Teacher-initiated Learner Self-correction Strategy of Academic Writing.**” Your genuine response to the questions below will be of much help for the study. I thus kindly request you to answer each question carefully. Your response will be kept confidential. **You don’t need to write your name!**

Directions: Please think of the last composition papers that you were asked to self-correct. The following questions are related to the way you dealt with the teacher’s feedback and the self-correction procedures you followed. Please answer as honestly as you can by putting a tick (✓) in the boxes given to show your agreement.

A. Students’ Reading of Their Commented Papers and Clarity of the Teacher’s Feedback.

| No | Items | All | Most | Some | Little | None |
|----|--|-----|------|------|--------|------|
| 1 | How much of the essay did you read over when you got back your paper to self-correct it? | | | | | |
| 2 | How much of the teacher’s feedback did you give thoughtful attention to? | | | | | |
| 3 | If you attended to the teacher’s feedback, how much of the feedback regarding the following aspects of composition were clear for you? | | | | | |
| | Content (meaning, relevance, etc) | | | | | |
| | Organization (paragraphing, transition markers, etc) | | | | | |
| | Mechanics (Sp, pun, etc) | | | | | |
| | Grammar (Tense, agreement, etc) | | | | | |
| | Vocabulary (Word choice, etc) | | | | | |

B. Students' Reaction to Teacher Feedback and Self-correction Technique

4. How do you react (feel) when attention is drawn to your error?

I am rather confused

I quickly detect my errors

I am irritated

I am indifferent

I feel comfortable to know my mistake Add (if any) _____

5. The teachers' feedback (comments) helped me to reduce my composition error.

I strongly agree I agree I disagree

I strongly disagree I am indifferent

6. What is your reaction to a paper with only comments for self correction as compared to the one with only grade on it?

I like it I don't like it I am indifferent

7. Did you find any comments that emphasized negative points (criticism)?

Yes

No

8. If your response to number "7" is "Yes", what is your reaction to such comments?

I like them I don't like them I am indifferent

9. What do you think you have benefited as a result of the self correction technique?

It increased my performance

It increased my motivation

It did both

I have benefited nothing

Others (if any) _____

10. On which aspect of composition do you need more feedback?

Content Organization Grammar Vocabulary Mechanics

C. Student Feedback Processing and Revising Strategies

11. What strategy did you mostly use to process and utilize the teacher's comments and write the second version?

I asked the teacher for help

I read the commented part over and over to understand it

I used contextual clues i.e. words, or sentences surrounding the comment

I ignored the words or sentences that contained the comment

I ignored the comment altogether

Other strategies (if any) _____

12. Please describe what you did when you went over the teacher's comments and wrote the second version (revision).

A. I only incorporated the teacher's comments

B. I revised and expanded the original version adding my own words

C. I didn't incorporate the teacher's suggestions.

D. Others _____

13. If you to response to "12" is "C", please give your reason.

I couldn't understand it I understood but I didn't know how to improve it

I felt that it was already correct and I didn't want to do anything more

Others _____

D. Students' Perceived Ease and Difficulty during Self-Correction

14. Which aspect of the composition did you find simplest for you to self-correct your composition?

Content Organization Grammar Vocabulary Mechanics

15. Which aspect of the composition did you find the most difficult?

Content Organization Grammar Vocabulary Mechanics

E. Questions on the Teacher's Usual Approach to written Error Correction and Students' Preferences and Attitudes

| No | Items | Always | Sometimes | rarely | Never |
|----|---|--------|-----------|--------|-------|
| 16 | How often does your teacher let you self correct your written errors? | | | | |
| 17 | If s/he does, does the teachers give you written feedback on your paper? | | | | |
| 18 | If s/he gives you written feedback, do you give thoughtful attention to it? | | | | |

19. If you response to "18" is "Never", please indicate your reason _____

20. Which of the following approaches to error correction do you prefer?

Teacher correction self correction peer correction

All of them I don't like all of them

Why? _____

21. What is your overall reaction to self correction strategy?

APPENDIX E

Teacher Interview

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to you for your cooperation in giving me reliable first hand information. As you know, postgraduate candidates need to conduct research for their in partial fulfillment of M.A degree. As a result, I am conducting a study to see the self-correcting ability of students of EFL taking the course Advanced Composition II. Regarding this, I have some questions for you. Ok, if we may begin:

