YAZILI ANLATIM DERSLERİNDE ÖĞRETMENİN VERDİĞİ YAZILI DÖNÜTLER VE ÖĞRENCİNİN 2. TASLAK ÇALIŞMASINA ETKİLERİ

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EFL TEACHER'S WRITTEN FEEDBACK AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE 2ND DRAFTS OF THE STUDENTS

Neval AKSOYLU KOZANLIOĞLU

(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)

Eskişehir, 1999

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<u>YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ÖZÜ</u>

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Bu çalışma yazılı anlatım derslerinde öğretmenin verdiği yazılı dönütün özellikleri ve öğrencinin yazdığı 2. taslak çalışmada neden olduğu değişimleri araştırmaktadır. Son zamanlarda yazma becerisinin kazandırılmasında izlenilen yöntemler değişiklik göstermektedir. Uzun bir süredir yazma öğretiminde önemle üzerinde durulan "sürece odaklı yazma" (process writing) yaklaşımı öğrenciye verilen dönütü (feedback) önemli kılar. Çünkü sürece odaklı yazılı anlatımda öğrencinin yazdığı taslak çalışmalar ve bu taslak çalışmaların öğretmen tarafından yapıcı bir şekilde değerlendirilmesi dönüt ile sağlanır. Bu değerlendirmeler öğrenciyi bir sonraki taslak çalışmada yapması gereken değişiklikler için yönlendiren dönütlerdir. Öğrencilerin bu yazılı dönütleri dikkate almaları için bu dönütlerin bazı özellikler içermesi gerektiği bilimsel araştırmalar sonunda gösterilmiştir. Bu bulgular ışığında Türkiye'de yabancı dil ortamında öğretmenlerin ne kadar başarılı ve etkili dönüt verdiği betimleyici çalışmalarla öğrencilerin görüşleri baz alınarak araştırılmıştır. Bu çalışmaların çoğu öğrencilerin, öğretmenin kullandığı yazılı dönütlerin etkileri hakkında fikirlerinin belirlenmesi yöntemi ile, pek azı ise öğrencilere ait gerçek taslak çalışmalara dayandırılarak sonuçlandırılmıştır.

Bu çalışma öğrencilerden toplanan gerçek veriler üzerinde öğretmenin yazılı dönütünün etkilerini incelemek amacıyla Anadolu Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi İngiliz Dili Programında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmaya 75 öğrenci arasından rastlantısal olarak

seçilen 21· birinci sınıf öğrencisi katılmıştır. Öğrencilerin deney ortamının sebeb olabileceği etki altında kalmamaları için çalışma normal ders programı akışında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Öğrencilerden çeşitli konularda bir giriş paragrafı yazmaları istenmiş, daha sonra gerekli yazılı dönüt verilmiştir.

Çalışmanın sonucuna göre, öğretmenin 1. taslak çalışma üzerinde yaptığı yazılı dönütler arasında türe bağlı nicel farklılıklar görülmüştür. "Soru sorma" şeklinde yapılan yazılı dönütler ve "dilbilgisi " ile ilgili olan dönütler diğer tür yazılı dönütlerle karşılaştırıldığında nicel çoğunluğu oluşturmaktadır.

Ayrıca yazılı dönütlerin büyük bir çoğunluğunu "kısa yazılı dönütler"in oluşturduğu görülmüştür. Öğrenci tarafından yeniden yazılan 2. taslak çalışmalarda öğretmenin yazılı dönütünün etkili olduğu görülmüştür. Bu etki daha çok "soru sorma" biçiminde ve "dilbilgisi" ile ilgili olan kısa yazılı dönütlerde yoğunlaşmıştır.

Öte yandan öğretmen tarafından verilen yazılı dönütlerin oluşturduğu, yazılı metin ile ilgili olan dönütlerin azlığı dikkati çekmiştir. 2. taslak çalışmalarda ise, metin ile ilgili verilmiş yazılı dönütlerin %100 lük bir değişime sebep olduğu görülmüştür.

Sonuç olarak denilebilir ki, yazılı anlatım derslerinde öğretmen yazılı dönütün geri bildirim sağlama açısından büyük önemi vardır. Öğrencilerin bazı yazılı dönüt türlerini daha çok dikkate aldıkları, 2. taslak çalışmaların incelenmesiyle anlaşılmıştır.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the changes caused by teacher written comments on the 2nd drafts and the characteristics of the teachers written commentary in writing. Approaches to teach writing skills have been shifting. Process writing which has been dominant for a long time, makes the feedback given to the student important; because, feedback provides teachers productive responds to the students drafts. These responds are the comments which lead the student to the necessary changings in the next draft. Studies show that these comments should have some characteristics in order to be concerned by the students. In Turkey, some descriptive studies have been done by the researchers to investigate the characteristics and effects of the teachers feedback. These studies based on the questionnaires and students thoughts about teacher's commentary. This study aims at investigating the effects and characteristics of teachers written comments on students writing, collected as real data.

This study was conducted at Anadolu University Education Faculty English Language Teaching program. 21 subjects who randomly selected out of 75 students participated in the study. To avoid the artificial circumstances due to the experimental environment, students participatec the study in their normal class procedure. Students were told to write an introductory paragraph on various topics, and then these paragraphs were responded and commented by the class teacher.

The results of the study shows differences of frequencies in the types of comments used in the 1st drafts. Vast majority of the comments over other types are "ask for information" and "grammar-mechanics" types of comments. Additionally, it was seen that short comments were the majority of the others in length. The effect of teachers commentary was seen on the second drafts of the writings. This effect was provided by the "ask for information" and "grammar-mechanics" types, mostly.

On the other hand, it was seen that the written comments were generic comments in vast majority and the use of text-specific comments was rare. On the 2nd drafts, these text-specific comments lead to a certain change in the revisions.

In conclusion, this can be said, written commentary of the teacher has a great importance to provide feedback in writing classes. It is understood that, students give importance to some types of written comments over others due to the characteristics.

JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAYI

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Problem

Writing skill in old days, mainly consisted of product-based activities, that is the activities that concentrated on mechanical exercises which are thought to promote mental gymnastics (Brown, 1994). The audio-lingual method was the dominant mode of instruction in those days, and speaking skill was primarily taught and writing served a subservient role; to reinforce oral patterns of the language. So writing took the form of sentence drills-fill-ins, substitutions, transformation and completions. But something was missing, as Zamel (1980) states, "the enormous complexity of writing.".

In the early 1970's, writing moved forward from sentence level mechanic-grammar activities to passages of connected discourse. Controlled composition tasks provided the text and ask the students to manipulate linguistic forms within the text. However students who are used to concentrate on grammatical transformation in writing class couldn't concentrate on the context. As Widdowson (1978, p.116) indicates in those days while they were occupied with such tasks, students "need pay no attention whatever to what the sentence mean or the manner in which they relate to each other." That is, students concentration was on the sentence level activities. These activities were emphasizing grammar and mechanics for that reason they couldn't consider writing as an organization of ideas. There was no aim at considering writing as a whole, so students couldn't concentrate on writing; that is the organization of the ideas.

Besides, it was not only grammatical form that was emphasized as Raimes (1991) states but concern for rhetorical form was also influenced. As Kaplan introduced the concept of contrastive rhetoric (Kaplan, 1987) different cultures are said to have

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different rhetoric organizations. For example "thought pattern" of English was found to be dominantly linear in its development in contrast to the paragraph patterns at other languages and cultures. So the compensatory exercises which often stress imitation of paragraph, completion, identification of topic and support and scrambled paragraphs to reorder are applied (Kaplan & Shaw, 1983; Reid & Lindstorm, 1985 in Raimes 1991). Though writing activities concentrated on the text instead of a sentence still the product was important. These product-based activities of writing ignored the very important element of the writing skill, the writer, and what writers actually do as they write. They only concentrated on the outcome rather than the process. However process itself seemed to have more importance.

By the influence of writing research on composing process (Emig, 1971; Zamel, 1976) "the writer" is been focused rather than the written text (Raimes, 1991). Teachers and researchers have reacted against the product-based approach and directed the attention to the writer as language learner and the creator of the text. As a result of this, change in the focus led to a new view called "process approach". So shift has been observed from a product based approach to process based one (Keh, 1990).

