

T.C.  
DOKUZ EYLÜL ÜNİVERSİTESİ EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ  
YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI  
İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLİĞİ PROGRAMI  
DOKTORA TEZİ

**THE EFFECT OF A TRAINING PROGRAM  
ON WRITING ACHIEVEMENT AND PEER-FEEDBACK**

**Armağan ÇİFTÇİ**

**İzmir  
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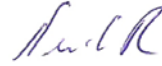
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Yrd. Doç. Dr. Berna ÇÖKER**

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EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ'NE

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Onay

Yukarıdaki imzaların adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylarım.

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Prof. Dr. H. C. İbrahim Atalay

Enstitü Müdürü

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
ABSTRACT .....	I
ÖZ .....	II
LIST OF TABLES .....	III
LIST OF FIGURES.....	IV
LIST OF APPENDICE.....	V
<b>CHAPTER I.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. 1. Background to the Problem.....	1
1. 1. 1. The Process Approach.....	2
1. 1. 2. Feedback .....	5
1. 1. 3. Peer feedback .....	7
1. 1. 4. Peer Feedback vs. Teacher Feedback.....	9
1. 2. The Purpose and Participants of the Study .....	12
1. 3. Statement of the Problem .....	12
1. 4. Research Questions .....	13
1. 5. Hypotheses .....	13
1. 6. Limitations .....	14
1. 7. Definitions of the Terms .....	14
1. 8. Abbreviations .....	14
SLA: Second Language Acquisition.....	14
<b>CHAPTER II.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....</b>	<b>15</b>
2. 1. Introduction.....	15
2. 2. Approaches to Teaching Writing .....	15
2. 2. 1. The Process Approach vs. the Traditional Approach.....	18
2. 2. 2. The Importance of Peer Feedback .....	19
2. 2. 3. Drawbacks of Peer Feedback .....	29
2. 3. Studies on Peer Feedback .....	33

2. 3. 1. Studies with Positive Results for Peer Feedback .....	33
2. 3. 1. 1. Studies on the Role of Training in Peer Feedback.....	34
2. 3. 1. 2. Studies on the Negotiations during the Peer Feedback Process and Their Impact on Revisions .....	38
2. 3. 1. 3. Studies on the Comparison of Teacher Feedback with Peer Feedback .....	42
2. 3. 1. 4. Studies on the Attitude towards Peer Feedback.....	44
2. 3. 1. 5. Studies on Various Other Topics .....	45
2. 3. 2. Studies with Negative Results for Peer Feedback.....	46
2. 3. 2. 1. Studies on the Comparison of Feedback Types .....	46
2. 3. 2. 2. Studies on the Effect of Cultural Differences on Peer Feedback.....	49
2. 3. 2. 3. Studies on the Interaction during the Peer Feedback Process.....	51
2. 4. The Significance of Training Students in Peer Feedback .....	53
<b>CHAPTER III .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>METHOD .....</b>	<b>57</b>
3.1. Introduction.....	57
3.2. The Design of the Study.....	57
3. 3. The Participants of the Study .....	58
3. 4. The Raters of the Study.....	59
3. 5. The Training Program.....	59
3. 6. Instruments and Materials .....	66
3. 6. 1. The ESL Composition Profile.....	66
3. 6. 2. The Rating Scale for Students Written Comments .....	73
3. 7. Data Analysis .....	73
<b>CHAPTER IV .....</b>	<b>74</b>
4.1. Inter-rater Reliability.....	74
4.2. Pre-test and Post-test Group Statistics .....	75
4.3. Writing Quality .....	76
4. 4. The Comments Made by the Experimental Group on Peer feedback Application .....	78

<b>CHAPTER V .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>81</b>
5. 1. Introduction.....	81
5. 2. Possible Drawbacks of Peer Feedback without a Training Program.....	82
5. 3. Findings and Discussion .....	83
5. 4. Pedagogical Implications .....	89
5. 5. Suggestions for Further Research .....	90
WORKS CITED .....	91
APPENDICES .....	96

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## YEMİN METNİ

Doktora tezi olarak sunduđum “Akran Dönüt Eđitiminin Yazma Başarısı Üzerine Etkisi” başlıklı çalışmamın, tarafımdan, bilimsel ahlak ve geleneklere aykırı düşecek bir yardıma başvurmaksızın yazıldıđını ve yararlandıđım yapıtların kaynakçada gösterilenlerden olduđunu, bunlara gönderme yapılarak yararlanılmıř olduđunu belirtir ve bunu onurumla dođrularım.

15 Temmuz 2011

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4- Peer feedback Training

5- Yazma Becerisi

5- Writing Skill

6- Yazılı ve Sözlü Dönüt

6- Written and Oral Feedback

## ABSTRACT

Studies on writing reveal that applying process oriented writing has a positive and contributive influence on students' writing skills and proficiency. Students should get efficient and appropriate feedback from their teachers and classmates to get maximum benefit from this method. If students do not know how to respond to each other's papers, this method cannot be applied effectively. Considering this, it is believed that students should have a condensed and detailed peer feedback training program. Briefly, the aim of this study is to eliminate possible problems arising from the lack of peer feedback training and to make writing skill an essential part of communication instead of being a tiring and boring process. This study examines the effect of feedback training on writing achievement and the quality of student feedback. The peer feedback training program was conducted for two hours per week for an eight-week period in 2009. Four graduate writing classes consisting of a total of 75 students (39 experimental, 36 control) were selected from the intermediate level of the preparatory program at Dokuz Eylul University, School of Foreign Languages. For this study an experimental design consisting of a pre-test/post-test control group was used. Furthermore, in order to obtain the views of the participants about the applied program on peer feedback training, oral questions were asked to the experimental group in group interviews and one-to-one interviews and answers were recorded and transcribed. The statistical analysis of the data revealed that the students in the experimental group produced better writing quality than the ones in the control group. The results also indicated that training students for peer feedback led to significantly more and better feedback. In other words, training students on peer feedback will have a positive effect on their writing achievement and on their feelings towards the peer feedback process.

## ÖZ

Yazma konusunda yapılan arařtırmalar süreç odaklı yazmanın öğrencilerin yazım becerisi ve dil yeterliliği üzerinde olumlu ve yapıcı bir etkisi olduğunu göstermiştir. Süreç odaklı yazma yönteminden öğrencilerin en üst düzeyde yararlanabilmeleri hem öğretmenlerinden hem de arkadaşlarından yerinde ve bilinçli dönüt alabilmelerine bağlıdır. Öğrencilerin birbirlerinin yazdıklarına nasıl dönüt vereceklerini tam bilmemeleri, diğer bir deyişle, neleri önemseyip, neleri inceleyeceklerinin ayırımında olamamaları bu yöntemin verimli bir biçimde uygulanamamasına neden olmaktadır. Buradan yola çıkarak öğrencilerin mutlaka yoğun bir akran dönüt eğitiminden geçmelerinin gerekliliğine inanılmaktadır. Özetle bu arařtırmanın amacı süreç odaklı yazma dersinin olmazsa olmaz bölümü olan akran dönütü konusunda öğrencilerin yeterince eğitilmemelerinden kaynaklanan sorunları gidermek ve yazma dersini, çoğu öğrenci ve öğretmenin sıkça dile getirdiği gibi sıkıcı, yorucu ve getirisi muğlâk bir çalışma olmaktan çıkartıp iletişimin vazgeçilmez bir aracı haline getirmektir. Bu çalışmada deney grubuna etkin bir akran dönüt eğitimi verilerek yazma dersindeki öğrenci başarısının arttığı ve verdiği dönütlerin daha bilinçli ve katkı sağlayıcı olduğu bilimsel olarak gösterilmeye çalışılmıştır. Arařtırma Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu'nda ki 4 ayrı lisans sınıfında toplam 75 öğrenciye (39 deney, 35 kontrol) uygulanmıştır. Akran dönüt eğitimi haftalık 2 saat olmak üzere 8 hafta sürmüştür. Uygulamanın başında ve sonunda ön test-son test başarı sınavı verilerek alanda kabul görmüş ölçütlere göre değerlendirilmiştir. Ayrıca uygulanan akran dönüt eğitimi ile ilgili deney grubundaki öğrencilerin görüşlerini almak için bire bir ve toplu olarak görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Elde edilen verilerin istatistiksel analizi sonucunda deney grubundaki öğrencilerin kontrol grubundakilere göre daha kaliteli dönüt verdiği görülmüştür. Edinilen sonuçlar aynı zamanda eğitilen öğrencilerin daha fazla ve daha doğru dönüt verdiklerini göstermiştir. Diğer bir deyişle öğrencilerin dönüt verme konusunda daha bilinçli olmalarını sağlayacak bir eğitim almalarının hem kendi yazma becerilerinde hem de arkadaşlarının yazma becerilerinde olumlu bir etki yarattığı ve onların bu akran dönüt verme konusunda daha olumlu düşündükleri ortaya çıkmıştır.

**LIST OF TABLES**Page

Table 1. Comparison of Product-oriented with Process-oriented Approaches to Writing	19
Table 2. Inter-rater Reliability by Pearson Correlations Rates	74
Table 3. Pre-test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups	75
Table 4. Post-test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups	75
Table 5. Samples of Students' Opinions for Common Themes	80

**LIST OF FIGURES**

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
Figure 1. Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups	76
Figure 2. Quality Score Means of Peer Feedback Given by the Experimental and Control Groups	78

**LIST OF APPENDICE**

Appendix A : The Question Which Was Asked in Both Pre-Test and Post-Test:	96
Appendix B : The ESL Composition Profile	97
Appendix C: The Rating Scale for Students Written Comments	100
Appendix D : Essay Checklist	101
Appendix E: At-a Glance Student Guidelines for Preparing a Peer Response	102
Appendix F: Sample Lesson Plan for the First Week	103
Appendix G: Sample Lesson Plan for the Second Week	104
Appendix H : Essay Scores For The Experimental Group	105
Appendix I Essay Scores For The Control Group	106
Appendix J: Sample Essays of the Students in the Experimental Group	107
Appendix K: Sample Essays of the Students in the Control Group	129

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. 1. Background to the Problem

In the academic world of language teaching, 'writing' is a lengthy process and requires hard work. It is especially more challenging for writers when it is to be in a foreign language. Good writers should write as much as they can, but it is important that they should be guided and given feedback by professionals, colleagues, critics or even classmates. While listening helps to improve one's speaking skills, reading helps to improve one's writing skills; thus, the more people read, the better they write. Because of the multiple-choice testing system in Turkey, students have started to read and write less and they cannot compose effective and persuading texts that reveal their thoughts about the 'real' issues of life. So, how can such students write well-organized essays in a foreign language? To do this there should be an effective program which raises their interest and eases the process. There are many approaches to teaching writing, the main ones being product oriented and process oriented. The latter has become more common in most academic environments and the use of peer feedback is the most striking difference between them. However, asking students to give feedback while using checklists might not be enough to gain sufficient writing skills. There are lots of things that can be done during this process and teachers should know these and implement a well-organized training program, especially in the 'peer feedback stage'. As Hairston (1982: 84) points out, we cannot teach students to write by looking only at what they have. We must also understand how that product came into being, and why it assumed the form that it did. We have to try to understand what goes on during the act of writing if we want to affect its outcome.

Many students resist writing because they are unable to choose a subject, establish a thesis, discover ways of developing ideas and compose creative sentences with their limited vocabulary and grammar; however, writing is a must for university students who claim to know a second language. At present, both foreign language learners and teachers give great importance to writing since skill in writing is a basic

necessity for language learners to cope with academic writing tasks and fulfill many individual needs in the target language. Kroll (1990: 65) clarifies this by saying that learning to express oneself well through writing is very beneficial for one's academic and daily life and having good writing skills has become the key to better career opportunities. These reasons encourage researchers to study more about writing and its applications, like peer feedback activities.

### **1. 1. 1. The Process Approach**

In the last forty years student-centered approaches and techniques have been favored whereas teacher-centered ones have been discredited. Due to this change in the philosophy of education, many approaches have emerged and been applied in educational settings. One of these approaches to teaching writing is the 'process approach'. It really is an innovative approach. It brings out the idea that "writing is a process" and that "the writing process is a recursive cognitive activity involving certain universal stages (prewriting, writing, revising)" (Cooper, 1986: 364). In other words, process writing represents a shift in emphasis in teaching writing from the product of writing activities to ways in which text can be developed: from concern with questions such as "What have you written?", "What grade is it worth?", to "How will you write it?" and "How can you improve it?" (Fumeaux, 2000: 1).

"The process approach originated in the L1 classroom was developed in reaction to 'traditional' types of writing teaching. Students were presented with rules of traditional writing about what constituted good writing, and were expected to produce texts that observed those rules" (Caudrey, 1997: 5). "The focus of the class was on the model and on the students' finished text, or product which would be graded by teachers with a focus on correcting linguistic errors rather than responding on students' ideas" (Shih, 1999: 22). As Roebuck (2001: 209) states, there was no teaching about how the content of an essay was to be created and developed. The process approach, on the other hand, argues that writers create and change their ideas as they write, so the most important task of writing instructors is helping students develop the skills needed to come up with ideas, explore ways of expressing them, and examine and refine their writing. In practice, this means "working on prewriting, drafting, analyzing and revising" (Miller, 2001: 35). As a result, revision has been



widely acknowledged as a “crucial component in the writing process” (Tsui & Ng, 2000: 167).

The stages of writing in the process approach have been named differently by different people. However, there has been a consensus that the main stages of writing are ‘prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing’. Kroll (1992: 253) explains the details of the process, in which the prewriting stage is the stage where students get ready to write. Ideas are generated, categorized, and planned. In order to generate ideas, different invention strategies, namely brainstorming, listing, free writing, and clustering, can be implemented in class. Brainstorming refers to students participating to share their knowledge on the given topic. Listing is similar to brainstorming. However, unlike brainstorming, students individually list whatever comes to their mind about the given topic. Free writing is writing without stopping, caring about grammatical correctness, and without looking back or crossing out anything for about 5 or 10 minutes. At the end of the time limit, students read their writing to select or delete ideas for their actual writing. Another invention strategy is clustering, which is also called visual mapping. In order to use this strategy, a key word is placed in the center of a page around which the student jots down in a few minutes all the free associations triggered by the subject matter. Circling the keywords and drawing lines out of the circles to write the related words is the method for its implementation. Drafting is the second stage of writing. The first draft is written with an emphasis on the content and organization of the written work. Revision is the next stage in the process approach. Having received feedback on the content and the organization of the first draft, students revise their first drafts. After the revision stage, students share their final products with their audience. The importance of sharing lies in the fact that it gives an opportunity to the students to exchange ideas and ask for clarification when there is a disagreement between the pairs. Generally, sharing occurs in the form of oral discussions.

According to Neman (1995:184), the revising phase of the writing process consists of three distinct practices: “rewriting- performing global, usually structural revision that affect the meaning of the text; editing-making changes, usually stylistic, within the paragraph and sentence, and in word choice; and proof-correcting

errors and infelicities”. The students need an outsider's comments on their work at this stage. Seow (2002: 316) indicates that process writing as a classroom activity incorporates the four basic writing stages -planning, drafting (writing), revising (redrafting) and editing - and three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher, namely, responding (sharing), evaluating and post-writing.

Keh (1990: 294) presents a similar definition of process writing as a multiple-draft process which consists of; generating ideas (pre-writing); writing a first draft with an emphasis on content (to 'discover' meaning/author's ideas); second and third (and possibly more) drafts to revise ideas and the communication of those ideas. Reader feedback on the various drafts is what pushes the writer through the writing process on to the eventual end-product.

Briefly, the activities in a process writing class would be in a sequence as follows:



Adapted from White, R. & Arndt, V. (1991: 7)

Roebach (2001: 210) states that the process approach in particular provides us with a theoretical framework for a better understanding of the learning process and for creating activities that help students work in and move through the stages of writing, in this case, as it is highly related to the development of their foreign language writing competence.

The idea behind the process approach is not really to dissociate writing entirely from the written product and to merely lead students through the various stages of the writing process, but 'to construct process-oriented writing instruction that will affect performance' (Freedman, et al., 1987: 13). To have an effective performance-oriented teaching program would mean that we need to systematically teach students problem-solving skills connected with the writing process that will enable them to realize specific goals at each stage of the composing process. Thus, 'process writing in the classroom may be construed as a program of instruction which provides students with a series of planned learning experiences to help them understand the nature of writing at every point.' (Seow, 2002: 315)

### **1. 1. 2. Feedback**

Feedback is a fundamental element of a process approach to writing. It can be defined as input from a reader to a writer with the purpose of providing information to the writer for revision. In other words, it is the comments, questions, and suggestions a reader gives a writer to produce 'reader-based prose' as opposed to 'writer-based prose'. Thus, feedback plays a central role in writing development and it is the drive which steers the writer through the process of writing on to the product.