1. When you treat your students' composition errors, what correction techniques do you usually use? In other words, do you give them the correct forms straightway yourself, use peer correction, self-correction, or some combination of these?
2. Which one do you think is the most helpful method? Why?
3. Which one do you think is the most difficult to apply? Why?
4. How often do you give the students the chance to correct their own errors?
5. If you employ self-correction strategy, do you provide the students with a written feedback which would give them visual clues as how to self correct like correction symbols or codes, or simply you make them search and correct?
6. How do the students handle your written feedback? Do you think they understand it. self correct and improve their texts?
7. When you make use of self-correction strategy, which aspect of composition (e.g content organization, grammar etc) do you focus on in giving feedback? In which aspects do you think the students are more successful and in which not?
8. What do you think is their general attitude to self-correction technique?



APPENDIX F
SAMPLE STUDENTS' COMPOSITION PAPERS

Qualities Of A good teacher

A good teacher or an effective teacher is a teacher who, concerned about his students' emotional and social welfare, a teacher's most direct obligation is to ensure that students leave their class with greater knowledge, understanding and appreciation of specific subjects and other people than when they entered. While all teachers make some difference in their students' lives. Some teachers consistently have greater and more positive influence than others. They seem to relate to students better and to be more successful in producing genuine learning among their students. We would almost certainly call these teachers effective.

Based on the above facts, a good teacher has the following qualities:

- Enthusiastic
- warm and humorous
- credible
- flexible
- knowledgeable.

N.B: These list of words and phrases (as a good qualities of a good teacher) are not the only criteria rather they are the major ones. So there are a no. of qualities that the teacher forms by his/her self even in the classroom or outside the classroom.

Advantages of Learning English as a Foreign Language

English is ^{SP}taught as a foreign language in the whole world, except the native speakers who are taking it as a first language. Our Country, Ethiopia, is also one of these countries. In this era of globalization, it is well known that English is a common language in many countries of the world. So having a good knowledge of English makes a ^{SP}full ^{NM}person in, especially, in employment issues. English is a primary focus to be employed in either governmental or non-governmental sectors. Even if English is given as one ^{SP}subject ^{NM}in Ethiopia at elementary level, it is totally the ^{SP}target ^{NM}language in higher institutions starting from high school.

So learning English as a foreign language has many advantages. For example, like, ^{SP}to interact ^{NM}with foreigners, ^{SP}to be ^{NM}successful in academic context, ^{SP}to be ^{NM}employed in institutions, ^{SP}to know ^{NM}the culture and values of foreign territories and the likes.



Qualities of a good teacher

A good teacher or an effective teacher is a teacher who concerned about his students' emotional and social welfare. A teacher's most direct obligation is to ensure that students leave their class with greater knowledge, understanding and appreciation of specific subjects and other people than when they entered. While all teachers make some difference in their students' lives. Some teachers consistently have greater and more positive ^{FRAG} influence than others. They seem to relate to students better and to be more successful in producing genuine learning among their students. We would almost certainly call these teachers effective.

Based on the above facts, a good teacher has the following qualities:

- Enthusiastic
- warm and humorous
- credible
- flexible
- know^{OW} ledgable.

N.B: These list of words and phrases as ^{good} qualities of a good teacher, are not the only ^{SW} criteria whether they are the major ones. So there are a no. of qualities that the teacher ^{WHO} forms by his/her self even in the class^{room} or out side the class^{room}.

E2V2

Advantages Of Learning English as a Foreign Language

English is ^{SP}tought as a foreign language in the whole world, except the native speakers who are taking it as a first language. Our Country, Ethiopia, is also One of these Countries.

In this era of globalization, it is well known that English is a common language in many countries of the world. So having a good knowledge of English makes a full person, especially, in employment issues.

English is a primary focus to be employed in either governmental or non-governmental sectors. Even if English is given as one subject in Ethiopia at elementary level, it is totally the media of instruction in higher institutions starting from high school.

So learning English as a foreign language has many advantages: to interact with foreigners, to be successful in academic context, to be employed in institutions, to know the culture and values of foreign territories, and the likes.