New concerns such as "process", "making meaning", "invention" and "multiple drafts" replaced the old ones like "accuracy" and "pattern" (Raimes, 1991). Writing teachers began to allow their students time and give them opportunity for selecting topics, generating ideas, writing drafts and making revisions. This process given to the student writers is provided with feedback.

The traditional product-based approach has emphasized the finished product and the teacher's role was the evaluation of this end product which came up after a single writing. But process of writing involves working with students throughout the stages of the writing process.

The writing process involves a series of stages that writers move through as they write. Such authorities in the field of composition as James Britton (1978), Janet Emig

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(1971), Donald Graves (1983) and Donald Murray (1984) list these stages in five categories as follows.

a) Prewriting: We can call this stage "the getting ready-to-write stage". Prewriting provides background for writing. Students choose their own topics based on their own experiences so they can easily start writing on something they know about.

b) Drafting: Students focus on getting their ideas down on paper in this stage, with little concern about spelling, punctuation and other mechanical errors. During this stage teachers provide support, encouragement and feedback for ideas and problems on students' writing.

c) Revising: With the guidance of feedback students refine their ideas, reorganize their writing and give it back to the reader, the teacher, in this stage teacher focuses on content and the organization of ideas.

d) Editing: In this stage focus changes from content to form and the feedback leads the students to rearranging words and correcting spelling, punctuation and other mechanical errors.

e) Sharing: At last students reach the final product, and they share their finished writing with an audience.

As process oriented pedagogy permits writing teachers have encouraged their students to write multiple drafts. Thus feedback gained great importance. The nature and function of feedback becomes an important issue to develop an awareness of process writing. So that learners and teachers can gain and perform most out of the writing process as Dheram (1995) suggests. The students' reactions to comments and persuasion to act on the feedback provided by the teacher is necessary. Without the involvement of the students feedback would be useless, because students interaction with the teacher gives feedback an effective role in the writing process. In order to provide this effectiveness on students revisions, teachers' comments should offer some qualifications, such as, being informative, clear, to the point, longer and comprehensible comments. Teachers comments should offer useful information. This information would help students avoid doing similar errors in the future studies, as Hyland (1990) suggests.

Students can learn from their mistakes. Teachers' adopting feedback methods is the heart of this problem. If the teacher adopts the most proper feedback method to the case, encourages the students to revise their writings.

As Ferris (1997) suggests, most experienced writing instructors know that responding to student writing could be the most frustrating, difficult and time consuming part of the job. Period of responding to writing show resemblance to the nature of a schizophrenia. That is, teachers role changes from time to time when responding to papers of students. At a time he/she becomes a helpful facilitator, hovering next to the writer to lend guidance, and support, and then the authority, passing critical judgement on the writer's work. Elbow (1981) agrees with the idea of changing roles of the teacher. He makes the same distinction of changing mode of the teacher when responding to the students writing. At the moment teacher becomes the intellectual peer, giving "reader-based" feedback, and at the next, the teacher shows up as the imposer of criteria, the gatekeeper of textual standards. The collapse of these two roles puts the teacher into chaos, in which the teacher has to decide whether to give productive, encouraging comments to the student for improvement or judge the writing within the critical rules. In other words, teacher may choose either to see the student at the starting line of a long way of drafting and learning the way through the comments of the teacher, or, to see the very first writing of the student as the final one to critisize as the end product.

Investigations have revealed that teachers respond to most writing as if it were a final product to evaluate and base their evaluations on preconceived and fixed notions about good writing (Gere & Stevens, 1985; Sommer, 1982). Their comments often reflect the application of a single ideal standard rather than criteria that take in to account how composing constraints can affect writing performance.

Furthermore, teachers' marks and comments usually take the form of abstract and vague prescriptions and directives that students find difficult to interpret (Zamel, 1985). Students may either respond or ignore the comments altogether, due to the

misinterpretations of the comments, and this ignorance would be the most dreadful part of the job for the teacher.

Studies about ESL students' problems with teachers' feedback and strategies for dealing with these problems have suggested that L2 students may struggle with responding to teachers' written comments. This could be on the basis of understanding their teachers' symbols and terminology, and even with the teacher's hand writing (Cohen, 1987; Ferris, 1995b; Leki, 1990). They may also result from a mismatch of cultural expectations. A student, for instance, may misinterpret a teacher's praise or questions as a sign of incompetence, as abdications of authority (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Patthey - Chanves & Ferris, 1997) or as indications that there is nothing wrong with the paper, (since the teacher has not said directly what the students should fix.).

Since feedback is an important part of writing courses the teachers should be guided to give effective feedback. However the data on the effects of feedback seems not to be satisfactory due to the scarcity of the studies in the area of feedback in the writing pedagogy.

In literature systematic studies of teacher response have been quite rare. L2 research on revised forms of students papers has been rare too and is found primarily in doctoral dissertations rather than in published articles or books. As Ferris (1997) states, most studies have focused on the types of revisions made by students (Belcer, 1989, Chandrasegeran, 1986; Chenowenth, 1987; Gaskill, 1987; Hall, 1987, 1990; Tagong, 1992) or on pedagogical techniques (such as reformulation or topical structure analysis) for helping students to revise (Allwright, 1988; Cerniglia, Medsker & Connor, 1990; Cohen, 1983, 1990; Connor & Farmer, 1990; John, 1986a, 1996b). Some L2 studies of feedback and revision have examined differences in students' ability to process feedback and revise successfully (Barnes, 1984; Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1987). the effect of teacher versus paper feedback (Chaudron, 1983, 1984; Connor & Asenavage. 1994; Hedgcock & Lefkovitz, 1992), and the impact of content versus form-based feedback (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Kepner, 1991; Russkof & Kogan, 1996).

In Turkey, the studies on the teachers' feedback in writing, can be seen in a few unpublished M.A. thesis or doctoral dissertation on the topic. Most of the studies held on the teachers feedback in writing seem to be descriptive within the feedback framework, such as studies focused on the students' reactions to teachers' written feedback on their compositions and also to explore how learners actually use written feedback when revising their compositions (Uzel, F. 1995; Bilge, B, 1993; Sağlam, G., 1993). Questionnaires and interviews with the students are used by the researchers to reach to the conclusion. Studies conclude as, the most preferred teacher's feedback style is both written comments and oral feedback as student-teacher conferences (as suggested also by Hedgock and Lefkowitz, 1994) and clear, detailed comments are found to be most helpful to the student writers (as suggested also by Zamel, 1985 and Cohen, 1987).

An other study (Gök, Ş., 1991) provides us that EFL teachers are interested more in the form than the content of the students writings, thus students who follow the teacher's instructions consequently will revise more form-based errors than context or organization.

All the above studies except Gök's (1991) provide descriptive conclusions, based on the questionnaires, interviews with students, askings for students opinions. The conclusions are based on the students responses to the questionnaires and interviews. Students may think that they could prefer some kinds of feedback over others, such as written comments and oral conferences with student to teacher are chosen to be the most prefered ones, when answering to a questionnarie. But in reality he/she may ignore or such a feedback could have unexpected effect on his second draft. He/she would not take it into consideration while writing his second draft, or he/she may make negative changings on the second draft. As one of the M.A theses on "Descriptive study of 1st year university students' reactions to teachers written feedback". by Uzel (1995) concludes, "However their (students') real revisions were not seen. What people say and what they actually do are different. So, students reports might not have reflected the reality.", it is better to work with real data. That is, students written drafts with the effects of the teachers commentary.

So, this study aimed at providing some more information on the teacher feedback and its effects. What do teachers do when they report to students writing and what they get in turn; that is what do students do against the commentary, written on their drafts.

1.2. Aim and Scope of Study

In this study, the effects of teacher comments on the students' revisions of first drafts will be examined. The aim of the study is to investigate the characteristics of the teachers commentary and its influence on the students revisions.