Keh (1990: 296) also states that a review of the literature on writing reveals three major areas of feedback as revision. These areas are: peer feedback; conferences as feedback; and teachers' comments as feedback. In fact, the types of feedback are so varied and numerous that Lynch (as cited in Muncie, 2000: 47) suggests that teachers should offer learners a range of feedback types, which may stand a greater chance of success than reliance on a single technique.

The types of feedback can be given orally or in writing. Written feedback is defined as "written from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision" and oral feedback is defined as "oral input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision" (Keh, 1990: 294). "Oral feedback can be given in one-to-one situations or with a small group through teacher-student conferences" (Zhu, 1995: 212).

The importance of feedback and revision is stressed by Elbow (1981: 237) as follows:

No matter how productively you managed to get words down on paper or how carefully you have revised, no matter how shrewdly you figured your audience and purpose and suited your words to them, there comes the time when you need feedback. Perhaps you need it for the sake of revising: you have a very important piece of writing and you need to find out which parts work and which parts don't; so you can rewrite it carefully before giving it to the real audience. Or perhaps you have already given an important piece to the real audience- it's too late for any revising- but nevertheless you need to learn how your words worked on the reader. Or perhaps you've simply decided that you must start learning in general about the effectiveness of writing.

This important item has also been pointed out by Swain and Lapkin (as cited in Porto, 2001: 40), who posit "relevant feedback could play a crucial role in advancing the learners' second language learning". Relevant feedback informs the writing process by "permeating, shaping and molding it" (Tsui & Ng, 2000: 148) and it also raises the writer's awareness of the informational, rhetorical, and linguistic expectations of the intended reader (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994: 151). This leads to a "modified output", which, in turn, enhances learning (Porto, 2001: 40). Muncie (2000: 52) asserts that feedback is vital to writing and helping learners to improve their writing skills, and according to her, "whatever form feedback takes, it can have the positive effect of producing improvements in learners' writing ability". Richards & Renandya (2002: 311) specify that when students revise, they review their texts on the basis of the feedback given in the responding stage. They reexamine what was written to see how effectively they have communicated their meanings to the reader. Revising is not merely checking for language errors (i.e. editing). It is done to improve global content and the organization of ideas so that the writer's intent is made clearer to the reader. Another activity for revising may have

the students working in pairs to read aloud each other's drafts before they revise. As students listen intently to their own writing, they are brought to a more conscious level of rethinking and reseeing what they have written. Meanings which are vague become more apparent when the writers actually hear their own texts read out to them. Revision often becomes more voluntary and motivating.

### **1. 1. 3. Peer feedback**

In the literature on writing, peer feedback is referred to by many names, for example, peer response, peer review, peer editing, peer critiquing, and peer evaluation. Each name connotes a particular slant to the feedback, mainly in terms of where along the continuum this feedback is given, and the focus of the feedback. For example, peer response may come earlier on in the process (e.g. after the first draft) with a focus on content (organization of ideas, development with examples), and peer editing for the final stages of drafting (e.g. after second or third draft) with a focus on grammar, punctuation, etc.

Since the late 1980's, a common respondent to students' writing, especially in the early stages of draft development, are the other students (Nelson & Carson, 1998: 118). Working in pairs or groups, students read and respond to each other's drafts (Miller, 2001: 37). Therefore, peer feedback has become a common feature in the L2 classroom, where the process approach to teaching writing is used.

Harmer (2004: 115) defines 'peer feedback' as a part of the process approach to teaching which is widely used in both LI and L2 contexts as a means to improve writers' drafts and raise awareness of readers' needs. Peer feedback can also be defined as "the use of learners as sources of information, and interactions for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor, or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing" (Hansen 2002: 1).

Actually, Caulk (1994: 182) summarizes that peer editing was developed in the late sixties when Moffett and Wagner (1968) proposed writing workshops in

which small groups of students exchanged papers and offered suggestions for improvement. Murray (1968) suggested a similar approach, restructuring the writing class into small groups where writers could read, edit, criticize, and compliment each other's writing. Elbow (1973) and Macrorie (1976) added their support by advocating small groups in which writers share efforts and seek responses as they work toward greater clarity. Although some minor differences exist among advocates, peer editing can be defined as the use of groups to read and critique each other's writing to improve each participant's work. These recommendations were quickly followed by a series of empirical studies to determine the merit of peer editing.

Peer feedback is considered a necessary component in the process writing approach (e.g. Elbow 1973; Emig 1971). It is also supported by collaborative learning theory, which holds that learning is a socially constructed activity that takes place through communication with peers (Bruffee, 1984). Support for peer feedback also comes from Vygotsky's 'Zone of Proximal Development' theory (1978), which holds that the cognitive development of individual results from social interaction in which individuals extend their current competence through the guidance of a more experienced individual, which is also referred to as 'scaffolding'. Peer feedback is also supported by Second Language Acquisition theory, which holds that learners need to be pushed to negotiate meaning to facilitate SLA (e.g. Long and Porter, 1985, Hansen, 2005)

Proponents of peer feedback have made claims about its cognitive, affective, social, and linguistic benefits, most of which have been substantiated by empirical evidence. As cited in (Hansen et al., 2005: 16), peer feedback has been found to help both college (Villamil & De Guerrero, 1996) and secondary (Tsui & Ng, 2000) students obtain more insight into their writing and revision processes, foster a sense of ownership of the text, generate more positive attitudes toward writing (Min, 2005), enhance audience awareness (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994, Mittan, 1989 and Tsui & Ng, 2000), and facilitate their second language acquisition (Bryd, 1994), and oral fluency development (Mangelsdorf, 1989). The details of these and other well-known studies on this topic can be examined in section 2.3.

According to Hyland (2002: 169), peer feedback is well established as an important theoretical component of the writing process. The process of having students critique each other's papers has become commonplace in the composition classroom and in English composition textbooks. Most composition scholars have established quite firmly that the composing process is social, and peer feedback is an integral part of that process. Learning to write is not only a matter of knowing the elements of composition, but also involves the student's acculturation into the collegiate, educated world—a process vital to the student's ability to succeed. Among other things, writing groups can help students overcome the alienation that occurs when writers create work that does not have an audience. Those who write solely 'for the teacher' will find it difficult to predict their audience's needs, which will increase their sense of isolation. Robert Brooke (as cited in Harmer, 2004: 117) notes the importance of peer audiences when he defines the goals of writing groups as helping each student to “understand the ways in which writing can be used in many areas of one's life, as well as to have experiences which adapt writing to any of those uses” .

It is obvious that good writing requires revision, writers need to write for a specific audience, writing should involve multiple drafts with intervention response at the various draft stages, peers can provide useful feedback at various levels, training students in peer response leads to better revisions and overall improvements in writing quality, and teacher and peer feedback are best seen as complementary (Chaudron 1984:11; Zamel 1985: 158; Mendonca and Johnson 1994: 749; Berg 1999: 22).

#### **1. 1. 4. Peer Feedback vs. Teacher Feedback**

Utilizing students in the editorial role for each other's writing is a pedagogic strategy which is currently becoming popular in the teaching of writing. This instructional device evolved originally from having students respond to each other's writing in order to help them develop a sense of audience. This provided them with a wider relationship than the customary audience of one- the teacher. In this way, students would have many readers, as is more typical of written communication. Because students tend to trust their peers, a comment from a friend which questions the clarity of a thought or the purpose of the paper is often more palatable than

responses from a teacher. Using students to provide additional feedback seemed a more productive and time saving alternative to the traditional method of feedback coming exclusively from the teacher.

According to one estimate (Sommers, 1982: 152), teachers take at least 20 to 40 minutes to comment on an individual paper. While little data of this sort exists for ESL teachers of writing, anecdotal evidence suggests that we too invest a great proportion of our instructional time responding to our students' compositions. Tsui & Ng, (2000: 168) claim that students take over part of the job of the teacher since they develop a critical eye toward what they read while analyzing their peers' essays. Writing no longer gives absolute control to the teacher, but rather is a positive, encouraging, and collaborative workshop environment within which students can work through their composing processes.

Bruffee (1984), a leading proponent of writing response groups, argues for the benefits of peers working together to foster a kind of peer-based learning that takes power away from the teacher and puts it in the hands of the students. He cites both Kuhn (1963) and Rorty (1979) in arguing that knowledge is not a static given but is "socially justified", evolving as communities of "knowledgeable peers" interact, thus shaping, extending, and reinforcing one another's ideas. Yang & Badger (2006: 185) indicate that introducing peer feedback in most contexts means students will receive more feedback than they would if only the teacher were providing feedback and that there may be other benefits, such as developing critical thinking, from encouraging peer feedback.

Sengun (2002: 11) explains the possible handicaps of teacher feedback and suggests using peer feedback for revising drafts;

Teacher feedback is provided by the teacher in the drafting stages. After students write the first draft of their compositions, the teacher collects the papers and gives feedback. The students revise their papers with respect to the feedback they received. At the end of the process, the final draft is submitted to the teacher to be marked. Since the teacher is more knowledgeable than the students in rhetoric, organization, and language use, they blindly accept what the teacher has written on their paper as feedback. Another reason why students tend to rely on this type of feedback is that the teacher is the marker. In order to get higher marks students revise their compositions through the feedback received from their teacher. Therefore, they do not question anything the teacher comments. The problem with this type of feedback is that students lack critical



processing and evaluation of the feedback they get from their teachers. They accept everything without questioning because it is the teacher who wanted that change. Therefore, it can be said that the end product belongs to the teacher, not to the students. This type of feedback may work for short-term improvement of the drafts. However, in the long run, it is obvious that this will not contribute to students' improvement in writing ability. The solution to this problem may be using peer feedback for revising the drafts.

Muncie (2000: 48) makes a similar claim about the effects of teacher feedback on students' critical processing and evaluation skills in that students tend to rely on teacher feedback and blindly accept everything the teacher commented. As a result, students lack critical processing and evaluation of the feedback received from the teacher.

All this is not to say that teachers of writing have no role to play beyond that of a classroom organizer. The fact that the teacher is more knowledgeable than the learners about the linguistic and rhetorical features of English text gives him or her a "unique role" to play in facilitating the improvement of the learners' writing ability (Muncie, 2000: 51). "Teacher feedback on learners' drafts is preferred both by the students and by the teachers themselves as necessary". (Tribble, 1996: 122) Unfortunately, students do not develop either cognitive or writing skills through their writing if they only rewrite essays based on their teachers' comments. In these circumstances, learning becomes "a more of a matter of imitation or parody than a matter of invention or discovery" (Hyland, 2000: 35). Soares (1998: 21) also states that peer review is very helpful since it gives writers more options to consider when they revise their papers. Peer review does not preclude teacher feedback, but is meant to supplement it. Students value both types of feedback. With training, practice and guidance, students can learn to be more specific and helpful in their responses to a peer's essay. It is a powerful way for ESL students to improve their writing.

As Villamil and De Guerrero (1998: 508) assert, instead of asking the question "Which is better (or which is more effective), peer feedback or teacher feedback?" perhaps the time has come to ask this question: "What and how can peer feedback contribute to the students' writing development in a way that complements teacher feedback?"

Carroll & Blake (1996: 30) are convinced that, especially for L2 writers, a combination of teacher and peer response is beneficial: “Nothing holds a candle to the teacher's input in the non-native speaker's eyes. The non-native speaker . . . needs to feel the constant guidance and support of the teachers as the 'real' source of feedback, but can learn to appreciate peers' feedback with training over time”

## **1. 2. The Purpose and Participants of the Study**

The purpose of this study was two-fold. The first aim was to identify students' achievement in writing after a detailed peer feedback training program and secondly, to specify the quality of the feedback they give to each other. To fulfill this aim, an eight-week -long peer feedback training program was designed to familiarize students with the process of giving and responding to peer feedback. After that, the pre-test and the post-test results were compared and contrasted. The quality of students' feedback was assessed and transcripts of their discussions during the feedback process and their impressions about the whole program were investigated.

The participants of this study were the prep class intermediate level students of the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University in Izmir, Turkey. By implementing a training program on peer feedback, the aim was to show the influence of such training on prep class students and suggest this application to other schools.

## **1. 3. Statement of the Problem**

Generally speaking, many traditional English composition writing classes are still under the effect of a product-oriented approach. However, most studies on writing reveal that a process-oriented writing approach has better effects on students' writing abilities and their proficiency in English. Although there are some teachers who use the process approach in their classrooms, students are not able to benefit from it. Studies indicate that one of the main reasons for this is because peer feedback is not applied efficiently and consciously in the classroom (e.g. Allei & Connor, 1990; Nelson & Murphy, 1993; Mangelsdorf, 1992; George, 1984; Zhang, 1995; Grimm, 1986; Leki, 1992). Since peer feedback has been supported by many

theoretical frameworks, such as by the Socio-cognitive Approach, Collaborative Learning Theory, Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and Second Language Acquisition theories, teachers should pay more attention to this matter. Reading their classmates' essays and giving written or oral feedback to them -either negative or positive- helps students both realize their weak sides and develop a natural skill in writing reflections. Furthermore, teachers can do their job more effectively by observing their students in their natural environment, looking for learning opportunities and removing the barriers whenever needed because they read fewer papers and spend less time and energy.

In our country, studies on peer feedback are very limited and they are mostly about students in teaching departments. In this study, prep class students from different departments of a university in Turkey were taken into consideration. The research is mostly about whether peer feedback training will help them to improve their writing abilities and increase their scores.

#### **1. 4. Research Questions**

This study tries to focus on the contribution of a feedback training program on writing achievement and the quality of feedback by searching for the answers to two questions:

1. Are there any significant differences between the writing achievement of the students who receive feedback training and those who do not?
2. Are there any significant differences in the quality of the feedback between the students who receive feedback training and those who do not?

#### **1. 5. Hypotheses**

Considering the research questions above, the following points were hypothesized:

1. Training students on how to give peer feedback effectively will help the students become more successful and fruitful in writing classes and improve their compositions, especially in content and organization.

2. After the training period, the quality of students' feedback will be better and will help their classmates to feel that they have a 'real' audience.

### **1. 6. Limitations**

The research is limited to four graduate classes with a total of 75 students at intermediate level in the preparatory program at the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University, in Turkey. Since the sample size is small, it does not allow generalizations to other writers in other contexts. Therefore, research with a larger number of subjects is necessary to confirm the findings.

### **1. 7. Definitions of the Terms**

Process Writing: As a classroom activity, process writing incorporates the four basic writing stages -planning, drafting, revising and editing - and three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher, namely, responding, evaluating and post-writing.

Peer Feedback: This can be defined as 'the use of learners as sources of information, and interactions for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor, or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing (Hansen 2002: 1).

### **1. 8. Abbreviations**

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

L1: Mother tongue

L2: Second or foreign language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **2. 1. Introduction**

In this chapter, first the theoretical framework is given. To do this, approaches to teaching writing, mainly product and process oriented approaches, are presented. Then, the significance of peer feedback and the drawbacks of it are discussed. After this, studies on peer feedback are provided. Finally, the significance of training students on peer feedback is explained.

#### **2. 2. Approaches to Teaching Writing**

There are several approaches to teaching writing, which are presented by Raimes (1983, cited in Abisamra, 1998) as follows:

##### *a-The Controlled-to-Free Approach*

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the audio-lingual method dominated second-language learning. This method emphasized speech and writing as a way to achieve mastery of grammatical and syntactic forms. Hence teachers developed and used techniques to enable student to achieve this mastery. The controlled-to-free approach is sequential: students are first given sentence exercises, then paragraphs to copy or manipulate grammatically by changing questions to statements, present to past, or plural to singular. They might also change words to clauses or combine sentences. With these controlled compositions, it is relatively easy for students to write and yet avoid errors, which makes error correction easy. Students are allowed to try some free composition after they have reached an intermediate level of proficiency. As such, this approach stresses grammar, syntax, and mechanics. It emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency or originality.