Sincerely yours,

Signature

Sp. 1

Qualities of a Good Teacher

A good teacher or an effective teacher who is concerned about his students' emotional and social welfare, a good teacher's most direct obligation is to ensure that students leave their class with greater knowledge, understanding and appreciation of specific subjects and other people than when they entered.

Some teachers consistently have greater and more positive influence than others. They seem to relate to students better and to be more successful in producing genuine learning among their students. We would almost certainly call these teachers effective.

Based on the above facts, a good teacher has the following qualities:

- Enthusiastic
- Warm and humorous
- Credible
- flexible
- knowledgeable

N.B: This list of words and phrases as qualities of a good teacher, ^{part} are not the only characteristics, rather they are the major ones. So there are a number of qualities that the teacher develops by his/herself ^{own} even in the classroom or outside the classroom.

Qualities of a good Teacher

IS IS
A good Teacher is ^{cap} Honest for his people, students and ^{cap} socials. He ^{cap} plan his work and ^{cap} work on his plan. He encourages the students in order to learn new things. ^{cap} also a good teacher is punctual.

① A good Teacher ^{cap} treat all students equally. He acts as a father of them by ^{cap} advising, ^{cap} teaching and ^{cap} look after by giving ^{cap} max ^{cap} assignment. He ^{cap} respect all of them as they ^{cap} respect him.

② A good Teacher ^{cap} do not ^{cap} show bad things inside & outside the compound such as ^{cap} drinking alcohol, ^{cap} smoking, ^{cap} unwanted ^{cap} teckling and so on. Rather he ^{cap} prefer to ^{cap} respect his time. ^{cap} also he is free from ^{cap} harmful ^{cap} habits. he ^{cap} do on his time ^{cap} orderly.
A good Teacher is acceptable before his social.

Advantages of learning English as a foreign language

We get many advantages by learning English. Some of them are described as follows.

One of the advantages of learning English is to communicate with international socialists. English is dominated over a world. Most of the material we use is are came from abroad and also named by English. Since we know English by learning we can simply use it. If we take computer as example, all of its programs are by English so we can easily use and understand.

Another advantage of learning English is to communicate and understand with foreign people/countries. If we know English languages, as well we can develop relationship with other people and share common culture.

The most advantages of learning English as a foreign language is to participate in modern technology and to be familiar with modern world.

Qualities of a Good Teacher.

IS

A good teacher is honest for his people, students and society. He always ^{SVA} plan his work and ^{SVA & WW} stick on his plan. He encourages the students in order, learn new things. A good Teacher is also punctual.

Also ^{WW} a good Teacher treats all students equally. He acts as a father of them by advising, teaching and looks after them by giving make ups, assignments. He respects all of them as they respect him.

Also a good Teacher does not show unwanted things ^{WW} inside and outside of the compound such as drinking ^{SP} alcohol, smoking, unwanted actions and so on.

Rather want to respect his time. ~~AND~~ He is also free from harmful habits. He does ^{things} errand ^{and} on time. ^{TRAF} Such as teaching. A good Teacher is acceptable before his society.

Finally a good Teacher is characterized by the above mentioned Qualities, such as punctual, ^{WW} honest, treat all students equally and so on.

Advantages of Learning English as Foreign Languages.

We get many advantages by learning English. Some of them are described as follows.

One of the advantages of learning English is to communicate with international ^{countries}. English is common ^{over} ^{the} world. Most of the materials we use come from abroad and also named in English. Since we know English by learning we can simply use it. If we take computers as materials ^{that} come from abroad, all of its programs are in English. So, we ^{can} ^{very} easily use and understand all of its contents.

Another advantage of learning English is to communicate with and understand foreign people/countries. If we know English language, we can develop relations with other people and share common culture.

Also the most advantage of learning English as foreign language is to ^{take} ^{part} in modern technology and to be ⁱⁿ ^{touch} with modern world.

Finally, learning English as foreign language is necessary for all of us.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Getachew Teshome

Signature: Getachew Teshome

Place: ILS

Addis Ababa University

Date of Submission: 5 June 2009

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as ~~the~~
an university advisor.

Name: Seime Kebede (Dr.)

Signature: Seime Kebede

Date: June 5/09