By investigating the characteristics of teacher feedback which effect students revision, it is aimed to contribute to a problematic area of teaching writing; "teacher response and its effects" the area in which literature review token show the scarcity of L2 and FL research on. Our aim is to reveal whether revisions influenced by teacher feedback lead to changes in students revised papers. Responding techniques and feedback could be adapted in various ways in writing process. Thus writing teachers could improve their responding techniques, to provide effective feedback to their students.

Considering the feasibility this study has some limitations within itself. In this study only the written commentaries of writing teachers are focused, therefore other types and sources of feedback are not adopted throughout the study. Written comments include marginal comments which are signed between margins and end comments which are usually statements about the whole paragraph, directing the writer to the improved paragraph. Only changes between drafts (that is 1st and 2nd) are considered, and compared by means of analytic scales of study.

1.3. Research Questions

After a frustrating, difficult and time consuming job as responding to students writing in return what do the writing teacher get in the revised papers?

In this respect a question arises; what happens between the two drafts? Students get 1st drafts with comments written on, do the students always respond to the comments as expected by the teacher? Do written comments have effect on students revisions or do students ignore or avoid teachers commentary on their revised papers? What types of comments can be considered as the most responded types of comments by students?

Therefore this study tries to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of teachers written comments?
2. Which of these characteristics cause a change on students revisions?

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

This study aims at investigating the characteristics of Turkish EFL writing teacher's written comments and the comments that cause change on revisions. For this purpose, this chapter aims at giving a brief information on the change in teaching writing and on the recent approach that is process writing. Besides, the research concerning the "feedback" in "process writing" will be reviewed.

2.1. Teaching Writing Skills

Writing is a basic communication skill and a unique asset in the process of learning a second language (Chastain, 1988-224). Writing helps when the other person is not right there in front of you, listening to your words and looking at your gestures and facial expressions. According to Raimes (1983) there is an additional and very important reason why we include writing as a part of foreign language syllabus; that is writing helps students learn. Such an important skill was viewed as an subsidiary exercises which promote grammar practice. Teachers support that writing could be possible only when students have sufficient control of writing system and the grammar to make themselves understood. These were the ideas of the teachers influenced by product-based writing approach.They mainly concentrated on sentence level grammar exercises which were mechanical. They haven't provided any kind of real writing experience for the students. General attempt to writing of the students was to consider the students writing pace as the final work, which has to be corrected by the teacher. But question arose as, how can a teacher improve the writing performance of the student by evaluating only one draft and closing the doors of development at the very beginning without providing the student guidance for more?

Since the early 70s, foreign language teachers have been considering questions alike, considering the writer, who has been ignored for a long time. How a writer writes has been considered more than what has been written. Attention is shifted to the writer and the writing process. Researchers (Zamel, 1982; Raimes, 1991; Leki, 1991; Ferris, 1997) support that process based writing involves a continuous attempt to discover what it is that one wants to say, and this, that is, the composing process, takes time and needs to give encouragement.

Composing process can be defined as the continuous effort to produce the desired outcome at the end. This effort contains writing drafts, again and again and improving them with the teachers feedback. Each time student writes a draft. teacher gives the feedback for more developed revisions. This can only be achieved through a shift of attention both for the teachers and the students to the writing process itself from the product of writing. No one should expect a student to produce perfect paper at the very first time (Chastain, 1988).

Reaching this goal, that is the desired outcome in writing, requires series of stages that writers move through as they compose. Through these stages student writers would organize their ideas and discuss them with their readers, classmates. teachers, so they can broden their views on the subject, they would write their drafts and get feedback from their teacher to improve their weaknesses, see their mistakes; at the end they could write their final drafts and share it with their readers. These stages have been defined by the authorities in the field of composition (James Britton, 1978; Janet Emig, 1971; Donald Grave, 1983, and Donald Murray, 1984). The names given to the stages vary, but they generally fall into five categories; a) prewriting, b) drafting. c) revising, d) editing, and e)sharing (see Chapter I).

On the other hand, Keh (1990, 294) describes these stages of process as multiple drafts process which consists of generating ideas related to prewriting, writing the first draft with an emphasis on content, second and third drafts to revise ideas and

communication of those ideas. Finally, through the feedback guidance in each draft, student edits the final form of writing and shares it with the readers.

Guidance of feedback (mostly the teachers, but the teacher is not the only source of feedback) motivates the writer to the end product. So feedback is as crucial as the wind beneath the wings of bird to fly, in the process of writing.

2.2. Importance of feedback during writing process

What is feedback? How can we define feedback in writing? Keh (1990-294) describes feedback as fundamental element of a process approach to writing. It is an input from a reader to writer with the effect of providing information for revision. This information is given to the writer through some techniques such as; peer response groups, teacher - student conferences, audiotaped commentary, computer based commentary (on students' diskettes or via e-mails).

Conferences and writing comments are two of the most frequently used forms of feedback given to the student writers. Conferences are the oral forms of feedback that provide an interaction between the teacher and the student so as to encourage students to self-evaluate to make decisions and to take control of what he/she writes by making use of the teachers' comments (Keh, 1990; Newkirk, 1989; Feris, 1997).

Since the concern of the study is to investigate written comments which change the students revisions, the classifications of written comments within the literature will be elaborated. Researchers have some classifications of written comments given by the teacher. As one of these, Keh (1990:301) makes this classification in terms of structure, considering the length of the comment.

- one-word comments; that is comments which are limited to one word to direct to student writer.
- phrasal comments; in which phrases used to help to students revise their on the next drafts.

- sentence-level comments; when considering the one-word and phrasal comments, this type of comments clarifies easily the teachers feedback.
- paragraph comments; quite long comments in length. Mostly seen as end comments because the space considerations on the paper. Teachers feedback can be clearly understood by the student writers.
- questions as comments; sometimes teachers ask questions to provide information from the student about the text or to point the problematic grammar-mechanics to be revised.

On the other hand, Ferris (1997-321) elaborates the characteristics of written comments in terms of content and lists the classification of written comment types as follows. This classification seems to be more specific in terms of content.

- Ask for information/question; that is the comment requires more information about the students writing. This request comes with a question form. For example: "Did you work out this problem with your roommates?"
- Make a request/questions; that is teacher asks for more detail, but the questioning is in a soft manner, requests are important types of comment because they ask questions about the text in kind manners, which promote students interest and motivation. For example, "Can you provide a thesis statement here?"
- Make a request/statement; in some comment statements, a request in the statement form can be used to ask for something new. For example, "This paragraph might be better earlier in the essay."
- Make a request/imperative; teacher directly tells what he/she thinks should be done with the writing in the comment, in an order -like manner. For example, "Mention Zinsser says about parental pressure."
- Give information/question: As described by Ferris (1997) comments that provides information to the students take one of two form: a) giving student writers feedback about how the reader (teachers) perceives their ideas or organisation, or b) providing information about another author's text that student writer may have overlooked or misunderstood. For example. "Most states do

allow a waiting periods before an adaption is final. - Do you feel that such laws are wrong?"

- Give information/statements; only a student can be used to give information to the student writers related to the writing. For example, "Iowa law favors parental rights. Michigan and California consider the best interests of the children." This form is the informative statement that will complete the information on students' writing.

- Make a positive comment/statements or exclamation; comments which encourages the writer positively show the pleasure of the teacher. For example, "A very nice start to your essay! You've done an impressive job of finding facts and quotes to support your arguments."

- Make a grammar comment/mechanics comment question, statement or imperative; any structural kind of comment which focuses on the grammar or mechanics of the writing. For example, "Past tense here?" "Your verb tenses are confusing me in this paragraph." "Don't forget to spell check!"

Studies which not only deal with the characteristics of comments but also their influence on the revisions are rare. Literature provides us that, there has been so little examination or systematic description of teacher commentary particularly in L2 writing. As Ferris (1997-157) states, further research on teacher response has often failed to take into account the overall pedagogical context of the written feedback. The writing classroom itself and the relationship between teacher and students. How does feedback help students progress in the writing process? How can teachers of writing use feedback most effectively to provide more developed revisions from student writers? What types of feedback are the most preferred and the most effective ones for the students, and how does feedback help writing teachers, teach writing to students writers? A recently published comprehensive bibliography of work on second language writing as Tannacito (1995) lists in Ferris (199-157) only 111 entries on the topic of "Feedback" or "Responses" of those 95 deal wholly or partially with teacher response.