##### *b-The Free-Writing Approach*

This approach stresses writing quantity rather than quality. Teachers who use this approach assign vast amounts of free writing on given topics with only minimal correction. The emphasis in this approach is on content and fluency rather than on accuracy and form. Once ideas are down on the page, grammatical accuracy and

organization follow. Thus, teachers may begin their classes by asking students to write freely on any topic without worrying about grammar and spelling for five or ten minutes. The teachers do not correct these pieces of free writing. They simply read them and may comment on the ideas the writer expressed. Alternatively, some students may volunteer to read their own writing aloud to the class. Concern for “audience” and “content” are seen as important in this approach.

*c-The Paragraph-Pattern Approach*

Instead of accuracy of grammar or fluency of content, the Paragraph-Pattern-Approach stresses organization. Students copy paragraphs and imitate model passages. They put scrambled sentences into paragraph order. They identify general and specific statements and choose to invent an appropriate topic sentence or insert or delete sentences. This approach is based on the principle that in different cultures people construct and organize communication with each other in different ways.

*d-The Grammar-Syntax-Organization Approach*

This approach stresses simultaneous work on more than one composition feature. Teachers who follow this approach maintain that writing cannot be seen as being composed of separate skills which are learned sequentially. Therefore, students should be trained to pay attention to organization while they also work on the necessary grammar and syntax. This approach links the purpose of writing to the forms that are needed to convey the message.

*e-The Communicative Approach*

This approach stresses the purpose of writing and the audience for it. Student writers are encouraged to behave like writers in real life and ask themselves the crucial questions about purpose and audience:

“Why am I writing this?” and “Who will read it?”

Traditionally, the teacher alone has been the audience for student writing. However, some feel that writers do their best when writing is truly a communicative act, with a writer writing for a real reader. As such, the readership may be extended to classmates and pen pals.

*f- The Product-Oriented Approach*

This approach is the traditional way of writing. The most popular way of writing in this manner is to take a model text, highlight the features of the genre and mimic it to produce your own product. Sticking to the conventions of the genre increases the likelihood that students communicate more clearly with their readers.

*g-The Process-Oriented Approach*

Recently, the teaching of writing has moved away from a concentration on the written product to an emphasis on the process of writing. Thus, writers ask themselves:

“How do I write this?” and “How do I get started?”

In this approach, students are trained to generate ideas for writing, think of the purpose and audience, and write multiple drafts in order to present written products that communicate their own ideas. Teachers who use this approach give students time to try ideas and feedback on the content of what they write in their drafts. As such, writing becomes a process of discovery for the students as they discover new ideas and new language forms to express them. Furthermore, learning to write is seen as a developmental process that helps students to write as professional authors do, choosing their own topics and genres, and writing from their own experiences or observations. The process approach requires teachers to give students greater responsibility for, and ownership of, their own learning. Students make decisions about genre and choice of topics, and collaborate as they write. During the writing process, students engage in pre-writing, planning, drafting, and post-writing activities. However, as the writing process is recursive in nature, they do not necessarily engage in these activities in that order.

Bahçe (1999) points out that the growing body of writing research and the recognition of the parallels between first and second language learners suggest the need for a paradigm shift from a ‘product-oriented approach’ to a ‘process-oriented approach’ in second language writing pedagogy. Nelson and Murhpy (1993: 137) support this idea by stressing that the increasing use of revision in the act of writing in classrooms and the increasing research studies on process-oriented writing

instruction testify to an emerging paradigm shift in second language pedagogy. A detailed comparison of both approaches is given below.

### **2. 2. 1. The Process Approach vs. the Traditional Approach**

The role of the teacher in the process approach is to provide students with a repertoire of strategies to compose texts and enable them to understand the nature and goals of written communication. On the other hand, in the traditional approach, the primary concern is the completed product of the students. Thus, this approach is also called the 'product approach'. Bogel and Hjortshoj (as cited in Sengun, 2002: 13) define product oriented writing instruction as "the English course based on rhetorical forms, grammar, exercises and weekly assignments that pass in silence from student to teacher and back again- as a sad little factory that produces only seconds". In this approach the main aim of writing is seen as practicing the structures and rhetoric of language.

Hairston (as cited in DiPardo, 1986: 129) defines the key features of the process approach. First, it focuses on writing as a process, with instruction aimed at intervening in that process. Second, it teaches strategies for invention and discovery. Third, it emphasizes rhetorical principles of audience, purpose, and occasion, with evaluation based on how well a given piece meets its audience's needs. Fourth, it treats the activities of prewriting, writing, and revision as intertwining, recursive processes, and fifth, it is holistic, involving non rational, intuitive faculties as well as reason.

When the product-oriented approach is compared and contrasted with the process-oriented approach, the role of the teacher is one of the noticeable differences between them. In the product-oriented approach, the teacher is the evaluator whereas in the process-oriented approach, s/he is the facilitator or the mediator. Another striking difference is when the feedback is given. In the former, feedback is given in the last stage of writing while in the latter it is given throughout the writing process. By using a table, it is easier to show the apparent differences between these two approaches and to remember them.



**Table 1**  
**Comparison of Product-Oriented and Process-Oriented Approaches to Writing**

Topic	Product-oriented	Process-oriented approaches
Writing process	Not considered	Considered important
Recursiveness in writing	Not considered	Emphasized
Writing techniques	Not included	Included
Focus of writing	Written product	The whole process of
Prior experience and knowledge	Not emphasized	Emphasized
Motivation and encouragement	Not encouraged	Encouraged
Punctuation	Emphasized	Less emphasized
Writing conventions	Emphasized	Not emphasized
Role of teacher	Evaluator	Facilitator/Mediator
Dynamic role of teacher	Not emphasized	Emphasized
Conferencing with	Not emphasized	Emphasized
Focus of the class	Teacher-centered	Student-centered
Lesson contents	Knowledge based	Strategy-based
Teaching method	Lecturing	Heuristics
Writing environment	Not considered	Considered
Peer collaboration	Not emphasized	Emphasized
Small group discussions	Not emphasized	Emphasized
Tune management	Fixed	Flexible
Feedback time	In the last stage of	Throughout the writing
Individuality and differences among students	Not considered	Considered
Problem-solving ability	Not considered	Considered
Context when writing	Not considered	Considered

Adapted from Shin, H. & Lee, J. (1997). "The meanings of the process-oriented approach to writing education", *Journal of Elementary Korean Education*. No:13, p. 325.

### 2. 2. 2. The Importance of Peer Feedback

There are many reasons why teachers choose to use peer feedback in the ESL writing classroom. First of all, peer readers can provide useful feedback. For example, Rollinson (1998: 26) found high levels of valid feedback among his college-level students: 80% of comments were considered valid and only 7% were

potentially damaging. Caulk (1994: 184) had similar results: 89% of his intermediate/advanced level ESL students made comments he felt were useful, and 60% made suggestions that he himself had not made when looking at the papers. He also found very little bad advice. It has also been shown that peer writers can and do revise effectively on the basis of comments from peer readers. Mendonca and Johnson's (1994: 766) study showed that 53% of revisions made were incorporations of peer comments. Rollinson (1998: 29) found even higher levels of uptake of reader feedback, and 65% of comments were accepted either completely or partially by readers. Finally, it may be that becoming a critical reader of others' writing may make students more critical readers and revisers of their own writing. Students themselves may not only find the peer response experience 'beneficial' (Mendonca and Johnson, 1994: 765) and see 'numerous advantages' of working in groups (Nelson and Murphy, 1992: 188), but its social dimension can also enhance the participants' attitudes towards writing (Chaudron, 1984: 12). Furthermore, it has been accepted by many researchers that peer feedback has the potential to be a powerful learning tool and it is claimed to have various benefits, some of which are helping to generate new ideas (Amores, 1997: 516), building a wide sense of audience awareness (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994: 747; Thompson, 2001: 68), building self confidence (Chaudron, 1984: 13), having the opportunity to make active decisions about whether or not to use their peers' comments as opposed to a passive reliance on teachers' feedback (Hyland, 2000: 38), learning to take responsibility in order to make constructive efforts to correct their own mistakes and assess themselves (Ndubuisi, 1990: 41), and being exposed to not only different perspectives, but also different writing styles and organizational patterns (Dheram, 1993: 230). Also, the feedback leads to consciousness-raising about the writing process; since learners gain awareness of their ineffective or inappropriate writing habits, they realize that different people approach writing in different ways and become conscious of how their linguistic choices affect the identity they project through their writing (Porto, 2001: 40).

Grabe and Kaplan (1996: 380) also emphasize the theoretical background by saying that peer feedback is based on the socio-cognitive approach to learning, according to which "knowledge is best acquired through negotiated interaction" and

cooperative learning. The socio-cognitive view suggests that students will develop as writers more effectively as they engage in transactions over their own texts and the texts of others while negotiating real intentions with a real audience. Rollinson (1989: 26) indicates that peer feedback, with its potentially high level of response and interaction between reader and writer, encourages a collaborative dialogue in which two-way feedback is established and meaning is negotiated between the two parties.

Briefly, peer feedback provides cognitive, social, and linguistic benefits to students. There are various advantages of using peer feedback in writing lessons. First of all, if the peers, rather than the teacher, provide the feedback, student autonomy will be encouraged. Since the feedback received from peers will be different from that of the teacher, students' reactions to the feedback will change. This time, they will be critical to the feedback given to them by their peers. Secondly, when students read the essays of their friends, they will be aware of the mistakes made by their friends, which will help them to avoid making the same mistakes on their papers. The third advantage is that peer feedback works faster than teacher feedback. Since correcting every paper takes a lot of time for the teacher, generally students do not get immediate feedback on what they have written. The fourth advantage is that it will save the teacher's time. The teacher will not be busy with providing feedback for every mid-draft in the class. Moreover, he/she will have more time to design different kinds of activities.

Peer feedback has not only social but also psychological benefits. As Matthusashi et al. (1989: 302) state, for many students the peer relationship is, quite simply, less intimidating than their relationship with the instructor, allowing freer communication, and ideally a new sense of possibilities on the part of the reader, that is, the collaboration of students' results in more enjoyable, more interactive, and less threatening writing activities. They also list some of the other advantages of peer feedback: "Peer tutoring will result in growth in linguistics, cognitive and contextual terms. Knowledge of written language and verbal interaction acquire new strategies for comprehending and evaluating writing tasks, increase awareness of

the importance of context and develop an appreciation for social, linguistic and cultural differences” (Matthusashi et al.,1989: 303).

The literature reveals many other positive effects of peer feedback. Tsui and Ng (2000: 148) also note many advantages which various educators (Chaudron, 1984: 12; Elbow, 1981: 64; Keh, 1990: 298; Nelson & Carson, 1994: 124; White & Arndt, 1991: 39) have claimed for peer feedback, such as:

1. Peer feedback is pitched more at the learner's level of development or interest and is therefore more informative than teacher feedback.

2. Peer feedback enhances audience awareness and enables the writer to see egocentrism in his or her own writing.

3. Learners' attitudes towards writing can be enhanced with the help of more supportive peers and their apprehension can be lowered.

4. Learners can learn more about writing and revision by reading each other's drafts critically and their awareness of what makes writing successful and effective can be enhanced.

5. Learners are encouraged to assume more responsibility for their writing.

Topping (2000: 44) states that in peer feedback sessions students not only compose their own texts, but read the texts written by other students, adopt the role of interested readers and commentators, and help each other in the elaboration of better texts. This collaboration increases a range of social and communication skills, including negotiation skills and diplomacy, verbal communication skills, giving and accepting criticism, justifying one’s position and assessing suggestions objectively. He continues to state that peer feedback has also been proved to increase motivation through the sense of personal responsibility, and improve self confidence.

Grabe and Kaplan (1996: 92) argue that since student reviewers soon perceive that other students experience the same difficulties in writing that they do, peer

feedback also leads to a reduction in writer apprehension and an increase in writer confidence. Responding to peer work involves students in each other's writing, so that they can see similar problems and weaknesses in their own writing.

Studies in L2 writing instruction have focused especially on the beneficial effects of peer reviews (student-student writing conferences) (Goldstein 2005: 53; Kroll, 1990: 46; Zamel, 1985:165), but only recently have researchers begun to explore what exactly goes on during peer reviews and how peer reviews shape L2 students' revision activities (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992: 266; Mangelsdorf, 1992: 281; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992: 239; Stanley, 1992: 227). Because peer reviews have become a common activity in L2 writing instruction, researchers need to broaden the understanding of the nature of the interactions that occur during peer reviews and determine the extent to which such interactions shape L2 students' revision activities. Hansen & Liu (2005:12) propose that effective peer feedback activities are not just a stage in the writing process; they are an integral component of promoting language development in an L2 writing class.

Vygotsky (1978, 1986), whose developmental theory assigns a pivotal role to social interaction, has prompted composition theorists and researchers to begin examining how working together promotes students' progress. Vygotsky's attention to social processes has helped produce a conceptual climate wherein peer-based learning of all kinds has acquired a provocative new role. Vygotsky states, (as cited in Villamil & De Guerrero, 1998: 508), "with assistance, every child can do more than he can by himself - though only within the limits set by the state of his development". Thus, as part of learner-training, the teacher should assist students to expand the repertoire of feedback strategies and instruct them to clarify their intentions and elicit feedback from their peers. As also cited by Soares (1998: 21), from a Vygotskian perspective, peer review helps students become more aware of their writing needs, and it helps them assume more responsibility for their writing improvement.

It is clear that peer feedback sessions are one of the most important activities in the composition process since the writer will read useful comments about the

content and structure of his composition. Thus, it is the instructor's task to provide the students with peer feedback sessions which facilitate the students' revising. Peer feedback motivates students to make revisions, for it provides them with genuine questions and responses from authentic readers. It also helps student writers to develop not only their audience awareness, but also their critical thinking ability, which is essential for good writing. Other benefits, such as stimulating students through multiple and mutual reinforcing perspectives and equipping students with the power to express them, can also be claimed.

Bruner (1972: 62) emphasizes the use of the peer teaching aspect of the process in learning;

It has long been obvious that children learn from their peers, but a more significant observation is that children learn from teaching other children. From this a major educational strategy follows: namely, that every child must be given the opportunity to play the teaching role, because it is through playing this role that he may really learn how to learn . . . The experience of the 1960's seems to indicate that the key to learning is individualization, and the use of the student or pupil as a teacher is one way to increase this individualization. The concept of learning through teaching appears to be one of those basic ideas which do work, and it is finding a place in an enormous variety of settings where the entire school is directed toward becoming a tutorial community.

The benefits of using peers as audiences prompted teachers to experiment further with this method. Why not use students as editors of each other's work? In the process of pointing out weaknesses or errors in each other's papers, students could learn from each other. Students could develop a stronger discriminatory eye when rereading their own papers. They could learn from the feedback others give them as well as from the responses they give others. The picture this created was of an optimal learning setting; students learning from the teacher, from each other, and from their own insights.

Furthermore, Pianko & Radzik (1980: 222) contend that some other advantages of having students respond to each other's writing are that they learn to discriminate more accurately, they become better judges of which expressions sound better, and they become exposed to a greater variety of writing. Although much of this writing is poor, at least they begin to understand why it is poor. Traditionally, students only read and responded to model essays in an assigned text. With this method, students apply the techniques they glean from published writings to their

own writing. Additionally, appropriately placed reading assignments will help students balance their perspectives. The more students are exposed to writing samples, the better the chance that you will integrate the appropriate components of the writing process. By reading each other's writings, students do a great deal of reading, more than they would normally do in a writing class.

Tsui & Ng (2000: 165) indicate that the development of students' critical thinking ability plays a pivotal role in raising awareness. Raised awareness is achieved not only through getting feedback but by giving feedback to peers as well.

Berg (1999b: 232) also makes the point that peer comments help students notice the problems which they cannot notice on their own. Moreover, reading a peer's text might serve as a model for how to read text through the eyes of someone else. It may then help students develop a better sense of how to read their own texts from the perspective of an audience, what questions to ask, and how to systematically examine their text with purpose of improving it. They can revise their texts for clearer meaning.

Interestingly, Thompson (2001: 58) sets forth that any text can in principle be seen as a record of a dialogue between writer and reader. Hirvela (1999: 10) affirms that students experience increased opportunities to review and apply their growing knowledge of second language writing through dialogue and interaction with their peers in the collaborative writing group.