Cummings (1983) provides insights into how ESL teachers respond to student writing. This study suggests that error identification -the practice of searching for and

calling attention to error - was the most widely used technique. However, Cummings didn't use the real student papers but a paper he himself developed. The teachers gave feedback to the papers he wrote. So the actual reactions and comment about authentic text in real instructional settings couldn't be determined. The study only search for the teachers respond but the reaction of the students to the feedback is equally important to investigate.

The handful number of accessible studies show that, there is still no consensus, however on how teachers can best react to students' errors and at what stage in composing process such feedback should be given (Robb, Ross and Shortreed, 1986-83). This is also the same with the types of teacher responses to the students writing. What teachers do when they respond to student writing? As Zamel (1986-84) cites, current research tells us very little about ESL teachers' responses to the student writing. That is known that teachers imprecisely and inconsistently respond to errors (Hendricson, in Zamel, 1986-84). Experimental studies have been undertaken to determine whether certain correction strategies seem to be more effective than others (Cardelle and Corno, 1981; Chaudron, 1983; Cohen, 1983; Robb, Ross and Shortreed, 1984 in Zamel 1986-84).

There should be a direct link between what teachers do as they respond to the students' writings and how do the students react to these responses. That is the effect of feedback treatments on the drafts of student writers is a result of how does the teacher uses feedback.

What do the students get out of written comments as feedback? According to the results of the study of Hedgock and Lefkowitz (1994), the most preferred teacher feedback style is both written and oral comments, as student choses. Clear and detailed comments are also chosen to be the most helpful characteristics of written comments (Zamel, 1985; Cohen, 1987). When comments remain implicit, whether at the conceptual, structural or sentential level, these comments are often misunderstood, misinterpreted and therefore unhelpful to students in their effort to rethink problems being addressed on their writings (Ziv, 1984).

In order to avoid these misinterpretations Ferris (1997) suggests that using longer comments in length would improve the revisions. Since the teacher could explain the problematic points clearly with the longer comments as to students can comprehend the comments and revise their writings in the light of teacher commentary. Ferris (1997) also argues that text-specific comments, that is comments directly related to the one specific paper and directs the writer of that paper. These kinds of comments can not be written on any other paper because it mostly concerns the content or mechanics of that unique paper. Text-specific comments lead learners to make more positive changes in their revision than general comments do. She recommends writing teachers should adopt more text-specific comments then general comments which can be seen in any paper.

Characteristics of an effective written comment are driven from the studies, but students' reaction to apply these comments on their next drafts can not be clearly defined. Ferris (1997) makes a generalisation on the relationship of teacher' comments and student' revision as two conflicting but coexisting truths; that students pay great deal of attention to their teachers feedback, helps them to make effective revisions, and that students ignore or avoid the suggestions given in teacher commentary. Dessner's (1991) study of responding practices of 10 collage ESL teachers found that two thirds of the teachers' commentary provided advice and suggestion.

Keh's (1990-302) results of questionnaire revealed that students actually read most if not all comments written on their paper for various reasons e.g. they want to know what they did well, and how they can improve their paper. When students read the written comments they are led to substantial changes in the next drafts. As a result of the study, these types of meaningful comments appeared to lead substantive student revisions. Supported by a study of Johnson (1979), when a student receives mixed messages, that is teacher may comment on mechanical errors at the same time elaborate upon an idea, he/she may be confused because they have no way of knowing whether to focus on the meaning level changes suggested or the local problems pin pointed. As the study concludes, students do not have to resolve this conflict in commentary. Instructors

do not provide and require revision although they suggest to. Ziv (1984) also agrees with these ·findings, as indicated by the research, students may read the comments on their papers but rarely write "subsequent" drafts in which they can act upon the comments and the improvements desired by their teacher rarely occurs.

In the Turkish educational system teachers are the authority and expected to give instructional guidance to the students (Adalı, 1991). And teachers are even if they apply process based writing it seems that they can't help responding papers as if they were the final products.

As the studies indicate, in Turkey most of the recent studies held on teachers feedback seem to be descriptive and not worked on real data as students written drafts. Thus the primary target of this study is to provide results of the influence of teacher feedback based on the students written drafts which are commented by the writing teacher and the effects of these comments on the revisions of the students.

Within the feedback framework, such studies focused on the student' reactions to teachers written feedback (Uzel, F., 1995; Bilge, B. 1993; Saglar, G., 1993) but these studies provide only descriptive conclusions depended on the students thoughts, questionnaries and interviews.

Another study (Gök, S., 1991) suggests EFL teachers are interested more in the form then the content of the students composition. And he concludes as students revisions are the reflextion of the techers instructions, that is students revise more form-based errors than content or organizational ones because the teacher focuses on more form based errors than content or organizational ones. In this study, rather than comments of the teacher, the teacher's attitudes towards errors, how they respond to the errors of student writers, and the corrections of those errors by the teacher were investigated.

Since there seems to be a lack of researches which addresses to the characteristics of written comments of the writing teacher and their influence on the students revisions studied with the real data that is the students written drafts, therefore this study is designed.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

3.1. Subjects

The subjects of the study are 21 students enrolled in the first y ear of Education Faculty at Anadolu University in Eskişehir. Their native language is Turkish and they study English as a foreign language. These students are randomly chosen out of 75 students. Subjects are upper intermediate level language learners. They all took a placement test and attended the pre-school for one year at Anadolu University.

3.2. Instruments and Materials

Comment length and comment types on the students drafts will be analyzed by means of an "Analytic Model for Teachers Commentary" which is developed and used by Ferris (1997). Since the comments on the collected data were not given on hedges, "use of hedges" part is excluded from the original model. Below is the original form of the model.

Figure I.
Analytic Model for Teacher Commentary

A. Comment Length (Number of Words)
   1 Short (1-5 words)
   2 Average (6-15 words)
   3 Long (16-25 words)
   4 Very long (26 or more)

B. Comment Types

1   Ask for Information/question

Example : "Did you work out this problem with your roommates?"

2   Make a Request/question

Example : "Can you provide a thesis statement here?"

         "What did you learn from this?"

3   Make a Request/statement

Example : "This paragraph is might be better earlier in the essay."

4   Make a Request/imperative

Example : "Mention what Zinnser says about parental pressure."

5   Give Information/question

Example : "Most states do allow writing period before and adaption is

         final."

6   Give Information/statement

Example : "Iowa law favors parental rights Michigan and California

         consider the best interests of the children."

7   Make a Positive Comment/statements or exclamation

Example : "A very nice start to your essay! You've done an impressive job

         of finding facts and quotes to support your arguments."

8   Make a Grammar Comment/mechanics comment question,

        statement, or imperative

Example : "Past tense here?"

         "Your verb tenses are confusing me in this paragraph."

         "Don't forget to spell check!"

C. Use of Hedges

No Hedge Included

Hedge Included

     - Lexical Hedges (e.g. maybe, perhaps, might)

     - Syntactic Hedges (e.g. Can you add example here?)

     - Positive Softeners (e.g. you have raised some good points, but ...)

D. Text Specific Comment

Generic comment (could have been written on any paper)

Example : "Nice intro."

Text-specific comment

Example : "Why is the American system better for children, in your

opinion?"   (Ferris, 1997)

The teachers comments on students 1st drafts are described by using above scale of Ferris (1997): Then the effect of these comments on students 2nd drafts is been searched. For this, students' 2nd drafts are been analyzed by two raters to see the changings made due to the teachers written comments. That is, the changings caused by the marginal and end comments are been analyzed, by means of frequencies and percentages of the type and the length of the comments. Changed comments and not changed commments are been counted according to the positive or negative changings the cause in the revisions of the students. Text-specific and generic characteristics properties are also been examined.