“Sense of audience” has become a common term among researchers as if it is a collocation of feedback. Leki (1993:22) says, for example, “The essence of peer response is students' providing other students with feedback on their preliminary drafts so that the student writers may acquire a wider sense of audience and work toward improving their compositions”. As cited in Harris, (1992: 372), Gere and Abbott also note that teachers endorse peer response because it develops a better sense of audience, reduces paper grading, exposes students to a variety of writing styles, motivates them to revise, and develops a sense of community. The assumption is that the more the student reads and responds, the more her critical skills improve. The more the writer hears reader response, the stronger his sense of audience will be.

Depending on his research, Keh (1990: 301) points out that peer feedback is versatile, with regard to focus and implementation along the 'process writing' continuum. Overall, students feel peer feedback is valuable in gaining a wider sense of audience. Conferences may be used at the pre-writing stage, in-process stage, evaluation stage, or post-product stage and were felt by students to have a beneficial effect on both written and oral work. Finally, comments are useful for pointing out specific problems, for explaining the reasons for them, and for making suggestions. Keh (1990: 302) adds that there are several advantages given for using peer feedback in whatever form it may take. It is said to save teachers time on certain tasks, freeing them for more helpful instruction. Feedback is considered to be more at the learner's own level of development. Learners can gain a greater sense of audience with several readers (i.e. readers other than the teacher). The reader learns more about writing through critically reading others' papers. Students feel that peer feedback is useful in gaining a conscious awareness that they are writing for more than just the teacher. This affects how and what they write. Students write with a greater goal than just writing down as much as possible to cover the topic. They write with a more specific focus because they know that their peers will also be reading their paper. Students also found peer feedback useful for obtaining immediate feedback and 'detecting problems in others' papers'.

In addition, Carol Berkenkorter's (1998) list of the benefits of peer response includes the experience of writing and revising for less threatening audiences than the teacher, of learning to discriminate between useful and non-useful feedback, and of learning to use awareness of anticipated audience responses as writers revise. Smagorinsky (1991: 36) states that by responding to writing in terms of their own anticipated audience, writers learn to think in the manner of their readers and thus understand the reasons behind audience demands. It is obviously seen that the majority of reports focused attention on the beneficial effects of feedback provided to writers when editorial suggestions are used to revise and improve later drafts. Writing for a real audience of peers improved performance and writers received social/emotional support in the writing process through this collaborative effort. Harris (1992: 382) notes the ability of peers to offer each other needed emotional support and adds that peers offer each other feedback which contributes to the



evolution of ideas, that peer response makes the audience real, and that sharing drafts helps to shape and test thought, to extend the invention process. In short, students should become responsible for editing, proofreading, and correcting their peers' texts. Elbow (1981: 18) contends that student writers derive great benefit from recognizing an audience. He notes that as student writers see confusion or incomprehension in their partners' responses or in their faces, writing becomes a task of communicating, rather than merely an exercise to be completed for the teacher. Soares (1998: 21) stresses similar aspects by saying that many benefits have been associated with peer review in language studies, such as providing authentic audiences who are at the writers' level, helping to increase motivation and confidence, giving various perspectives on writing, and developing critical reading and oral skills. Ultimately this gives students more choices to consider regarding additional information, organization, structure and grammar. Finally, Wyngaard & Gehrke (1996: 69) warn that students must have a keen sense of audience. One approach to developing this sense is to have them work with peers. Merely going through the motions of the peer editing process does not develop the sense of audience that the exercise is intended to foster. Furthermore, since the final assessment of student papers usually rests upon the teacher, many times students end up largely writing for an audience of one, the teacher.

Villamil and De Guerrero (1998: 491) explicitly state that peer revision should be seen as an important complementary source of feedback in the ESL classroom. It seems reasonable to make a similar claim for peer feedback in the EFL classroom. Furthermore, the usefulness of reading peers' writing and giving peer feedback was acknowledged by 70% of the peer feedback class students as (a) learning from others' strong points to offset their own weaknesses and (b) communicating with each other to enhance understanding and explore better solutions to writing problems. They insist that peer feedback, with its potentially high level of response and interaction between reader and writer, can encourage a collaborative dialogue in which two-way feedback is established, and meaning is negotiated between the two parties. It also 'fosters a myriad of communicative behaviors' and highly complex socio-cognitive interactions involving arguing, explaining, clarifying, and justifying.

Hansen et al. (2005: 28) state that peer response comments can lead to meaningful revisions, and that compared with teacher feedback, revisions based on peer comments can be better in vocabulary, organization, and content. Increased text length has also been found as a result of revision based on peer comments. Collective scaffolding, negotiation of meaning, and interactions employing a wide range of language functions have also been found to take place during peer response activities, which may promote L2 development. Students have the opportunity to work with their peers through the entire writing process, which may enable them to be better responders to a written draft, as they have more knowledge of the content of their peers' writing, and may result in increased negotiation of meaning and scaffolding.

Marcoulides & Simkin (1995: 220) also list some of the benefits of peer feedback, such as the large amounts of time that instructors can save by using it. Using properly designed evaluation forms and willing students, an instructor can supervise the grading of a large number of papers in a single class hour. There are other advantages as well. One is the faster feedback that can be obtained from in-class reviews. Another is the possibility of increased student interaction and socialization. A third is the fact that peer review of writing samples is, itself, a learning process that exposes students to the complexities of qualitative judgements of other people's work.

Stanley (1992: 67) suggests that the purpose of peer review is to help students revise their essays by receiving different points of view about their drafts. The various perspectives give the students rhetorical choices to select from when they revise their essays. He adds that the ultimate success of a peer evaluation session lies not in how carefully students read each other's drafts, but in how well they communicate their perceptions to the writer.

Many investigators have argued that in instructional settings the peer interactions that occur during peer reviews have specifically "cognitive" benefits because they provide students with opportunities to assume a more active role in their own learning (Barnes, 1976; Brief, 1984; Carl, 1981; Forman & Cazden, 1985).

Using the metaphor of 'discourse as catalyst', Cazden (1988: 126) characterizes peer interactions as enabling students to reconceptualize their ideas in light of their peers' reactions and to establish a didactic relationship with their audience by giving and receiving feedback. Barnes (1976: 200) supports increased opportunities for peer interaction because it allows students to engage in 'exploratory talk' as they try out and work through new ideas using unrehearsed language. Such exploratory talk among peers, claims Barnes (1976: 201) "supports forms of learning which take place less readily in full class". Both Barnes (1976) and Cazden (1988) base their support for more peer interaction upon the Vygotskyian notion that language use, whether written or oral, is a deeply rooted social act and, therefore, that peer interactions bring together the cognitive and social aspects of language by allowing peers to construct meaning within the context of social interaction. Brief (1984: 642) agrees that people internalize thought better when they converse and argues that, like thought, writing is related to conversation as "the way they [students] talk with each other determines the way they will think and the way they will write". Finally, Kroll (1990: 45) claims that peer-evaluation enables the writer to recognize egocentrism in his or her writing.

In almost all the studies, the effects of peer feedback on writers are cited as the predominant cause of improvement. The underlying rationale for these studies is the concept of feedback and information about early attempts that can be used to improve later attempts. In fact, examination of the literature reveals that the effect of reading peers' work, which occupies the vast majority of the participants' time, is significant.

### **2. 2. 3. Drawbacks of Peer Feedback**

Although using peer feedback has the above advantages and is supported by many theories, the value of it is still being questioned. A review of empirical research reveals that a number of studies have been conducted on peer feedback, in areas such as attitudes towards peer feedback, incorporation of feedback, types of changes made after receiving feedback and the influence of training on the quality of the process.

In other words, despite the benefits stated above, teachers and some researchers question the value of peer feedback. The first criticism is about the true

value of peer feedback. As Allei & Connor (1990), Nelson & Murphy (1993), Mangelsdorf (1992), and George (1984) state, students may not regard their peers as qualified enough to comment on their papers. That is, they might distrust and, therefore, underestimate their peers' feedback. Nelson & Carson (1998), Zhang (1995), and Saito (1994) view this as the main reason why students prefer receiving teacher feedback to peer feedback. Another problem with peer feedback is the fact that students from different cultural backgrounds might view peer feedback differently. As Paulus (1999: 268) mentions, if students are defensive, uncooperative, and distrustful of each other, or primarily trying to avoid conflict, little productive work will occur in the classroom.

Saito and Fujita (2004: 48) comment that there is a persistent belief among teachers that students are incapable of rating peers because of their lack of language ability, skill and experience.

Zhang (1995: 216) asserts that less than profitable interactions have been found within peer groups, sometimes because of the participants' lack of trust in the accuracy, sincerity, and specificity of the comments of their peers.

Tsui & Ng (2000: 158) state if the student writer gets a response from his peer, he will question its validity, weigh it against his or her own knowledge and ideas, and then make a decision about the changes to make, instead of indiscriminately accepting comments as if these comments come from the teacher. Kate Mangelsdorf (1992: 276) agrees and says that in her study, 77% of L2 students surveyed who did not like peer review were afraid that their peers would not provide valid advice.

Rollinson (2005: 26) stresses doubts about peer feedback by saying that, although in recent years the use of peer feedback in English as a Second Language (ESL) writing classrooms has been generally supported in the literature as a potentially valuable aid for its social, cognitive, affective, and methodological benefits, doubts on the part of many ESL teachers and students are not uncommon. Teachers may question its value within their particular context, or wonder how such a time consuming activity can be reconciled with course or examination constraints.

Students may have even more doubts: they are uncertain about its purpose and advantages; they may feel instinctively that only a better writer—or a native speaker—is qualified to judge or comment on their written work. They may feel that feedback received from classmates whose English level is more or less the same as theirs is a poor alternative to the 'real thing'—that is, the teacher's periodic red-penned notations. Rollinson (2005: 28) adds that whether feedback is oral or written, the peer response process itself is a lengthy one. Reading a draft (probably more than once), making notes, then either collaborating with another reader to reach a consensus and write the comments, or engaging orally with the writer in a feedback circle, will consume a significant amount of time. What is more is that heterogeneous collaborative groups would be more problematic. Not all students work well together; the success of peer review may depend on exactly who the reviewer is and whose work is being reviewed. Also, different cultural backgrounds might cause conflicts and discomfort in cross-cultural interactions in peer groups. They also reveal potential problems with the peer response technique in the context of a diversity of cultures. In other words, differences in expectations concerning the amount of talk, the role of interlocutors and politeness strategies could contribute to a high level of discomfort in multicultural collaborative peer response groups. Teachers who favor the peer feedback technique have to be aware of these potential problems. In other words, students from certain cultures may feel uncomfortable with certain aspects of the social interaction demanded by peer review. On the other hand, Yang & Badger (2006: 186) emphasize that peer feedback is associated with a greater degree of student autonomy, and so even in cultures that are said to give great authority to the teacher, there is a role for peer feedback.

Grimm (1986: 92) claims: “As any composition teacher knows, dividing a class into groups does not automatically ensure that everyone will receive a useful response. Even students complain that too often peer-group work feels like the blind leading the blind.”

Leki (1992: 126) remarks that certainly the often promoted affective advantages of peer response over teacher response (less threatening, less

authoritarian, friendlier, more supportive, and so on) have not been immediately recognized by students.

Freedman (1985: 42) points out that peer evaluation often turns out to be an exercise in futility because students are busier figuring out easy ways to complete the evaluation sheets than evaluating the text. So, learners may pay only lip-service to the task.

Brammer & Calera (2007: 38) claim that although the emphasis on decentralizing the role of teacher once made peer review a cutting edge, progressive activity, it is now as entrenched as the old routine of lecture, write, and correct. Yet we frequently hear students complain bitterly that peer review is a waste of time or blame their peers for not "catching all the mistakes." Colleagues grumble that students' papers are poor in quality and that students do not stay on task during the peer review process. While such behaviors and responses do not support the theory, they are a reality in many educational settings. Most first-year students will approach peer review as a proofreading exercise and will tend to remain on the level of correcting spelling and punctuation.

Rollinson (2005: 29) also draws our attention to the fact that other factors, such as the age of the students or their inter language level, may constrain the extent to which the response activity can safely or profitably be left in the hands of the students (once the pre-training period is over), since they may find the co-operative, collaborative, aspects of peer feedback somewhat beyond them. Another issue requiring some consideration is that the teacher might find it difficult to hand over a significant degree of responsibility to the students, since he or she will not be able to oversee each group simultaneously, particularly if the response groups are providing oral feedback. In addition, the teacher may find it difficult not to interfere by providing feedback in addition to that of the student readers, which might well reduce the students' motivation and commitment to their own responding. No less significant is the fact that the teacher's role as trainer and supervisor may be rather arduous.

Nelson & Carson (1993: 139) put forward that when writers interact with their peers in a cooperative manner, they are more likely to use the peers' suggestions in revising. When writers interact with their peers in a defensive manner or do not interact at all, the writer is less likely to use the peers' comments.

Considering all the points above, it is essential to prepare and implement a detailed peer feedback program. Without doing this, peer feedback activities may become useless and even discouraging.

### **2. 3. Studies on Peer Feedback**

Up to now, the studies conducted on peer feedback can be classified under six major headings: attitudes towards peer feedback, incorporation of peer feedback, types of the changes made after receiving peer feedback, the role of training in peer feedback, interaction and stances during peer feedback sessions and finally the comparison of peer feedback with teacher feedback. Some researchers conclude that peer feedback should be incorporated in writing classes while others still question the value of peer feedback.

In our country, a few researchers, namely Sengun (2002), Subaşı (2002), Mıstık (1994) and Bahçe, (1999) have studied this subject and their findings and results are mostly positive. The details of their studies are given below along with those of foreign studies.

#### **2. 3. 1. Studies with Positive Results for Peer Feedback**

Instead of only saying “X did research on Y and found that Z is beneficial”, the aim of this section is to give the main points of the studies in this area by gathering them under some sub-headings. In this way, the intention is to guide new researchers to realize what has been done and what can be done and how to apply the previous researchers’ experiences, especially in peer feedback activities, in their studies.

### **2. 3. 1. 1. Studies on the Role of Training in Peer Feedback**

Since the aim of this study is to investigate the effect of peer feedback training on students' writing achievement and quality, similar studies have been taken into consideration first. Berg's research (1999b) has been one of the cornerstones in this field. She studied the effects of trained peer response on ESL students' revision types and writing quality. Participants were 46 ESL students from 19 different countries. Students were divided into two groups; one was trained in how to participate in peer response to writing and the other was not trained. The training consisted of 10 steps, ranging in time from 5 to 45 minutes each:

1. comfortable classroom and trust among students (a number of in-class get-to-know each other activities and out-of-class pair and group projects),
2. the role of peer response in the writing process (writing as a process is explained),
3. professional writers using peer response (through a class discussion, they arrive at the conclusions that all authors ask others to read their work),
4. the teacher using peer response (several drafts of a conference proposal with comments from Berg's colleagues are examined),
5. peer response to writing (students respond as a class to an unknown ESL student's paragraph stressing the revising for clarity of meaning and rhetorical-level aspects rather than cosmetic sentence-level errors),
6. appropriate vocabulary and expressions (appropriateness of language in responding to someone's writing is addressed by comparing inappropriate comments),
7. response to a collaborative writing project (students get into groups of two or three and respond to an academically structured paragraph by using the peer respond sheet),



8. conversations among the authors, responders and the teacher (a whole-class discussion about some of the difficulties in judging classmates' comments and students' lack of confidence in their revision abilities),
9. revision guidelines (a whole-class discussion about some good revision strategies and how peer response helps authors understand that there is sometimes a discrepancy between intended and perceived meaning),
10. sample peer response sessions (students view two video examples of peer response).

The preparation was designed to address a number of specific ideas and provide students with certain response skills. These skills concerned the language used to respond to writing (asking questions, using specific words rather than making vague and general statements, and stating ideas as opinion, not fact) and the foci of discussion ( a focus on higher-level aspects that concern the meaning of the text as opposed to lower-level aspects that do not concern the meaning of the text). The researcher used the taxonomy of Faigley and Witte (1981) to code meaning changes in the second drafts. Revision types were based on the discrimination between two types of changes; those that affect text meaning and those that do not. The findings of the study showed that training accounted for greater writing improvement of revised drafts. That is, trained students' second drafts improved more than untrained students'. In addition, the significant difference between the mean number of meaning-type revisions between the trained and untrained groups suggested that training, in fact, made the difference. As a result, trained students achieved higher scores than untrained students, which means appropriate training results in better quality writing in a second draft. The researcher (Berg, 1999b: 232) points out two important classroom implications at the end of her study: firstly, teachers who desire to use peer response as a part of their approach to teaching writing in the ESL classroom have some evidence that it can work and it can result in improved writing and secondly, in order for peer response to work, training seems essential. The difference in results between the trained and the untrained groups in the study suggests that training results in more successful peer response in terms of revision

type and writing quality. In other words, by training students to offer and receive constructive feedback and allowing them to practice these roles, teachers can help to make peer response a valuable and successful experience.

Paulus (1999) also conducted a research study to find out the effect of feedback on the improvement of student writing. Eleven ESL students participated in the study, and working in pairs, students received written and oral feedback from their classmates on the first drafts of their essays, after which they revised and wrote a second draft. All of the students tape-recorded two think-aloud protocols (TAPs); the first as they revised their essays based on their peer review discussion and the second as they revised based on teacher feedback. The researcher analyzed student essays in detail, categorizing the types and sources of revisions made according to Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy of revisions by evaluating the first, second and the third drafts of the students' essays, and by analyzing the TAPs of the students. The repeated-measures t-test indicated that a statistically significant improvement in essay scores took place from the first, the second and the third drafts. Based on these findings, the study revealed that students did use both the peer and the teacher feedback to influence their revisions. While Connor and Asenavage (1994) were discouraged to find that only 5 % of total revisions made resulted from peer comments, the study of Paulus (1999) found nearly three times that number, with 14 % of total revisions made as a result of peer feedback. Even more encouraging and relevant is that 32 % of the changes made to the second drafts of the essay, written immediately after receiving only peer feedback, were a result of peer feedback. These outcomes show that the students found their classmates' advice particularly useful and they took their classmates' advice seriously. In the light of the positive results of the study, the researcher (Paulus, 1999) claims that writing instructors should integrate peer feedback into the writing classroom with confidence that this feedback can be effective and can be used by many students in their revisions.

Another study which investigated the effects of training on peer revision was conducted by Zhu (1995). Four instructors and 169 students participated. Each instructor taught one class in the experimental group and one in the control group. The experimental group received systematic training conferences; the control group

did not. The training conferences, involving one instructor and three students, were group conferences, from 15 to 25 minutes long. For each conference, one student volunteered writing to be critiqued. The papers volunteered, however, were not drafts on which students were working at that time, but expository papers done for other classes or before the current composition assignment. During the training conference, the instructor and the students discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the essay together and provided suggestions for revision. The instructors focused on helping students respond critically to peer-writing and to provide specific feedback. They made it clear that when critiquing peer writing the students should focus on global concerns, such as development of ideas, audience and purpose and organization. Students worked in groups of three and were given response sheets during peer revision sessions. Their group discussions were audio-taped and their drafts were collected. The researcher used data from various sources: students' written comments on peer writing, students' initial drafts on which peer feedback was generated, tape-recordings of students' peer revision sessions, holistic scores on assignments students had written before the study and essays that they revised following peer revision, student responses to the pre-test and post-test attitude questionnaires and notes of and material from classroom observations. Quantitative analysis of students' written feedback on peer writing revealed that students trained for peer revision provided significantly more and significantly better comments on each other's writing. Qualitative analysis helped to explain the quantitative findings; students trained for revision could provide more and better feedback because they participated more actively in peer revision groups, attended to the more global concerns of writing, and engaged in more extended negotiation. Similarly the students' responses to the questionnaire revealed that the students trained in peer revision demonstrated better attitudes toward it.

Subaşı (2002) did a similar study and investigated the effects of training in written peer feedback on students' revising their first drafts and providing written comments on each other's writing. She conducted an empirical study with 36 first year intermediate level students at an English language teaching department in Turkey. She found that the students in the experimental group produced better writing quality than the ones in the control group. She also found that training

students in written peer feedback led to significantly more and better-quality feedback.

Villamil and De Guerrero (1998) conducted another study in Puerto Rico and found that peer feedback had a beneficial effect on the quality of writing and also led to more learner autonomy.

### **2. 3. 1. 2. Studies on the Negotiations during the Peer Feedback Process and Their Impact on Revisions**

Some researchers deal with negotiations during the peer feedback process and their impact on revisions: Mendonca and Johnson (1994), for instance, conducted a research study to describe the negotiations that occur during ESL students' peer reviews and the ways these negotiations shape students' revision activities. Twelve advanced ESL learners enrolled in a writing course participated in peer reviews. For the peer review, students worked in pairs. Firstly, they gave oral feedback and then they wrote down their comments on each other's papers. They asked questions, offered explanations, gave suggestions, restated what their peers had written or said and corrected grammar mistakes. Audio-taped transcripts of the peer reviews and the students' first and revised drafts were analyzed, and post interviews were conducted. The findings of the study indicated that reviewers made negotiations during the peer review sessions. Although students used their peers' comments to revise their essays, they incorporated those comments in their revisions selectively, deciding whether the comments would fit in their revisions. Since peers from different fields of study were better at pinpointing unrelated ideas in the drafts, they asked more questions, either in the form of requests for explanation or comprehension checks. However, peers from the same field of study could offer more ideas without asking detailed questions. All students in the study reported that they found the peer review beneficial since they could see the points that were clear and needed revision in their drafts with the comments of their peers. In addition, students pointed out that they enjoyed reading their peers' essays as they could compare their work with their peers and learn some more new ideas about writing. The results of this study support the claim that peer reviews are a valuable form of feedback in L2 writing instruction.

Therefore, according to the researchers (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994), teachers should use peer feedback sessions in their classes since peer revisions allow students to explore and negotiate their ideas as well as to develop a sense of audience.

Similarly, Stanley (1992) conducted a qualitative research study that examined whether or not L2 learners who received coaching demonstrate a greater level of student engagement in the task of evaluation, more productive communication about writing and clearer guidelines for the revision of drafts. A total of 30 students were the subjects of this study. The subjects were taking a freshman composition course at the University of Hawaii. They came from different countries. A writing class of 15 students was given lengthy preparation (approximately 7 hours during the first 4 weeks of a 15 week semester) for peer evaluation, during which time they considered the genre of student essays and discovered the rules of effective communication within the group. As a contrast to this class, the group work of another class was also studied. They were prepared for group work with a shorter and more typical procedure of watching a demonstration peer-evaluation session and then discussing it. The genre of the student essay was introduced through a series of drafts written by previous students of the course. Students followed several writers through successive stages of readiness from rough first draft to polished third. With every draft, students were asked to comment on, not to bridge, cohesive gaps. They were asked not to supply meaning where the writer had been inexplicit, but to pinpoint vague or unclear sections of text. They were urged to judge the writer's claims and assumptions against their own knowledge and to report their judgement. By looking at the succession of drafts, they saw each essay as a work in progress. As they read later drafts, they searched for evidence of reworking and repairs. In short they were pressed to read students' essays with an uncommonly close eye. All the students' peer evaluation sessions were audio-taped and then transcribed. The transcriptions and the drafts were analyzed. For each transcript the evaluators' responses during group work were assigned into seven categories: pointing, advising, collaborating, announcing, reacting, eliciting, and questioning. The writers' responses were assigned into four categories: responding, eliciting, announcing and classifying. The drafts were also analyzed for evidence of response to evaluators' comments. Analysis of the final versions of the essays collected from both groups showed that essays

produced by the experimental group received a significantly higher number of revisions than those produced by the control group. The researcher (Stanley, 1992) found that students who received coaching were seen to look at each other's writing more closely and to offer the writers more specific guidelines for revision than did the uncoached students. Hence, the coached groups dealt “more often in concrete, specific issues and more often gave the writer a blueprint for revision” (Stanley, 1992: 229). Stanley (1992) asserts that considering the quality of their partners' ideas, gauging the soundness of their logic and tracking the coherence of their arguments are the essential skills for writers which are not easily attained. Therefore, students should be exposed to organized practice of these skills during L2 instruction.

Nelson and Murphy (1993) tried to find the answer to the research question “When revising drafts, do students incorporate suggestions made by their peers in response groups?” Four university students from four different countries (Chile, Colombia, Peru and Taiwan) were selected according to their scores on a university-developed placement exam. They were given a set of guiding questions related to the content of their paragraphs and were told not to correct mechanical errors such as grammar, spelling and punctuation. Students talked through their responses to the drafts during peer-group discussions and they revised their paragraphs at home. The researchers analyzed the transcripts and the final drafts in the light of their peers' comments using a 5- point coding scale. Nelson & Murphy (1993) found that the degree to which L2 writers incorporate peer suggestions in their revised drafts depends on the nature of the writers' interactions with the group. When the writers interacted with their peers in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to use their peers' suggestions in writing. On the other hand, when students were faced with a defensive manner and no interaction at all, the writer was less likely to use the peers' comments.

Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger (1992) carried out a study concerning how advanced ESL students actually respond to each other during feedback sessions and what these responses suggest about their assumptions concerning peer reviews and composition. Participants were sixty freshmen ESL composition students. All were enrolled in the study by responding to an essay written by another ESL student in the

previous semester. The researchers analyzed the stances the students took toward the text and the student writer as they made suggestions for revision. Three stances were defined at the end of their analysis in the students' reviews: an interpretive stance (students impose their own ideas about the topic onto the text), a prescriptive stance (students expected the text to follow a prescribed form) and a collaborative stance (students tried to see the text through the author's eyes). The researchers classified the reviews according to the dominant stance the student writers took toward the student text. The results of the study revealed that a majority of the students took a prescriptive stance because they believed that correct form was more important than the communication of meaning. The analysis of the collaborative category showed that the students wrote reviews by focusing on the important aspect of the rhetorical situation: purpose, audience, message, context and forum. According to the researchers (Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992: 249), creating a collaborative classroom setting is the key point in making students express themselves in a particular context since students become actively involved in making meaning, not just receiving meaning.

Villamil and De Guerrero (1996) conducted a research study which sought to investigate the kind of revision activities students engage in while working in pairs, the strategies peers employ in order to facilitate the revision process, and significant aspects of social behavior in dyadic peer revision. Fifty four intermediate ESL college students participated in the study. The students were paired for each revision session and writer/reader labels were given: in each pair, there was a 'writer', whose composition would be revised, and a 'reader', whose task was to help the author to revise his/her paper. Interactions between pairs of students during two revision sessions were recorded and transcribed. The analysis of the transcripts yielded seven types of social-cognitive activities in which the students engaged: reading, assessing, dealing with trouble sources, composing, writing comments, copying and discussing task procedures. There were also five different mediating strategies used to facilitate the revision process: employing symbols and external resources, using L1, providing scaffolding, resorting to inter language knowledge, and vocalizing private speech, and four significant aspects of social behavior: management of authorial control, affectivity, collaboration and adopting reader/writer roles. The outcomes of the study

revealed that peer feedback is indeed a very complex process which enlarges the picture of what happens during interaction and highlights some of the benefits of collaborative writing in the L2 classroom. As the researchers (Villamil & De Guerrero, 1996) point out, peer feedback gives students a chance to explain, defend and clarify their points of view. In addition, it has the potential for bringing out into open the students' limitations and creating awareness, without which remedial action would never successfully be undertaken.

Gere and Stevens (1985) (cited in Sengun, 2002: 18) studied peer-evaluation groups in grades 5, 8 and 12 and found that these writers addressed questions of meaning and content in their interactions, rather than merely serving as proofreaders for each other.

### **2. 3. 1. 3. Studies on the Comparison of Teacher Feedback with Peer Feedback**

Some other researchers have compared and contrasted teacher feedback with peer feedback.

Mistik (1994) investigated whether peer feedback as opposed to teacher feedback helped to improve Turkish EFL students' writing skills with respect to content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. She also investigated students' reactions towards peer feedback. She found that peer feedback seemed to be effective with respect to the experimental group's writing quality in the areas of content, organization and language use when compared to teacher feedback. She also found that almost all students had a positive attitude towards peer feedback.

Tsui and Ng (2000) carried out a study on the roles of teacher and peer comments in revisions in writing among secondary L2 learners in Hong Kong. The study involved 27 Chinese students in secondary 6 and 7, which are pre-university years in Hong Kong. All were enrolled in writing courses in which peer and teacher feedback were used. Students were asked to read their peers' writing and provide written comments. Then they provided oral responses to their peers' writing in groups of three or four. All peer response group discussions on the first draft were audio taped. The data collected consisted of a questionnaire survey, students' drafts



and comments and follow-up interviews with a sub-sample of six students. The researchers analyzed the transcripts and the drafts of the students to find out whether revisions were made or not after receiving peer and teacher feedback. This was done by coding the written and verbal comments according to whether they required any revisions, and if they did, whether they were incorporated or not in the proceeding drafts, and whether the revisions were self-initiated. The findings of the study showed that some learners incorporated high percentages of both teacher and peer comments, some incorporated higher percentages teacher comments than peer comments, and others incorporated very low percentages of peer comments. Those who incorporated a low percentage of peer comments saw the teacher as a figure of authority, who guaranteed quality, and did not have confidence in their peers, who were non-native speakers of English. However, those students who incorporated a high percentage of peer comments saw the value of getting feedback from their peers since they felt that peer comments did help them to revise and improve their writing. What is interesting is that no matter whether the students incorporated a high percentage or a relatively lower percentage of peer comments, they saw peer comments as having certain roles to play. From the interviews with the learners, four roles of peer comments that contributed positively to the writing process were identified: enhancing the sense of audience, raised awareness through reading peers' writings, encouraging collaborative learning and fostering ownership of text. This suggests that even for L2 learners who are less mature L2 writers, peer comments do play an important part. According to the researchers (Tsui & Ng, 2000: 168), the teacher should highlight the fact that responding to peers' writing is a learning process that will raise their awareness of what constitutes good and poor writing, help them to identify their own strengths and weaknesses in writing, and make their texts more reader friendly.

Karegianes, Pascarella, and Pflaum (1980) also conducted a study on peer editing and reported that peer editing groups developed significantly higher writing proficiency than did students whose essays were edited by teachers.

Ford (1973) (cited in Sengun, 2002: 19) compared two groups of college composition students, one group receiving peer feedback and the other, teacher feedback. The results indicated that the peer feedback group did significantly better.

In 1974, Lagana conducted a study on peer editing and reported that the peer group made greater gains in writing quality than a teacher evaluation group.

### **2. 3. 1. 4. Studies on the Attitude towards Peer Feedback**

Attitude towards peer feedback has been another topic which researchers have studied. Sengun (2002) studied the impact of a 4-week training program on students' attitude change and on the types of the changes students made to their written work after receiving feedback. She chose 15 first year students of a foreign language department in Turkey. Before and after the training program attitude questionnaires were administered and interviews with 8 students were conducted to arrive at more detailed information about the students' attitudes towards peer feedback. She found that the training program resulted in significant attitude changes of students. She also found that the training program enabled students to make not only surface level changes but also meaning level changes.

Bahçe (1999) investigated not only the student readers' attitudes towards peer feedback, but also the stances adopted by them. Furthermore, she looked for function and content categories used by readers in different stances and the relation between the reader's stance and writer's attitude. She selected proficient student writers and collected two sets of data for analysis. The first one consisted of the peer feedback interactions of the sixteen pairs and the other was the journals in which the subjects expressed their attitudes towards peer feedback. She found that Turkish readers adopted four different stances towards the writer and the text: authoritative, interpretive, probing and collaborative. However, her investigation of the relation between the reader's stance and the writer's attitude indicated no significant relation between these two variables.

Kastra (1987) also tested ninth-grade writers' attitudes towards writing after peer response and teacher response. She found that students who participated in peer

evaluation demonstrated a more positive attitude toward writing than did the students who had received teacher response alone. She also found a significant increase in writing fluency in the group that had participated in peer-evaluation sessions.

### **2. 3. 1. 5. Studies on Various Other Topics**

Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod, and Rosen (1975) studied the writing process with very different research techniques. Britton and his colleagues collected 2,122 writing samples from 500 secondary students, produced under natural conditions in British school settings. The researchers then independently coded the writing samples to indicate the audience that the students had in mind as they wrote. They found the “teacher-examiner” to be the audience for 40% of the writing produced by first-year (U.S. sixth-grade) students, increasing to 60% of the audience for seventh-year (U.S. twelfth-grade) students. Britton and his colleagues conclude by urging schools to broaden the audience for student writing so that the audience demands in school more closely match the varied writing demands in the world outside school. Peer groups could certainly play an important role in helping promote such a goal.