3.3. Procedure

Written drafts of the students in writing class are analyzed in the study with the permission of their writing teacher. The experimenter was not present in the class. First, subjects are given various topics to write their first drafts, then these drafts are responded by the writing teacher. Some comments are written on the 1st drafts by the teacher. After the teacher commented on the papers, 1st drafts were analyzed by the researcher and a rater using the analysis scheme of Ferris (1997). Then, 1st drafts were given to the students for revisions. 2nd drafts produced by the students are analyzed to find out whether the feedback given to the students on the first drafts led to a change on the 2nd drafts. Analysis will clarify the types of which characteristics of the comments lead this change most, by means of the frequencies. Depending on the writing teachers expectations, revisions will be analyzed as being positively effected or negatively effected by the teachers comments.

These written drafts (both 1st and 2nd drafts) are the originally written ones through the writing course procedure. Thus, the probability of influence of the teacher's responses by the artificial conditions prevailing in an experimental situation will be avoided.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data to be analyzed consisted of teacher commentaries on the 1st drafts and students responses on the revised 2nd drafts.

First, the teachers comments were analyzed. They were divided into idea units. As Chafe (1980) defines, "idea unit of teacher written comment is the spurts of language marked by pauses, intonation and syntax, usually consisting of a single clause." Then these idea units are analyzed by means of an "Analytic Model of Ferris (1997). The resulting analysis scheme described and illustrated in Figure I allowed the examination of several different features of each marginal and end comments, including their length (that the number of the words), their type (pragmatic intent and syntactic form). The comments are also analyzed for their text specific or generic properties. The writing teacher assisted the researcher to provide the expected revisions for each comment, so that the effects could be defined as positive or negative. Two independent raters counted and analyzed each comment (idea unit) and coded it for analysis as shown in Figure I. The raters were the researcher herself and an ESL instructor whom had an M.A. in Education with 15 years of teaching experience. Equal numbers were found by the raters, after the analysis of the written comments given by the teacher.

Second, students' revised 2nd drafts were analyzed to asses the impact of the teacher's commentary on the students' revised drafts. Considering length of the comment, type of the comment, being marginal or end comment. and text-specific generic specialities of comments, and effects of this change as positive or negative on the revisions of the students, two independent raters analysed revised 2nd drafts.

Next chapter discusses the frequency results indicating comment types used by the teachers and the changes made by the students due to these comments.

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Characteristics of teacher commentary

The teacher's comments on 1st drafts of the student writings were analysed and the frequencies of different characteristics are found. The frequencies and the percentages of comment lengths are given on Table 4.1. The results related to the comment type are given on Table 4.2.

4.1.1. Comment Length

Results of the analyses provide us that, marginal comments were the most applied type of teachers written comments. Marginal comments are written in the margin right next to the example being pointed out. So that the writer would understand which specific point is being commented upon.

The vast majority (98%) of the marginal comments which are written in the margins, were short, only 2% were rated average, where as 61% of the end comments which are written at the end of the paper, were rated as short, 39% were rated average. Neither in marginal nor in end comments, long and very long comments were used by the teacher. The difference in percentage of average of length comments between marginal end comments, reflects the generic and summative nature of end comments and at the end of the papers teachers has more space to write comments (see Table 4.1). Marginal comments were the most applied type of teacher's written comments.

Table 4.1

Summary of the comment length of the teacher's commentary

Length	Marginal Comments		End Comments	
N:104	N	%	N	%
Short (1-5 words)	84	98	11	61
Average(6-15 words)	2	2	7	39
Long (16-25 words)	-	-	-	-
Very Long (25-more words)	-	-	-	-
Total	86	100	18	100

4.1.2. Comment Type

Marginal and end comments differed considerably in type. The most common types among the marginal comments was "make a grammar, mechanics comment in question statement or imperative form (55%). But in end comments the percentage got lower(27%). This is not surprising as found by Applebee (1978, in Robb, Ross and Shortreed, 1986) 80% of foreign language teachers ranked mechanical errors as the most important criterion for responding to student writing. Zamel (1985) also showed the same attitude of teachers towards writing samples, in her study on teacher responses.

Then in marginal comments "ask for information" type rated as 40% but in end comments that is 19%. For example, comment asking for information. (see appendices) paper#4, comment#6. "What does it refer to?" The most frequent type of end comment was "make a request/imperative" (48%) where as this type was only 5% of the marginal comments. For example, paper#12, end comment#1. "Rewrite your thesis statement."

Some comments written by the teacher to the students' drafts were "informative statements" about the problematic part of the paper. Percentages of such comments for the marginal comments were 5% but 28% for the end comments. For example, paper#14, comment#1. "Give a negative idea." This shows teachers prefer giving the missing information about the students' writing at the end of the draft as end comment.

Only 6% of the end comments were "positive comments/statements or exclamation" marginal comments had no such type of characteristics. For example, paper#25, end comment#1. "Good topic sentence."

Some of the types were seen neither in marginal comments nor in end comments of the teacher: These comment types are "make a request/question", "make a request/statement", "give information/question".

Table 4.2

Summary of the type of teacher commentary

Comment N:104	Marginal Comments		End Comments	
Type	N	%	N	%
Ask for information	33	40	2	19
Make a request/question	-	-	-	-
Make a request/statement	-	-	-	-
Make a request/imperative	3	5	7	48
Give information/statement	-	-	-	-
Make a positive comment / statement or exclamation	-	-	1	6
Make a grammar mechanics comment /question, statement or imperative	47	55	3	27
Total	86	100	18	100

4.1.3. Text specific and generic comments

The vast majority (97%) of the marginal comments were generic comments, that is vague prescriptions written by the teacher, that can be seen on any students' paper on the 1st draft of the papers. Such comments could be seen on any paper; for example, one of the mostly used marginal comments "sentence fallacy" is seen on many papers of different student writers (paper#25, comment#1; paper#9, comment#3; paper#26, comment#1, comment#3) or marginal comment as "not a good sentence" is also an example for this kind (paper#11, comment#6; paper#13, comment#3; paper#22, comment#4). Only %3 were rated as text specific comments, that is specific strategies, questions and suggestions on the paper. For example to such text-specific comments "There is no tense agreement in your whole paragraph, check it" (paper#22, end comment#1, #2) or "clothing, food, rent → these are not problems; there are problems about them!" (paper#13, end comment#1, #2), or, "Your support is weak. How can it be easier to live in İstanbul?" (paper#14, end comment#1, #2). This result is almost the same in ratio of the end comments that is generic comment were the vast majority (94%) but text specific comments were only 6% of the comments (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Summary of the generic and text specific comments on the 1st drafts

	Marginal Comments		End Comments	
	N	%	N	%
Generic comments	83	97	17	94
Text specific comments	3	3	1	6
Total	86	100	18	100

4.2. Students revision and teacher comments that is changed the revisions

Students revisions were analyzed and each comment of the teacher on the first draft was compared to the 2nd draft revision to see whether the comments led to a change on the revisions.

4.2.1. Comment length and student revisions

For both marginal and end comments the most common rating was "change". Considering the length of the marginal comments 94% of the short comments were rated change, and 100% of the average comments were rated as changed 39% of the short end comments were rated as changed where as only 17% of the average end comments were rated as changed in the revision of the students.

Frequencies and percentages show us even though the teacher preferred short and average comments for both marginal and end comments, these comment lengths lead to changes in the revisions of the students. The lowest rate among all is average comment length in end comments, which rated as changed 17%. Long and very long comment lengths were not seen on the drafts, instead, the teacher prefers revision symbols and short comments of one or two words.

Comments which are changed by the effect of the teacher commentary are divided into two groups according to the positive or negative effects of the teacher comments. This negative or positive effects are grouped according to the expectations of the writing teacher, of that comments and the changes in next draft.

According to the comment length and comments effect, (whether it is positive or negative), in marginal comments 60% of the changed comments are positively changed, but 40% of the change comments are negatively changed. The most applied marginal comment length was short comments. 60% of the short comments have positive effect on the revisions. 40% of the short comments have negative effect. This slight difference

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in ratio may lead us to think about the issue of how to provide positive effect on student revisions with short marginal comments. Ratio of comments which are rated as average is 100% and all positive. This may provide us an evidence that students interpretation of the intend of the comment gets higher as the comment length gets longer (Ferris, 1997-330).