Min (2005) conducted a different classroom study to train 18 responders in a sophomore EFL writing class. She identified four characteristics of comments reported to facilitate students’ revisions in previous research: clarifying writers’ intentions, identifying problems, explaining the nature of problems, and making specific suggestions, and used them as guidelines during in-class training. She also employed the conference method to meet each responder twice to provide individual assistance. Subsequent text analyses of the written comments generated by responders post peer review training revealed that responders could produce significantly more comments containing two or three of the aforementioned characteristics and were able to produce more relevant and specific comments on global issues.

Considering all these aforementioned studies, it can be concluded that peer feedback activities can be very productive and beneficial, but many studies show that the productivity does not come without a considerable investment of time and effort

in preparing students for pair work. Therefore, both teachers and students have vital roles in the process of providing feedback for student writers.

### **2. 3. 2. Studies with Negative Results for Peer Feedback**

Although there are numerous studies which report that peer feedback is a very useful technique, there are others which document unfruitful outcomes of this technique. They question the effectiveness of peer response and suggest reconsidering the use of peer response in student composition classes. Some examples of these negative results and the reasons why they may have occurred are: some students saw the teacher as the only feedback giver (Zhang, 1995; Sengupta, 1998; Carson & Nelson, 1998), some students suspected the validity of their peer responses due to cultural differences (Zhang, 1995), in other words, different cultural backgrounds might cause conflicts and discomfort in cross-cultural interactions in peer groups (Allaei & Connor, 1990; Carson & Nelson, 1994), some students could not work cooperatively together (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Amores, 1997), some students felt uncomfortable when making negative comments; they were afraid of making honest and critical comments because they feared such comments might hurt other people's feelings (Allaei & Connor, 1990; Leki, 1990; Mangelsdorf, 1992), some students felt that their limitations in terms of language skills constrained them in making contributions in the peer response process (Allaei & Connor, 1990) and some students questioned the quality of the responses. They felt that their peers offered nonspecific, unhelpful and even incorrect feedback (Allaei & Connor, 1990; Leki, 1990).

After a short overview of the main drawbacks of peer feedback activities, a detailed presentation of the studies with negative results for peer feedback would be beneficial to realize the source of the problems and to find solutions for better results.

#### **2. 3. 2. 1. Studies on the Comparison of Feedback Types**

The studies with negative results for peer feedback have been mostly on the comparison of feedback types. Zhang (1995) asked eighty-one academically oriented ESL students which type of feedback they believed was most effective by

statistically analyzing their responses to a questionnaire. Three research hypotheses were formulated in his study. The first one was that ESL learners would strongly prefer peer feedback since it is “inherently more meaningful or relevant and gives more social support than teacher feedback” (Zhang, 1995: 213). The second one was that peer feedback would be preferred over self-feedback because there was “no audience and no social support”. The last one was that self-directed feedback would be preferred over teacher feedback since the learners felt as if “teacher feedback threatens the ESL writer's natural inclination toward self-determination, ownership, or empowerment, whereas self-feedback protects the author's rights to his or her own texts” (Zhang, 1995: 213). The participants were eighty-one ESL students enrolled in one private college and one state university in a western state of the United States. They experienced all three types of feedback: teacher feedback, peer feedback and self feedback. They were encouraged to reflect on their own ESL writing experience and to give honest opinions by answering a two-item questionnaire. They were asked to write down whether they preferred teacher feedback or non-teacher feedback, that is, peer feedback or self feedback, and whether they preferred peer feedback or self feedback before they wrote their final drafts. The researcher converted the answers into a rank order of preferences. The results showed that claims made about the effective advantage of peer feedback in L1 writing did not apply to ESL writing, since ESL students overwhelmingly preferred teacher feedback. However, Tsui and Ng (2000) found just the opposite in their study and asserted that even for L2 writers; peer comments do play an important part.

Connor and Asenavage (1994) investigated the impact of peer responses on subsequent revisions, comparing comments from the teacher with other sources. Two peer response groups, four freshmen ESL students in each, participated. The students were introduced to methods of collaborative response through modeling. They were given a 'peer review sheet' to be completed and also were expected to develop their own guidelines for collaboration. They were encouraged to be supportive, helpful and to overlook surface errors such as grammar, punctuation and spelling. The peer collaboration was audio-taped, and written comments by the teachers or others were noted. Faigley and Witte's taxonomy of revision was used to identify the types of revisions: surface or text-based. There are six specific types of revisions in each of

these broad categories: additions, deletions, substitutions, permutations, distributions and consolidations. The results showed that the students made many revisions, but few of these were the result of direct peer group response; approximately 5% of the revisions resulted from peer comments, 35% could be described as resulting from teacher comments and about 60% of the revisions occurred as a result of self/others. Students who made the greatest number of changes made predominantly more text-based changes, students who made fewer changes generally made more surface changes. The outcomes of the research raised questions regarding group formation and types of modeling done for group work, due to the fact that the small impact on revisions from peers' comments in the two groups in the study was disappointing.

Sengupta (1998) conducted a study to explore how the educational context and its belief system shapes ESL students' perception of peer evaluation. The participants were a class of girls in a secondary school writing class in Hong Kong and their native language was Cantonese. The study was designed to answer two research questions. The first one asked whether there were textual changes arising from peer evaluation or not, and the second one asked whether the students believed peer evaluation led to awareness of themselves as real readers or not. The students were given the self and peer evaluation sheets to be completed during the feedback session. Their evaluation sheets were compared to identify peer suggestions that were distinct from those made by the writers themselves. Then, their revised drafts were examined to see whether the peer suggestions had been used or not. Twelve students' compositions, that is, six pairs, were chosen for the analysis and six students were also interviewed to search for their genuine thoughts of peer evaluation. The findings of the study showed that the self and peer evaluation of the same composition were not different from each other. In addition, none of the students made use of their peer's suggestions unless they had detected the same problem in their self-evaluation. According to the results of the interviews, none of the students believed that peer-evaluation led to self-awareness of themselves as real readers. They thought that the real reader was their teacher due to his "perfect grammar" not a peer "with a questionable command of English" (Sengupta, 1998: 22). Moreover, the students voiced the importance of teacher feedback repeatedly since their teacher was giving the grades. Sengupta (1998: 25) concludes that peer-

evaluation was not able to “bring a real reader's perspective”. According to her, one of the reasons of this failure is that the input may not prepare the students with adequate linguistic and cognitive maturity to evaluate and act upon the evaluation. Providing students an evaluation sheet may be one of the other reasons since this may have encouraged a “prescriptive stance rather than a collaborative one”. Also, Sengupta points out that the most significant reason why these students could not benefit from peer review was their perception that “the teacher was the only reader”. She emphasizes the traditional roles of teacher and learner in the school curriculum and states that these roles “seem so deep-rooted that the only possible interpretation of knowledge appears to be that it is transmitted from the teacher to the student and not constructed by the classroom community” (Sengupta, 1998: 25).

Hedgcock and Leftkowitz (1992) also investigated peer feedback in FL writing. In their study of 30 students in accelerated first-year college French, the participants wrote two essay assignments requiring three separate drafts. Students in the experimental group participated in peer review in small groups, reading their papers aloud to each other and receiving oral feedback from their peers. Students in the control group received written feedback from their teacher. Comparison of the final drafts of the assignments revealed that there was no significant difference between the two groups in performance from the first assignment to the second assignment. These results also indicated that the teacher-feedback group improved significantly in grammar but got significantly worse in content, organization, and vocabulary, whereas the peer-feedback group showed the exact opposite change: significant improvement in content, organization, and vocabulary, but significant weakening in grammar.

### **2. 3. 2. 2. Studies on the Effect of Cultural Differences on Peer Feedback**

Because cultural differences are said to cause problems in peer feedback activities, some researchers have investigated this problematic topic especially for students from far-eastern countries. Carson and Nelson (1994) underscore two cross-cultural issues in the dynamics of ESL groups: individual versus collective goals of groups and in-group versus out-group relationships. They argue that students from a

background with collective goals (i.e. China and Japan) collaborate in order to benefit the group, but students from western countries expect to work together in the group to serve the needs of the individuals.

Nelson and Carson (1998) investigated Chinese and Spanish-speaking students' perceptions of their interactions in peer response groups in an ESL composition class. Eleven students in an advanced ESL writing class at a large metropolitan university in the United States participated in the study. The researchers conducted a micro ethnographic study of peer response groups since they were interested in group interaction as it occurred naturally. For data collection, three response groups were videotaped for six consecutive weeks. Then, the researchers interviewed three Chinese and two Spanish-speaking group members. During the interviews, the researcher and the student watched the videotapes of the peer response group in which the student had participated together, and the students answered the researcher's questions about the group interactions. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed. The researchers examined the transcripts and coded according to the following categories: initiating comments, responding to peer comments (agree), responding to peer comments (disagree) and effectiveness of comments. The results of the study indicated that both the Chinese and Spanish-speaking students preferred negative comments that identified problems in their drafts. They also preferred the teacher's comments to those of their peers, and found grammar and sentence-level comments relatively ineffective. Nelson and Carson (1998: 128) claim that peer response was not effective in their study since the students perceived their task as finding peers' mistakes; thus, the written product, not the writing process, often became the focus of group interaction, along with a sense that early drafts are to be seen as problem-filled and in need of correction. Also, Nelson and Carson (1998: 128) pointed out that the students were not satisfied with the type of comments since the comments were mainly on "word or sentence level". Finally, the researchers stated that the Chinese and Spanish speakers had divergent views about the amount and kind of talk that was needed to identify the problems. The Chinese students saw the goal of peer response as "problem-identification", but they were not keen on making negative comments on a peer's draft since this might lead to division, not cohesion, in a group.



In an ethnographic study of two ninth-grade writing classes, Freedman (1987) looks at how peer groups function within learning environments informed by diverging instructional theories. In addition to providing the context for the groups, she presents a detailed analysis of the talk in the groups. In one classroom, the teacher depended on peer response as central to her teaching; from no other source in the classroom context could students get substantive help during the writing process. Overall, the teacher did not relinquish control of the groups; she gave them specific directions and had group members complete sheets she prepared for assessing one another's work. An analysis of the patterns of the talk in the groups shows that the students were oriented to the teacher and the teacher's tasks rather than to one another's writing. They were as concerned with completing the sheets in a way that would please the teacher as they were with interacting with one another. They refused to offer evaluative commentary. In the end, rather than serving as a comfortable setting where students could collaborate, these groups functioned more as a time for individual writers to complete teacher-given tasks.

### **2.3.2.3. Studies on the Interaction during the Peer Feedback Process**

Finally, interaction during the peer feedback process and its influence on revision reveal some problems which should be focused on to implement a productive training program: Nelson and Murphy (1992, 1993) analyzed one writing group over six different collaborative sessions. Their earlier study discovered that the students were on task and incorporated a fair amount of their peers' suggestions into their revisions. During the interactions, four roles emerged: the attacker, the weakest writer, the best writer, and the mediator or facilitator. In the later study, using the same set of data, the researchers focused on the types of interaction that triggered revisions. The results indicated that "when writers interacted with their peers in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to use their peers' suggestions in revising; however, when writers interacted with their peers in a defensive manner or did not interact at all, they were less likely to use the peers' comments" (Nelson and Murphy, 1993: 140).

Amores (1997) carried out another study in order to describe more fully what takes place when students interact as a result of specific writing assignments. Their perceptions of role and status, language proficiency, credibility of feedback and instructor intervention in the peer editing process were also examined. Eight undergraduate students in a third year Spanish composition and grammar review course participated in the study. Data was collected over four months through interviews, participant observation, artifact inventories and questionnaires. In terms of students' perceptions of role and status, the results revealed that students perceived a relationship between the quantity of feedback provided by a participant and the power that the provider assumed. In other words, some students had authority over the others since they were able to make valid suggestions for changes in the drafts they were editing. In terms of students' perceptions of language proficiency, the students claimed that the students who appeared 'to know more language-wise', that is, the students who were brilliant at Spanish grammar, had a dominant role in peer editing sessions. In terms of students' perceptions of credibility of feedback, the students reported that negative criticism made them feel discomfort and their self-image was threatened. Therefore, they decided to conform their writing to their peer's expectations to avoid negative criticism. In terms of students' perceptions of instructor intervention, the students said that they should take their instructor's feedback into consideration seriously since the instructors were giving grades. The outcomes of the study clearly indicated that the nature of peer editing produces a sense of discomfort and uneasiness among the participants. According to Amores (1997: 520), both instructors and peer-editors need to respect "the authority of the author and take great care not to compromise ownership of the text under the guise of constructive criticism". In the light of the results of the study, Amores (1997: 522) concludes that students placed much less importance on peer editing as an activity than they placed on submitting work for evaluation by the teacher. The principal reason for participating in peer editing was that the instructor required it, not because it was perceived by the participants as a particularly valuable activity linguistically.

Mendonca and Johnson (1994) also attempted to illustrate the nature of peer interaction in relation to revision. Analyzing the frequency of students' incorporating their peers' suggestions, they concluded that in 53 percent of the instances of

revisions, students incorporated their peer's comments, in 10 percent of the instances they did not use their peers' comments and in the remaining 37 percent they revised their first drafts without discussing these changes with their partners in the peer response sessions.

In addition to the points above, allowing students to operate in peer groups requires teachers to give up a large measure of classroom control. Even with the most energetic supervision, no teacher can effectively monitor all groups to ensure they are performing the required work. Since exchanging information is the basis of peer editing, several conversations are occurring simultaneously, and it is virtually impossible for the teacher to guarantee that these discussions do not become small talk or social chit-chat. Referring to this disadvantage, Roessler (1983: 162) writes, "the more conservative among us will probably not be ready to relinquish our role in the classroom so completely".

It is obvious that support abounds for the cognitive, social, and linguistic benefits of peer feedback, and some recent research has begun to investigate not only what L2 students actually do during peer feedback but also the range of problems that tend to arise during the peer feedback process.

To conclude, it can be claimed that unless students believe in the feedback process and have some experience of it, they will not get sufficient benefit from this element of the writing process. They need to know how to give efficient feedback.

#### **2. 4. The Significance of Training Students in Peer Feedback**

The key to making peer feedback a welcome component in writing classrooms lies in teacher planning and student training. Most of the potential problems can be prevented or handled by establishing effective procedures and adequate training, that is, coaching students in the principles and practices of effective peer group interaction and response. Without such training, it is more likely that student response will be inappropriate: "it may be destructive and tactless; it may also tend towards dealing with surface matters rather than issues of meaning and content, or it may be prescriptive and authoritarian rather than collaborative and

supportive” (Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger, 1992). In any case, as Stanley (1992: 230) points out, it is not fair to expect that students will be able to perform these demanding tasks without first having been offered organized practice with and discussion of the skills involved. Paulus (1999: 269) stresses the urgency by saying: “Studies that investigate the role of training students on peer feedback are indeed urgently needed”. Long (as cited in McGroarty & Zhu, 1997: 36) agrees and says that writing teachers should be encouraged to implement peer feedback sessions with training into their classroom settings in order to open up the ‘black box’ of the writing classroom. Moore (1986) also stresses the necessity of training students to become effective peer responders. He emphasizes that students should be encouraged to evaluate each other's papers throughout the writing process. Moreover, he insists that it is the students' responsibility to give and take criticism. Grimm (1986: 92) says “Students should not be asked to do anything they do not know well. They do need guidance through the response process, but they need a framework rather than a blueprint.” Hansen, Jette and Liu (2005: 12) assert that while some teachers may be hesitant to use peer response because of concerns about its efficacy, time constraints, or prior unsuccessful experiences, well-articulated and purposeful peer response activities can be beneficial.

There is some variation in approaches to training students to provide peer feedback. The students in Zhu's (2001) study received training just in the form of watching a video on peer review, and Tsui and Ng (2000) report only that their students were simply given broad categories under which they needed to write comments. However, most studies have used more extensive preparation. Berg's (1999) study shows the benefits of a 10-stage training plan, which can be examined in section 2.3.1.1 of this dissertation. Min (2005) found that a demonstration of feedback and conferences between the teacher and individual students with each conference lasting one hour was effective.

Connor and Asenavage's (1994: 267) study on peer response included some training in the form of modeling and they specifically recommend that “more extensive and specific peer response training with follow-up should be implemented” when using peer response to writing in an ESL context. Tsui and Ng (2000: 168)

identifies a similar point by saying “As part of learner training the teacher should highlight the fact that responding to peers’ writing is a learning process that will raise the students’ awareness of what constitutes good and poor writing, and help them to identify their own strengths and weakness in writing”.

Dheram (1995: 229) suggests that there appears to be the need to provide all students with guidance and instruction so that they can acquire a conscious knowledge of strategies to improve their writing and to process the feedback they receive. Consequently, it appears that a lot can be gained from the peer feedback session, especially for people who are students of writing. However, in order for student writers to get the maximum benefits from peer feedback, they need both to be taught certain skills and strategies which would sharpen their critical sensibilities and to be encouraged to participate in the peer feedback sessions.

Hansen, Jette and Liu (2005: 34) agree with the suggestions above and state that when properly implemented, peer response can generate a rich source of information for content and rhetorical issues, enhance intercultural communication, and give students a sense of group cohesion.

The literature provides useful insights as to how to implement peer feedback, particularly suggestions such as the use of modeling by the teacher and use of feedback sheets. However, not all suggestions will be applicable to all contexts. For example, although conferences or extended training programs are desirable, it would not be practical in many contexts for teachers to spend one hour with each student. Berg (1999a: 22) warns that writing teachers interested in using peer feedback as a learning tool in their classrooms may find it difficult to locate information on how to train students, especially information that is based on empirical research that outlines exactly how students can be appropriately prepared.

Zhu (1995: 506) implies that tested and detailed information is important not because it provides a formula for ‘peer feedback training’ in all ESL settings, but because it can eliminate students’ lack of knowledge and skills needed for peer feedback.

Consequently, although first language writing studies have reported that peer response has various advantages, it is still questionable whether second language learners benefit equally from this technique. On the other hand, Moore (1986: 24) reports that he successfully helped college ESL students with peer feedback in his writing class. He states that the effectiveness of the peer feedback technique could be attributed to the training of the students received and the careful integration of the peer feedback procedures. Those researchers who favor peer feedback maintain that second language students could benefit profoundly if teachers implement the peer feedback procedure carefully and give students substantial training.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### 3.1. Introduction

In our country, studies on peer feedback are very limited and they are mostly about the students in teaching departments. In this study, prep class students from different departments of a university in Turkey were taken into consideration. This research attempts to examine peer feedback training to see whether it helps to improve the quality of peer feedback and the achievement of students in writing skills. To fulfill this aim, an eight-week peer feedback training program to familiarize students with the process of giving and responding to peer feedback was designed.

#### 3.2. The Design of the Study

In this study, a pre-test/post-test control grouped experimental design was used. This is, by far, the simplest and most common of the pretest-posttest designs, and is a useful way of ensuring that an experiment has a strong level of internal validity. The principle behind this design is relatively simple, and involves randomly assigning subjects between two groups, a test group and a control. Both groups are pre-tested, and both are post-tested, the ultimate difference being that one group was administered the treatment (Shuttleworth, 2009). In other words, this design allows researchers to compare the final post-test results between the two groups, giving them an idea of the overall effectiveness of the intervention or treatment. The study was applied for two class hours a week for an eight-week period in the second term of the academic year 2008-2009. To find the answer to the first research question “Are there any significant differences between the writing achievement of the students who receive feedback training and those who do not?” the students in both groups were asked to write an argumentative essay on ‘the problems of the education system in Turkey’ as a pre-test and these essays were evaluated by two lecturers considering the criteria in ‘The ESL Composition Profile’ ( Jacobs, Hartfiel, Hughey, Wormuth, (1981) (cited in Bahçe, 1999) (appendix B). The students were not told that they were going to be given the same test at the end of the research process. At

the end of the training period, the students were asked to write another argumentative essay on the same topic as the pre-test and by using ‘The ESL Composition Profile’ again, the same two lecturers evaluated the post-test of the students. The results were compared in order to determine whether there was an apparent change in the experimental group’s writing achievement.

To find the answer to the second research question “Are there any significant differences in the quality of the feedback between the students who receive feedback training and those who do not?” the researcher and the second rater used ‘The Rating Scale for Students Written Comments’ (Zhu, 1995) (appendix C) for the evaluation of the students’ feedback quality.

Furthermore, group interviews and one-to-one interviews were conducted to discover the participants’ impressions of the application. These student-to-student and student-to- teacher interviews were recorded with the participants’ permission, coded and transcribed. Considering this side of the research, it can be claimed that this research is not only ‘qualitative’ but also ‘quantitative’.

### **3. 3. The Participants of the Study**

In this research, 75 graduate class students who were at the intermediate level in the preparatory program of the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University were selected. All subjects were monolingual speakers of Turkish between the ages of 17 and 19. Their placement test scores ranged between 60 and 69 and they were placed in ‘B’ level intermediate classes. Two classes of a total of 39 students were selected for the experimental group and two classes of a total of 36 students were selected for the control group. The classes in each group were nearly identical in every way; they were taught and tested by the same lecturers. Pre-study testing verified that there was no meaningful difference in the ability level between the groups. Moreover, it should be noted that none of the students had any experience with the peer feedback process during their previous education.



### **3. 4. The Raters of the Study**

The raters in this research have been lecturers at the Dokuz Eylul University School of Foreign Languages for more than ten years and they have been giving writing courses since they started teaching English. They are non-native English speakers and they have completed their graduate and post-graduate studies at the Dokuz Eylul University Department of English Education. For the sake of inter-rater reliability, the researcher ignored the third rater's evaluation scores.

### **3. 5. The Training Program**

There are probably as many different ways to conduct peer feedback as there are instructors to conduct it; the question then becomes, what elements of peer feedback must gain pedagogical priority? Teacher planning and student training seem to be crucial aspects of a satisfactory writing course. Students can be encouraged to learn how to participate in the peer feedback process by designing properly organized classroom activities.

In order to organize an efficient peer feedback training program, possible problems occurring during this process should be taken into consideration. Only after taking necessary precautions against the problematic components below, will the training program be successful and beneficial.

First of all, since 'lack of trust' was one of the most negative components in peer feedback activities, the researcher arranged a comfortable environment for students to establish peer trust. This was done firstly by doing warm-up activities and having students engage in other group or pair activities in order to encourage peer support. This also helped to develop an environment where students felt more comfortable to engage in negotiation of meaning and to provide each other with linguistic content, rhetorical expressions and knowledge when necessary. Moreover the researcher gave students enough time to become familiar with peer response procedures. They were encouraged to ask questions about the process, and allowed to establish their own rules. For instance, they were allowed to read papers before or during the class hour or decide what to do if their peers were late for bringing the

paper back. Nelson & Murphy (1993), Stanley (1992), Chenoweth (1987), and Moore (1986) report that if students are trained on how to give effective feedback and if students are continuously encouraged to trust their peers' feedback, the problems with peer feedback will be lessened. If students tend to trust their peers, a comment from a friend which questions the clarity of a thought or the purpose of the paper will often be more palatable than responses from a teacher. Using students to provide feedback seems a more productive and time saving activity especially if it is after a condensed training program.

Secondly, 'lack of linguistic abilities' in the target language caused manner problems (e.g. authoritarian, destructive, over direct criticism etc.). In order to alleviate the limited knowledge or inappropriate talk in the groups / pairs, the researcher provided the students with linguistic strategies. As the students are language learners, they might not have the necessary expressions to communicate their opinions clearly. Additionally, as the L2 classroom is still a language classroom, these expressions might enable students to extend their linguistic repertoire. For example, if a point is not clear, or if the reader has perceived that the writer has made an error, rather than saying 'This is wrong!', which may offend the writer and create a hostile atmosphere, the reader can soften the expression by saying 'I am not sure if this is right', or 'Could you explain what you wanted to say here?' These expressions could be generated in class through a brainstorming activity (e.g. How can you tell someone you don't understand what they mean? How could you say it more politely? What expressions do you think would be best to use in class?). They could also be practiced in various peer response activities. Learning these expressions also helps to extend students' language competence and ability to engage in negotiation of meaning which is very important for their communicative skills. Besides, doing these would help to maintain group harmony and keep prejudice, lack of trust, defensive / offensive behaviors and insincerity away from the collaborative environment of the peer feedback process. Nelson & Murphy (1993) found that the degree to which L2 writers incorporate peer suggestions in their revised drafts depends on the nature of the writers' interactions with the group. When the writers interacted with their peers in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to use their peers' suggestions in writing. On the other hand, when students faced a defensive

manner and no interaction at all, the writer was less likely to use the peers' comments. According to the researchers Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger (1992), creating a collaborative classroom setting is the key point in making students express themselves in a particular context since students become actively involved in making meaning, not just receiving meaning. Considering all of these, the researcher reminded the students to give positive comments to each other, too.

The third negative component is the 'lack of quality' in the students' responses. Without training the students gave non-specific, unhelpful, inaccurate or inappropriate feedback to their peers' papers. Overgeneralization and dealing with surface matters weakened the peer feedback process. This was apparent especially in the papers of the control group in the present study. In the first two weeks the researcher instructed the students in the experimental group how to ask the right questions. Most students did not have a clear idea of what they should look for, and had few comments to make unless they were directed to ask specific questions, or looked for specific issues that were problematic. They tried to check only grammatical mistakes at the beginning. It is important to train students to ask questions that generate a response from the writer, and that are revision-oriented so that there is a meaningful discussion about not only the grammar but also the content, rhetoric and organization of the paper, depending on the purpose of the activity. Asking clarification questions such as 'I'm not sure what this means. Can you clarify this?', or elaboration questions like 'Could you explain this point in more detail?' will be more likely to lead to a meaningful discussion, negotiation of meaning, and revision, than making evaluation statements such as 'This is not a clear thesis statement!' or 'I don't like / understand this paragraph!'. Such evaluation statements could be seen in the first papers of the students in the experimental group; however, after the researcher stressed the importance of asking the right questions above, the students started doing it and at the end of the application they admitted during the interviews that they felt better when they see clarification or elaboration questions in their papers. Briefly, the researcher noticed that if the students knew how to provide responses to each other it would result in more effective feedback. Barron (1991: 24) reminds that prior to working peer feedback activities, students must understand the purpose. They need to learn that evaluating the worth of the papers written by others

is not the primary goal of good responders. Nor is an “error hunt” a valuable approach to the task. Instead, effective responders treat the papers they are examining as “works in progress” and recognize that their goal is to serve as sympathetic readers asking right questions to writers to use in improving their papers. Ideally a dialogue should be created between the writer and the reader which clarifies the intent of the writer's essay. This mind-set is not easy to establish, but it is critical in achieving success with response groups. Modeling of the process is essential. Usually when students are not on task in their groups, it is because they do not know what to do or they do not understand why the task is important, or a combination of these two reasons. Therefore, students need to study what peer-response groups do and then practice using peer-response techniques. In one of their studies, Nelson and Carson (1998: 128) claimed that peer response has not been effective in their study since the students perceived their task as finding peers' mistakes; thus, the written product, not the writing process, often became the focus of group interaction, along with a sense that early drafts are to be seen as problem-filled and in need of correction. Also, they pointed out that the students were not satisfied with the type of comments since the comments were mainly on “word or sentence level”. Many researchers such as Zhu (1995) and Berg (1999) report positive results of trained peer feedback on student attitudes and communication about writing, revising types and better quality writing.

Fourth, some students were ‘hesitant in critiquing others’ essays’. They thought their peers would be offended because of their comments and naturally this lessened the quality of the comments. So the researcher warned such students that critiquing others’ work would be useful for them, too and they would learn skills that would enable them to better evaluate their own work. The researcher ensured them that they were capable of critiquing each other's essays and it was their responsibility to give and take criticism well. He discussed why they were asked to participate in peer work, and how important he felt this work to be. He encouraged students by telling them they were about to undertake very important work which would help their own writing as much as it helps their partner's. The students were also reminded that peer review work receives grades.

The fifth problematic issue was that most students in the control group and some in the experimental were 'oriented to the teacher and the teacher's tasks' rather than to one another's writing. They were as concerned with completing the sheets / checklists in a way that would please the teacher as they were with interacting with one another. They did not offer evaluative commentary. So, rather than serving as a comfortable setting where students could collaborate, these pairs functioned more as a time for individual writers to complete teacher-given tasks. The researcher realized this and reminded the participants in the experimental group in the third week of the training program that he would appreciate more if they focus on giving efficient feedback to each other. In his empirical study in 1997, Amores also found that uncoached students placed much less importance on peer editing as an activity than they placed on submitting work for evaluation by the teacher. The principal reason for participating in peer editing was that the instructor required it, not because it was perceived by the participants as a particularly valuable activity linguistically.

Finally, the group structure or roles of the participants in group or pair work sometimes cause problems. While monitoring the students in the experimental group, the researcher realized that some students played problematic roles such as being an attacker or trying to be dominant throughout discussion. There were various reasons (trying to affect the teacher, show his/her language proficiency or sharing the activity with a silent / shy partner) behind this. Different levels of proficiency or difficulty in working well together made some students prefer studying alone. These behaviors ruined the natural process of peer feedback activities. So, the researcher tried to put the students with low proficiency level together for a few weeks at the beginning of the program. He also warned the students about the requirements of an ideal peer feedback activity and told them to work cooperatively.

Considering the aforementioned drawbacks of peer feedback activities, it seems crucial for the teacher to monitor student and group progress. This can be done in several ways; first, the teacher can serve as a peer in the activity, though he/she has to be careful to remain in a 'peer' rather than a teacher role; second, the teacher can sit in with each group for part of the session in order to provide support, and to remind students of appropriate linguistic expressions and communication patterns.

The training program in this research was mostly based on the studies of Berg (1999), Rollinson (2005), Hansen, Jette and Liu (2005), Stanley (1992) and Sengun (2002). As for the procedure, the researcher conducted a pilot study to four intermediate prep classes in the second term of the academic year 2007-2008 before implementing this peer feedback training program in 2009 to check possible weaknesses of the program. Then, an 8-week peer feedback training program on how to give and respond to peer feedback was conducted in the second term of the academic year 2008-2009. In this period, detailed peer feedback training with carefully planned lessons (sample lesson plans are in Appendix F and Appendix G) was given to the experimental group while the control group was given only the two pages long peer feedback explanations and activities in their writing course books. The researcher and the second rater were also the lecturers of the experimental and control groups. They provided the students in both groups with peer feedback checklists (Appendix D) that included questions on content and organization of the papers and guidelines (Appendix E) which guide the students how to behave and what to do while giving feedback. However, more time was spent with the experimental group to understand and practice using checklists and guidelines effectively. While the students in the control group examined at least 4 sample essays written by professionals in their course books for each type of essay and wrote their essays in the classroom, the students in the experimental group examined only one essay for each type from the course book. Mostly, they examined and commented on the previous year students' and their classmates' essays. Moreover, they were allowed to write their own essays at home. By this way, an additional time was created for the peer feedback training activities and on each week, two class hours were devoted to the peer feedback training program. They were asked to focus on content and organization related errors first and then on language and mechanics related errors. They discussed the unique qualities of the types of writing students will be expected to do, as well as trying to reach a consensus about what makes the models effective. When students discuss what makes a piece of writing effective, they have a better understanding of how to write a composition of their own which incorporates those priorities.

Then in two-week-long periods the students were asked to write 'informative', 'compare and contrast' and 'cause and effect' type essays according to the applications of the process approach. After each essay, students were grouped in pairs and were asked to provide feedback for their partner's paper. In each peer editing session, students were paired with different peer editors so that they could benefit from different points of view. After students provided feedback for each other's paragraphs, conferences were held between the student writer and the reviewer. These discussion sessions helped students to understand their peers' comments more clearly, enable them to ask for clarification about their peers' comments, and defend their paragraphs. Finally, regarding the feedback received from their peers, students revised their first drafts and wrote the second drafts. Actually, the lecturers spent several hours teaching their students how to read a paper for errors. The students were truly helping each other and themselves in eliminating errors from their papers.

Throughout the training program, students also practice how to respond to the comments made by their peers. The lecturers warned that the students should be critical to their peers' comments and should consult a dictionary, course material or their instructor whenever they had doubts about the truth value of their peers' feedback. On the other hand, they wanted the students to concentrate on what they wanted to say, not on what they thought the lecturers wanted them to say. The researcher thought that if they made specific suggestions, some students would follow them without thinking about whether they agreed or not.

To conclude, the aim of this training program was to introduce the peer feedback process to students and to emphasize the importance and advantages of it in addition to familiarizing students with the genre of the student writing, introducing students to the process of giving and responding to peer feedback, and encouraging students to be collaborators. Throughout the training program, students were encouraged to believe they could trust their peers' comments.