As for the end comments, short comments are dominant, 45% of the end comments are rated as positively effected, but on the other hand, 55% of the short end comments caused negative changes in the revisions of the students. Average end comments had a positive effect of 86% in the revisions and 14% negative effect. We can see the same result as the marginal comments considering length, average length comments caused considerably high positive effect over negative effect. In short, 61% of the end comments are positively changed whereas 39% of the end comments changed negatively and comment length effected on this change.

Table 4.4 illustrates the frequencies and percentage of the comment lengths for marginal and end comments which rated as changed in the student revisions.

Table 4.4

Summary of the relationship between comment length of marginal and end comments and the change in the students' revisions.

Comment length	Marginal Comments Change						End Comments Change					
	Total change		Positive effect		Negative effect		Total change		Positive effect		Negative effect	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Short	84		50	60	34	40	11		5	45	6	55
Average	2		2	100	-	-	7		6	86	1	14
Long			-		-				-		-	
Very Long			-		-				-		-	
Total			52	60	34	40			11	61	7	39

4.2.2 Comment type and student revisions

Apart from the comment length, comment type and it's effect on student revisions is also analyzed. Below are the relationship between each characteristics comment type and its effect on the students revision. Table 4.5. summarizes the revision ratings of the students writings which have been changed by the student writer.

Table 4.5

Summary of the frequencies and percentages of the comment type for marginal and end comments which are rated as changed on the students revisions

Comment Type	Marginal Comments Change						End Comments Change					
	Total		Positive effect		Negative effect		Total		Positive effect		Negative effect	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Ask for information	33	100	19	59	14	42	2	100	1	50	1	50
Make a request/ question	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Make a request/ statement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Make a request/ imperative	3	100	3	100	-	-	7	86	4	57	3	43
Give information/ question	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Give information/ statement	3	100	2	67	1	33	5	60	4	80	1	20
Make positive comment/statement or exclamation	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	1	100	-	-
Make a grammar mechanic comment	47	100	28	60	19	40	3	100	1	33	2	67
TOTAL	86	100	52	60	34	40	18	100	10	59	7	41

- Ask for information: "Ask for information" summarizes questions asking the student to provide further information in the 1st drafts. This type of comment was the most common of the marginal notes. Table 4.5 indicates the changes students made in response to these questions. In general, the students appeared to make changes in response to the requests for information. 97% of the marginal comments were rated changed. 59% of these changed comments were negative changes on the revisions. Positive effect is not little in marginal comments. End comments showed 50/50 ratio of the effectiveness of this type of comment. One of the two end comments caused positive change and the other negative change.

- Request/question/statement/imperative: Comments in the form of requests were widely used by the teacher. Students apparently took the teacher's request quite seriously even the comments in the imperative form were taken into consideration by the students, especially in marginal notes; 100% of the imperative forms appeared to lead to changes and the effect of this type would be clear with the ratio of 100% positive change on the revisions. For the end notes, 86% of the imperatives were rated change in the revision. 57% of the comments effected positively the students revisions and 43% of them are negatively changed.

- Comments/giving information to the students: All of the comments giving information to the students were in the statement form for both marginal and end comments. 100% of the marginal comments of this type led to changes in the revisions. The change is mostly positive for this type (as 67%). Only 33% of the comments had negative effect on the students revisions. For the end comments 60% of them were rated change. Of this ratio of changed comments, 80% is positively changed and 20% is negatively changed.

- Positive comments: Unfortunately positive comments were not applied by the teacher. Only one of the end comments showed such a form and it led to a positive change in the revision of the students writing.

- Comments about grammar/mechanics: All of the grammar/mechanics based comments were rated change in the marginal comments. 60% of the comments address grammar/mechanics changed positively in the revisions of the students. This result is not surprising for the characteristics of the Turkish educational system. Teachers are the authoritarian figures and are expected to give instructional guidance to the students (Adalı, 1991). This dependence on the teacher is also found in institutions of higher education where students do not feel free to express their thoughts, ideas, opinions, because, as Bear (1985) pointed out that educational system is strongly affected by social, cultural, and historical factors, which, in general, emphasize rote learning and memorization, that is what we call mechanical learning. 33% of the end comments on grammar and mechanics changed positively, but 67% of the same kind of comments, caused negative changes in the revisions of the students. But the results support that even if the teachers give importance to the mechanics and grammar, students responses to this type are not the expected revisions by the teacher. For example, on paper#13, comment#3, #4, changed negatively because the revision of the student and the expectations of the writing teacher mismatched. Student writer ignored the teacher commentary and wrote totally different sentences around the ida, instead of correcting the wrong one. On paper#22, comment#1, spelling mistake is repated by the student writer as it was written on the first draft.

4.2.3 Text-specific and generic comments on the revised 2nd drafts of the students

Results of the analyses show that, 2% of the text specific marginal comments changed positively and 1% of the text-specific marginal comments changed negatively. Text-specific comments are rarely applied by the teacher, as seen in the ratios of this study. For the text-specific end comments, we come across 6% of negative effect of teachers comment on the revisions. Not surprisingly, generic comments are the most applied kind of comments. Their effects as seen in the ratios related to the amount of the teachers use of generic comments. 59% of the marginal generic comments are rated as positively changed, where as 38% of the marginal generic comments are rated as

negatively changed in the students revisions. Generic end comments show 62% positive effect or revisions and 33% negative effect on student revisions.

Table 4.6

Summary of text-specific and generic comments on the 2nd drafts of the students

	Marginal Comments				End Comments			
	Positive effect		Negative effect		Positive effect		Negative effect	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Text-specific comment	2	2	1	1	-	-	1	6
Generic Comment	50	59	33	38	11	61	6	33
Number TOTAL	86				18			
% TOTAL	100				100			

4.3. Discussion

The aim of the study was to identify the characteristics of these comments which led to a change on the students writings and to investigate the effect of written comments on students revisions. Teacher's comments were analyzed in order to determine the characteristics of written comments. As a result short and average comment lengths were found to be the most applied length of written comments, for both marginal and end comments (98% for short comments, 2% for average comment length). The majority of the comment types was "grammar-mechanics" comments written on the margins (55%).

This indicates that the surface-level comments which focus on grammar and mechanic errors are still the mostly applied characteristics of teacher comments in

drafting. This result agrees with the studies of the researchers (Cohen and Cavalcanti, 1990; Robb, Ross and Shortreed, 1986) that suggest surface-level errors that is grammar and mechanics are the most focused ones among problems with organization and content of the writing.

Results of the comment types suggest that, marginal comments, "asking for information" type, mostly led change on the revisions (100%). For the end comments this type led also a change on the revisions (100%). Comments which give information in statement form for both marginal (100%) and end comments (60%) led to a change on the revisions of the students. This can indicate that, students consider informative comments, that is comment which gives extra information about the text, and directs the student writer to the revised drafts. This information is mostly text-based rather than referring to other sources. With this type of comments teachers can directly indicated the problematic point on the paper. That is unique to one paper. As suggested by Sommers (1982) and Zamel (1985) teachers should be encouraged to provide text-specific commentary rather than vague generalizations which demonstrate little teacher involvement with the individual student paper.

Imperative forms were widely seen types of comments in the study (5% for marginal, 48% for end comments). This result suggests that the teacher attempts to be an authoritative reader to the students writing. Rather than being a facilitating consultant teacher prefers being the authoritative figure as the teacher. This likely to Turkish educational system. As Adalı (1991) found teachers are the authoritarian figures and are expected to give instructional guidance to the students.

Positive feedback was rarely given to the students. As Connors & Lunsfore (1993) suggest, generally teachers not tend to give positive comments to the students writing. This tendency could be the result of the belief that, praise is not more effective than criticism in facilitating students improvements. This was the case in our study. Positive comments were scarcely given to the students by the writing teacher. The positive comments were very few and could be seen in the end comments. Thus, our findings agree with the findings of Ferris (1997). As Ferris (1997) found in her study, teachers

give very few positive comments to student writers. And teachers mostly give positive comments as end-comments. According to Ferris (1997) this depends on the advice given to the teachers to begin end-comments with a note of encouragement. In our study, positive end comments were tending to encourage the student writers for the revision.

Positive comments and few other characteristics of the teacher's commentary such as make a request/question, make a request/statement, give information appear not to have been put into practice in our study. Teacher's choice of comment types gives us an idea of the authoritarian role of the teacher who almost forgets to praise the students work. Comment length used by the teacher could provide us the evidence that teacher prefers giving short cut directions to the students rather than clear and long comments. Rather than being an authoritative figure, teachers need to establish a collaborative relationship with their students by drawing attention to problems, offering alternatives and suggesting possibilities. This collaborative and interactive relationship would provide a platform which both encourages students to think about what they have done and lead them to improve it.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

5.1. Summary of the study

From the early 1970s, process of writing has been receiving more attention than the product. Writing process focuses on the writer's involvement. When writing, in the process of creating, discovering and extending meaning, students need a supportive environment in the classroom. Teachers should encourage the students through their composing processes collaboratively. Feedback is the most important tool of this collaboration between the teacher and the student writer.

Feedback can be defined as an input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information for revision. With guidance of feedback the writer can modify his/her writing. This modification can be provided by showing where the writer misled or confused the reader by not supplying enough information in the writing, illogical organisation, lack of development of ideas, or something like inappropriate word-choice or tense (Keh, 1990-295).

Teachers are the most frequently seen sources of feedback among other sources such as, peers. Quite rare studies have been done on the area of teachers' feedback. As it is stated in the literature there is more to search in this area.

Zamel (1985:85) examined the comments reactions, and markings that appeared on compositions assigned and evaluated by teachers. The findings suggest that ESL composition teachers made similar types of comments and more concerned with language-specific errors and problems. In addition to that marks and comments of the

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teachers were often confusing, arbitrary and inaccessible. Zamel's (1985:85) study deals with the teachers response but provides implications to improve the responding techniques of the teachers. Thus expected improvement could be provided on the next drafts. On the other hand, Robb, Ross and Shortreed (1986) designed an empirical study to evaluate the effects of different types of feedback error in the written work on the second language writer. Influence of teachers commentary on the first drafts to the revisions was examined by Ferris (1997) resulted that various types of comments appeared to be more helpful than others.

So this study investigated both the characteristics of the teacher comments and the effect of whether teachers written comments (given as feedback to the student writers) led to changes in the students revised papers. 21 subjects have been chosen out of 75 students. Subjects wrote on various topics. Teacher's comments written on the papers have been analyzed by using "Analytic Model for Teacher Commentary" of Ferris (1997). After this analysis the papers with comments on was given to the students as the process of writing course suggests. Revised papers were examined and the changes occurred by the effect of each comment were rated by two independent raters.

Written comments of the teacher have been studied according to their types, lengths; and compared as being marginal or end comments. Results of the analyses showed that short comments for both marginal (98%) and end comments (61%) are the most applied ones, and the changes seen due to the comment length in the revision is high (94% for short marginal comments and 39% for short end comments). Long and very long lengths of comments have been used neither in marginal nor in end comments. Thus the effects of these length characteristics weren't observed in the study. 60% of the marginal comments were positively effected by the students revisions, the rest 40% of the marginal comments had negative effects on the 2nd drafts of the students. On the other hand, 59% of the end comments were positively effected the students revisions. 41% of the end comments had negative effects. Numbers of ratios of negative and positive effects of teacher comments for both marginal and end comments are close to each other.

Not surprisingly teachers comments focusing on grammar-mechanics have been rated as the majority among the other types. Thus, result indicates that teachers are still dominantly effected by the product based writing. Teachers approach to the students' drafts as the final product, even in the first drafts. Teachers approach to red-pen directly when responding to the students writing. The general idea is the more they correct the more they do their job. But the case shouldn't be considered like that as the researchers recommended (Zamel, 1985). Depending on the findings of this study, we can say that writing teachers do correct immediately, when they read a student's writing, without thingking of which draft they read, first or the last. They simply can't ignore the surface level errors at the very beginning, whereas they should focus on the context first; organization of ideas.

Comments asking for information are also quite in number. In the revisions this type also lead to changes mostly. This type of comment directly points to the problem of writing and asks for more detail or students attention on grammar-mechanics or ideas on writing. This type of direct questions are mostly answered in the revisions by the students. That is students revise their writing considering the question type comments mostly, because it is easy to determine the point solutions to a problem in writing but when it is generally written students sometimes have difficulties about identifying the location of the problem. Results of the revisions which have been effected by the comment type showed that mostly comments asking for information, requests in imperative form, informative statements as comments and comments about grammar-mechanics led to changes on revisions.

5.2. Conclusion and implications for teaching writing

Hyland (1990:285) and many other researchers (Ferris, 1991) agree with the idea that student writers should be encouraged by providing appropriate feedback, in the process of writing. Process of writing requires drafting that is the meeting of the writer and the reader for several times before the final product. If the writer considers the readers directions provided by feedback, the body of the writing can be shaped step by

step with each draft, and at the end, the writing could be finished and the final product is produced.

Teachers as readers of the student writers are like locomotives which push the cars on the rails. If locomotives push hard the cars may go off the rail and collapse, if they push slow, the cars wouldn't move even an inch. Just like locomotives, teachers should encourage student writers with their comments. As Ferris (1997) suggests, teachers should be careful in their own responding strategies and explaining those strategies to their students and helping them learn to revise. How can a teacher provide these to push the student writers to the final product safely without getting of the rail or let students afraid to move with the fright to collapse?

Results of the study suggests us that teachers are still responding to the first drafts of the student writers as they were the final products. As Zamel (1985) suggests, teachers should not respond to student WRITING but to student WRITERS, that is, teachers should try to respond to authors, but not to secretaries. This suggestion agrees with the conclusion of our study. Student writers shouldn't be drawn in to the red-ink sea rather they should be taught to swim with them encouraging feedback power by the teacher. Teachers of writing shouldn't reach to their red pens immediately after seeing a mistake on students paper. First they should realize that the student writer may have limited experience in writing. And they should never forget that, their job is not judging the students for how they write, instead, teachers job should be guiding the student in learning how to write.

The power of feedback can be provided only with the right choice of commentary which encourages student writers. Results of the study (Ferris, 1997) show that comments in form of question effected students revisions. In our study we also reached to this result. Students more properly understood and interpreted the comments in the form of question then requests. That is, students need clear, to the point comments and they feel safe to answer them in the revisions.

Teacher commentary can occur in many other forms. Writing teachers should feel free to adjust the amount of type of feedback as the process of writing goes on. Peer correction, conferences with student writers and others such as audiotaped commentary, computer based commentary. Depending on the needs and feasibility, of the students and conditions, teachers should decide on the most effective type of feedback. As Ferris (1997) suggests, there is no "one-size-fits-all" form of teacher commentary, teachers should be sensitive to the needs, abilities and personalities of their students in providing feedback.

As a conclusion, feedback is very important in the writing process. Studies suggest this importance, but how can we as teachers, get the most out of feedback, that is the most effective methods of feedback is still an area to search for. By investigating the comment characteristics which effect on the revision, this study aimed to contribute to this area.

5.3. Suggestions for further studies

This study has investigated the characteristics of teacher comments appear to influence students second drafts. An other research could be done between multi-drafts and the effects of written comments could be searched, e.g. between 2nd and 3rd, or 3rd and 4th drafts.

Subjects of large numbers would provide variety of comment types and other characteristics of teacher comments could be defined and their effects on the revisions could be examined.

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1st draft

THE BELIEF IN THE CATHOLIC AND THE PROTESTANT

Since the Ancient Times, people felt themselves to believe in something in their minds. Some *Tense* believed in animals, others believed in nature, and something that they didn't see, but felt. Their beliefs in different things are caused by their being in different ethnies, and having different life-styles. For instance, while those in the Middle Asia believed in God in the sky, those in Persia worshipped to the Fire. In time, religion concept, and thanks to it, different religions occured. These distinctions also showed themselves in the religion, itself, and caused it seperate in creeds. Nowadays, we see it in Christianity. From the Middle Ages, there have been Catholic and Protestant creeds which have insignificant differences in their beliefs owing to their life-styles.

(margin notes: what does it refer to? ; rephrase ; VOC)

<u>Subject</u>: Writing an introduction paragraph.   1st draft
          = MUSIC =

   Lyrics are more important and effective ~~and~~
than the note-scores. Namely, lyrics are an effective
way of explaning people's sense and thoughts. Surely,
note-scores have roles to help expressing feelings.
Also, writing lyrics takes long time as it necessitate
                                      ↳ SVA ————↑
to be more careful and <u>attention</u>. In addition to this,
                       parts of speech
lyrics precedes note-scores. <u>Because it is not only</u>
value of eyes but also ear.   sentence follacy

?

In my 'opinion lyrics are more important and effective than note-scores. Because writing lyrics is the best way of explaining feelings X and thoughts. Certainly, note-scores are one of the , effective way to reflect the inside world but people prefer lyrics mostly. Writing lyrics takes long time because of the while writing, people have to think and concentrate on subject. For that reason lyrics precedes note-scores. I mean people become fastidious at lyrics. so, lyrics are the best expression manner which needs more necessitate and attention.

pl.

?

X

VOC.

not a good sentence.

First Draft

Living in istanbul is more difficult than living in Eskişehir. People who live in istanbul⑤? have to <u>endure lots of problems such as transportation,</u> <u>house rent</u>, clothing, food and VOF! CHECK IT pollution. <u>Because of these reasons living in</u> a big city is <u>more difficult</u> than living in not a good statement a small city.

→ clothing ⎫
  food ⎬ these are not problems; there
  rent ⎭   are problems about them!

Number: 14

Introductory Paragraph

Living in _a very crowded city_ has more advantages than living in small cities. Istanbul is Turkey's most crowded city with its high population and when we contrast this city with Eskişehir (the smaller city), we will see a lot of differences. However, living in Istanbul is easier than living in Eskişehir for the city has more health services, more education possibilities and the life standards are better than the other one.

gives a negative idea; yet you seem to support it.

＊ Your support is weak. How can it be easier to live in Istanbul?

1st draft

TOPIC: Music
THESIS STATEMENT :Note scres are more important than the lyrics.
1-CONTENT OF INTRODUCTORY
a-Definition of lyrics and note scores.
b-Thesis statement
c-Studying on note scores take long time
d-Note scores preeced lyrics
e-Rephrase thesis statement

    There are two stars tonight.The voices and sounds are here with play
by play description of our demo.All the auidience are bored to death.Because the
chief has been delayed.But,what goes?Sounds rithmically join to be melt inthe
ears as a note scores.The magic of this incident has began to make people on top
of their feelings.On the other hand,voices compose and lyrics exist.The
meaningful words designate the way of the music in minds.Combination of note
scores and lyrics go into effect and cause to be energical all the night.At the end
of the show,two stars thanked audiance because of their great deal.And they
gave a speech about their works.Now there is no doubt that note scores are more
effective and important than the lyrics.Because note scores need long time to be
exist.In addition,it preceedslyrics.As a result these two subjects haven't had
same effect and importance while they are related to each other.

                    not a good
                    statement

*There is no tense agreement in your whole
  paragraph, check it.

Number: 25   1st draft

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

        Lyrics are more important and effective than
note-scores. Altough their importance is different, they complete
each other in a way. Becouse lyrics, the basic of music, are
words of the songs; and note-scores are the symbols-they
                           Sentence fallacy
include 8 sounds — of the sounds in the music. Owing to
the fact thot lyrics are the basic of music, it takes
longer time. For that reason, it precedes note-scores. Because
of taking much time and preceding, lyrics are more   Gr.
                                                      must
important and effective than note-scores in music.
        Good Topic sentence.

Lyrics are more important and effective than the note-scores. Lyrics are the words of the songs, on the other hand, the note-scores are the sound of the songs. But lyrics precedes the note-scores. When we listen them, firstly we try to understand the words which affect us. Because they are very powerful to express strong personal feelings. So, It is very important to choose the right words for thoughts. But as everybody knows, trying to find suitable words for feelings is very difficult. It takes longer time. As a result the note-scores aren't as important as the lyrics.

Sentence fallacy

prep. verb?

Sentence fallacy

* The case is not a contrast
* Punctuation
* Do not use contractions in an academic work.

APPENDIX
B

2nd draft

THE BELIEF IN THE CATHOLIC AND THE PROTESTANT

Since the Ancient Times, people have felt themselves to believe in something in their minds or in the nature. Some believed in animals, others believed in nature, and something that they didn't see, but felt. Their different beliefs result from the distinctions in the ethnic group and life-styles. For instance, while those in the Middle Asia believed in God of sky, those in Persia worshipped to the fire. In time, religion concept and different religions occured. These distinctions also showed themselves in the religion, itself, and caused it separate in creeds. We can see this separation in Christianity. From the Middle Ages, there have been Catholic and Protestant creeds which have insignificant differences in their beliefs owing to their life-styles.

2nd draft

_ HOMEWORK _

Subject: Lyrics are more important and effective than
the note-scores.

Lyrics are more important and effective than the
note-scores. Namely, lyrics are an effective way of
expressing people's thoughts and feelings. Of course,
note-scores have a role to play in expressing feelings,
but writing lyrics takes a long time and requires more
care and attention. Also, the writing of lyrics precedes
the writing of note-scores. The lyrics have the specific
meaning in a song.

2nd draft

LYRICS

Lyrics are more important and effective than note-scores. Lyrics are the best way of explaining feelings and thoughts. Certainly, note-scores are one of the ways of reflecting the inner bloom of humanity. However, lyrics and note-scores are different from each other in some respects. For instance, writing lyrics takes a long time, so people have to think and focus on the subject. As we know, writing lyrics is a process. Lyrics can not be written in an hour. People should be fastidious in creating lyrics. For this reason, lyrics precede note-scores. In terms of their importance, the writer will always concentrate on the development of the lyric before considering the note-scores.

1

Number (13)

Second draft

İstanbul and Eskişehir are governed by the same government, but there are some differences between them. People who live in İstanbul have some problems with transportation, life prices and pollution. However, in Eskişehir, people are not affected so much by these problems. So, living in İstanbul is more difficult than living in Eskişehir.

Introductory Paragraph is 2nd Draft
Developmental Paragraph is 1st Draft.

Living in a big city has more advantages than living in a small city. Istanbul is the biggest city center of the Turkey with its high population, economical comfort and social activities. But, when we contrast this city with Eskişehir, we will see a lot of differences. However living in Istanbul is easier than living in Eskişehir for the city has more health services, more education possibilities and better life standarts than the other one.

THE WAY OF LIFE

There are two stars tonight. The voices and the sounds are here with play by play description of our demo. All the audience are bored to death. Because the chief has delayed. But, what goes? Suddenly, a man with his stick appears. Then sounds rhythmically join to be melt in the ears as a notescores. The magic of this event begins to make people on top of their feelings. On the other hand, voices compose and lyrics exist. The meaningful words designate the way of music in minds. Combination of notescores and lyrics go into effect and cause to be people feel gergeous. But note scores are more important and effective than lyrics. Nobody can deny the power of music which preceeds lyrics, and takes long time to be produced. So notescores mean power of effectiveness if you compare with lyrics.

SUPERIORITY OF LYRICS OVER NOTE-SCORES

Lyrics are more important and effective than note-scores. Altough their importance is different, they complete each other in a way. Because lyrics make mutual communication among people, and note-scores are the symbols - they include & sounds- of the sounds in the music, they always need each other. Owing to the fact that lyrics are the basic of music, it takes longer time. For that reason, it precedes note-scores. Because lyrics take much time and precede, lyrics are more important and effective than note-scores in music.

Good Topic sentence.

LYRICS VERSUS NOTE-SCORES

Lyrics are more important and effective than the note-scores. Lyrics are the words of the songs and the note-scores are the sound of the songs, but lyrics precede the note-scores, because they are very powerful to express strong personal feelings. Also, It is very important to choose the right words for thoughts, but trying to find suitable words for feelings is very difficult. It takes longer time. As a result, the note-scores are not as important as the lyrics.