### **3. 6. Instruments and Materials**

In this research, for pre-test and post-test, “the problems of the education system in Turkey” was given as an essay topic (appendix A) and the participants were given an hour to write on it. The raters used the standardized and proved profile below while evaluating the essays of the participants. The Jacobs et al. (1981) ‘ESL Composition Profile’ criteria was selected among other similar ones in the present study as it has been used successfully in evaluating the essay writing proficiency levels of students in ESL programs and academic researches. Hamp-Lyons (1990: 78) comments that it is the best-known scoring procedure for ESL writing at the present time. The ‘detailed’ explanation of the profile (different from the one in appendix B) is given below.

#### **3. 6. 1. The ESL Composition Profile**

##### **(A Guide to the Principles of Writing; The extended profile criteria)**

Since the criteria descriptors are only shorthand reminders of larger concepts in composition, a clear understanding of them is essential for effective use of the profile. The concepts embody the essential principles of writing -- the rules, conventions, and guidelines -- that writers must observe to create a successful piece of writing. This section presents a detailed description of the concepts represented by the profile criteria descriptors at the Excellent to Very Good mastery level. The other three levels of competence should be thought of as varying degrees of these extended criteria for excellent writing, with the primary distinguishing factor being the degree to which the writer's intended meaning is successfully delivered to the reader or is diminished or completely lost by insufficient mastery of the criteria for excellence. The profile's first two mastery levels in each component (Excellent to Very Good and Good to Average) both indicate that successful communication has occurred (although differing in degree), whereas the two lower levels (Fair to Poor and Very Poor) suggest there is a communication breakdown of some sort -- either partial or complete. Effect on meaning thus becomes the chief criterion for distinguishing the degree to which the writer has mastered the criteria for excellent writing.



## CONTENT

30-27	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> <b>knowledgeable*substantive*thorough</b> <b>development of thesis* relevant to assigned</b> <b>topic</b>
26-22	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> some knowledge of subject* adequate range* limited development of thesis* mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail
21-17	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> limited knowledge of subject* little substance* inadequate development of topic
16-13	<b>VERY POOR:</b> does not show knowledge of subject* non-substantive* not pertinent * <b>OR not enough to evaluate</b>

### DESCRIPTORS CRITERIA

<b>Knowledgeable</b>	Is there understanding of the subject? Are facts or other pertinent information used? Is there recognition of several aspects of the subject? Are the interrelationships of these aspects shown?
<b>Substantive</b>	Are several main points discussed? Is there sufficient detail? Is there originality with concrete details to illustrate, define, compare, or contrast factual information supporting the thesis?
<b>Thorough development of thesis</b>	Is the thesis expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness? Is there a specific method of development (such as comparison/contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience)?
<b>Relevant to assigned topic</b>	Is all information clearly pertinent to the topic? Is extraneous material excluded?

## ORGANIZATION

<b>20-18</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression* ideas clearly stated/supported* succinct*well-organized*logical sequencing*cohesive</b>
<b>17-14</b>	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy*loosely organized but main ideas stand out*limited support* logical but incomplete sequencing</b>
<b>13-10</b>	<b>FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent* ideas confused or disconnected* lacks logical sequencing and development</b>
<b>9-7</b>	<b>VERY POOR: does not communicate* no organization*OR not enough to evaluate</b>

### DESCRIPTORS      CRITERIA

<b>Fluent expression</b>	Do the ideas flow, building on one another? Are there introductory and concluding paragraphs? Are there effective transition elements -- words, phrases, or sentences -- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs?
<b>Ideas clearly stated/supported</b>	Is there a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus to the paper (a thesis)? Do topic sentences in each paragraph support, limit, and direct the thesis?
<b>Succinct</b>	Are all ideas directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digression?
<b>Well-organized</b>	Is the overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated? Are there a beginning, middle, and an end to the paper?
<b>Logical</b>	Are the points logically developed, using a particular sequence such as time order, space

<b>sequencing</b>	order, or importance? Is this development indicated by appropriate transitional markers?
<b>Cohesive</b>	Does each paragraph reflect a single purpose? Do the paragraphs form a unified paper?

### VOCABULARY

<b>20-18</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range* effective word/idiom choice and usage* word form mastery * appropriate register</b>
<b>17-14</b>	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range* occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured</b>
<b>13-10</b>	<b>FAIR TO POOR: limited range* frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage* meaning confused or obscured</b>
<b>9-7</b>	<b>VERY POOR: essentially translation* little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form* OR not enough to evaluate</b>

### DESCRIPTORS CRITERIA

<b>Sophisticated range</b>	Is there facility with words and idioms to convey intended information, attitudes, and feelings to distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions? To convey shades and differences of meaning? To express the logic of ideas? Is the arrangement and inter-relationship of words sufficiently varied?
<b>Effective word/idiom choice and usage</b>	In the context in which it is used, is the choice of vocabulary accurate, idiomatic, effective or concise? Are strong active verbs and verbals used where possible? Are phrasal and prepositional idioms correct? Do they convey the intended meaning? Does word placement give the intended message or emphasis? Is there an understanding of synonyms, antonyms or homonyms? Are denotative and connotative meanings distinguished? Is there effective repetition of key words and phrases? Do transition elements mark shifts in thought,

pace, emphasis or tone?

**Word mastery** **form** Are prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively? Are words correctly distinguished as to their function (noun, verb, adjective, and adverb)?

**Appropriate register** Is the vocabulary appropriate to the topic? To the audience? To the tone of the paper? To the method of development? Is the vocabulary familiar to the audience? Does the vocabulary make the intended impression?

#### LANGUAGE USE

25-22	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> effective complex constructions* few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions
21-18	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> effective but simple constructions* minor problems in complex constructions * several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured
17-11	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> major problems in simple/complex constructions* frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions * meaning confused or obscured
10-5	<b>VERY POOR:</b> virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules dominated by errors does not communicate OR not enough to evaluate

<b><u>DESCRIPTORS</u></b>	<b><u>CRITERIA</u></b>
<b>Effective complex constructions</b>	Are sentences well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements? Are single-word modifiers appropriate to function? Are they properly formed, placed, sequenced? Are phrases and clauses appropriate to function, complete or properly placed? Are introductory It and There used correctly to begin sentences and clauses? Are main and subordinate ideas carefully distinguished? Are coordinate and subordinate elements linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation? Are sentence types and length varied? Are elements parallel? Are techniques of substitution, repetition, and deletion used effectively?
<b>Agreement</b>	Is there basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary and verb, subject and verb, pronoun and antecedent, adjective and noun or nouns and quantifiers?
<b>Tense</b>	Are verb tenses correct? properly sequenced? Do modals convey intended meaning? time?
<b>Number</b>	Do nouns, pronouns, and verbs convey intended quality?
<b>Word order/ function</b>	Is normal word order followed except for special emphasis? Is each word, phrase, and clause suited to its intended function?
<b>Articles</b>	Are a, an, and the used correctly?
<b>Pronouns</b>	Do pronouns reflect appropriate person, gender, number, function or referent?
<b>Prepositions</b>	Are prepositions chosen carefully to introduce modifying elements? Is the intended meaning conveyed?

### MECHANICS

5	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> demonstrates mastery of conventions few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing
4	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured
3	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing poor handwriting meaning confused or obscured
2	<b>VERY POOR:</b> no mastery of conventions dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, handwriting illegible OR not enough to evaluate

#### **DESCRIPTOR**

#### **CRITERIA**

#### **Spelling**

Are words spelled correctly?

#### **Punctuation**

Are periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, and question marks used correctly? Are words divided correctly at the end of lines?

#### **Capitalization**

Are capital letters used where necessary and appropriate?

#### **Paragraphing**

Are paragraphs indented to indicate when one sequence of thought ends and another begins?

#### **Handwriting**

Is handwriting easy to read, without impeding communication?

Adapted from Jacobs, H. L., Hartfiel, V. F., Hughey, J. B., & Wormuth, D. R. (1981). Testing ESL Composition: A Practical Approach. Boston, MA: Newbury House.

### **3. 6. 2. The Rating Scale for Students Written Comments**

‘The Rating Scale for Students Written Comments’ (Zhu, 1995) is used for the evaluation of the students’ feedback quality. The criteria are:

A "3" comment or suggestion is ‘relevant and specific’. It (a) correctly identifies the strengths and / or weaknesses in a piece of writing in concrete terms, (b) raises a relevant question about a particular area of writing, or (c) provides correct and clear direction for revision.

A "2" comment or suggestion is ‘relevant but general’. It may correctly identify the strengths and weaknesses in a piece of writing, but fails to address them in concrete, specific terms. It may also raise a relevant but general question about the writing. Furthermore, it may provide correct but nonspecific direction for revision.

A "1" comment is ‘inaccurate or irrelevant’.

Mc Groarty and Zhu (1997) stated that they analyzed student written comments with the writing scale in their study and the reliability of the rating scale achieved 97 % agreement on the classifications.

### **3. 7. Data Analysis**

The data is analyzed in several steps. Firstly, since drafts were scored by two scorers, the inter-rater reliability (about .96) was assessed by using SPSS. Secondly, the scores of the students in the pre-test and the post-test were compared in the control and the experimental groups separately in order to analyze the effect of peer feedback training on students' writing achievement. Independent sample t-test was applied to see whether there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test scores’ mean. In the third step, ‘The Rating Scale for Students Written Comments’ (Zhu, 1995) was used for the evaluation of the students’ feedback quality. Last, the analysis of the qualitative data collected through written and oral questions about the impressions of the students’ on peer feedback training program are given. Following these, the results were displayed in figures in order to demonstrate the findings in the visual form.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS and RESULTS

This chapter consists of both qualitative and quantitative results of the present study obtained by using the data collection instruments outlined in Chapter III. Quantitative data used in the study were obtained from the essays written by the students assigned to both the control and the experimental groups. On the other hand, qualitative data were obtained by means of group interviews and one-to-one interviews.

First of all, inter-rater reliability was calculated between the raters' scores for the pre-tests and post-tests. Secondly, a comparison was made between the experimental and the control groups in order to see whether there were any differences between the two groups in terms of writing improvement as indicated by pre-test and post-test scores. Thirdly, quality score means of peer feedback given by the experimental and control groups were taken into consideration. Last of all, students' comments on peer feedback training program were given.

#### 4.1. Inter-rater Reliability

**Table 2**  
**Inter-rater Reliability by Pearson Correlations Rates**

Correlation	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Groups
<b>r</b> 1.rater – 2. rater	<b>.928<sup>**</sup></b>	<b>.952<sup>**</sup></b>	<b>Experimental</b>
<b>r</b> 1.rater – 2. rater	<b>.976<sup>**</sup></b>	<b>.957<sup>**</sup></b>	<b>Control</b>

<sup>\*\*</sup>Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

For inter-rater reliability the degree of congruency between raters was computed for both the experimental group and the control group. The results in Table 2 show that there is a high correlation between Rater 1 and Rater 2 for both groups indicating small statistical difference between ratings. That's to say, similar scores were given by both raters to all participants of the experimental and control groups.



#### 4.2. Pre-test and Post-test Group Statistics

**Table 3**  
**Pre-test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups**

<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Experimental	39	60.05	10.23	0.948	.346*
Control	36	62.27	9.95		

\*p<0.05

It is shown in Table 3 that the difference between the means of pre-test scores of the experimental group and the control group is not significant at the .05 level, indicating that there was no statistical difference between both groups in their level of writing achievement before the application of the peer feedback training program.

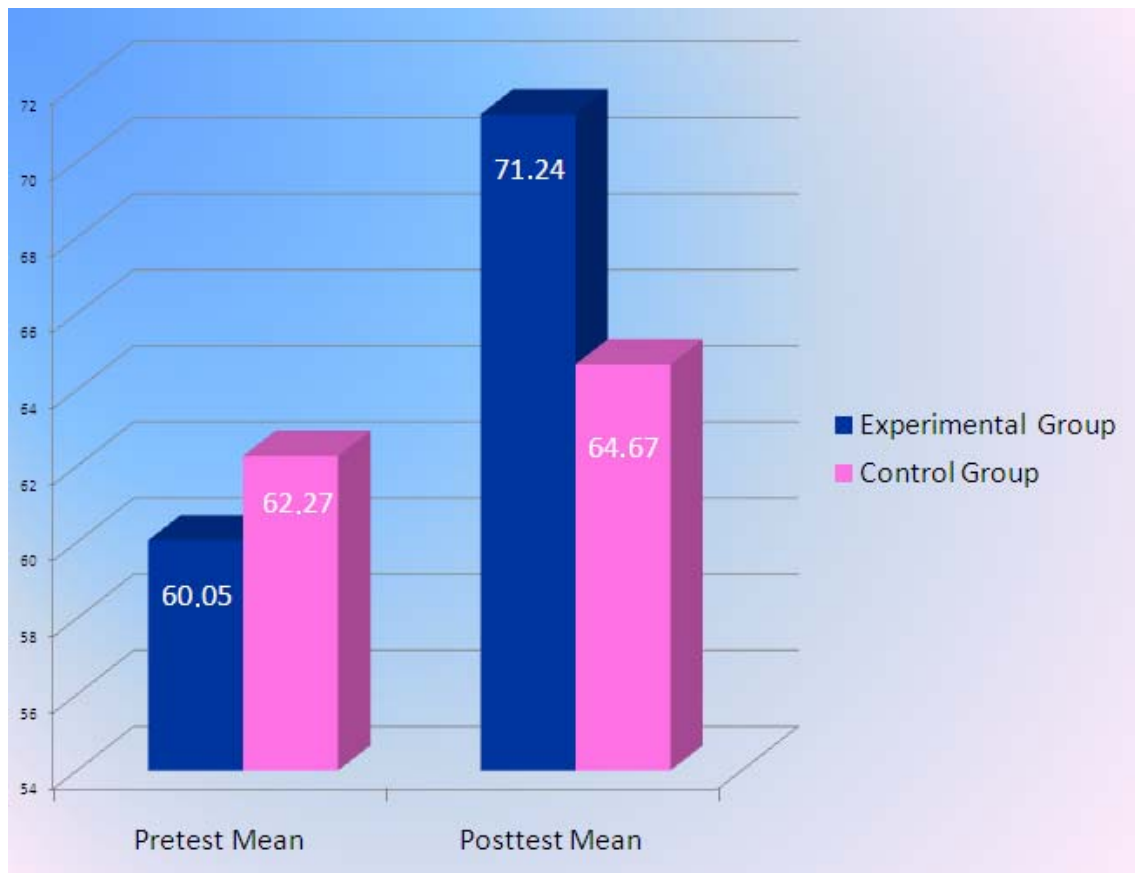
**Table 4**  
**Post-test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups**

<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Experimental	39	71.24	8.92	3.129	.003*
Control	36	64.67	9.28		

\*p<0.05

It is shown in Table 4 that the difference between the means of post-test scores of the experimental group and the control group is significant at the .05 level indicating that there was an apparent statistical difference between both groups in their level of writing achievement after the application of the peer feedback training program. The findings of this research support the hypothesis that 'the training program applied to experimental group has a positive effect on students writing achievement.' This can also be shown by Figure 1:

**Figure 1**  
**Comparison of Post-test Scores of Experimental and Control Groups**



\*  $p < 0.05$

In this figure too, it seems that the experimental group achieved much more than the control group when the change between the pre-test and post-test scores are examined. The achievement level of the experimental group was 11.19 % higher while it was 2.4 % for the control group. The limited increase rate (2.4%) of the control group can be expected after 8 weeks of standard schedule. In this content, it can be asserted that the applications for the experimental group help students to improve their writing skills more.

### 4.3. Writing Quality

Relevancy of peer feedback was established in the context of the drafts on which the feedback was provided. Totally 1134 comments (702 for the experimental group and 432 for the control group) in 225 essays (117 for the experimental group and 108 for the control group) were evaluated according to the criteria in the rating

scale. Inter-rater reliability procedures resulted in .98. To analyze the students' written comments specifically the qualitative data, all the written comments were rated on a three-point scale prepared by Zhu, (1995).

The raters gave "3" to the comments of the participants in both groups such as:

"You should have compared secularism and other political view. You mentioned about a problem at our country and I agree with you but you had better mention about similarities and differences between the views."

"You can add a small paragraph about how alcoholism tends people to drink it. You must write causes of alcoholism, I mean (before explaining its effects)."

On the other hand, the raters gave "1" to the comments such as:

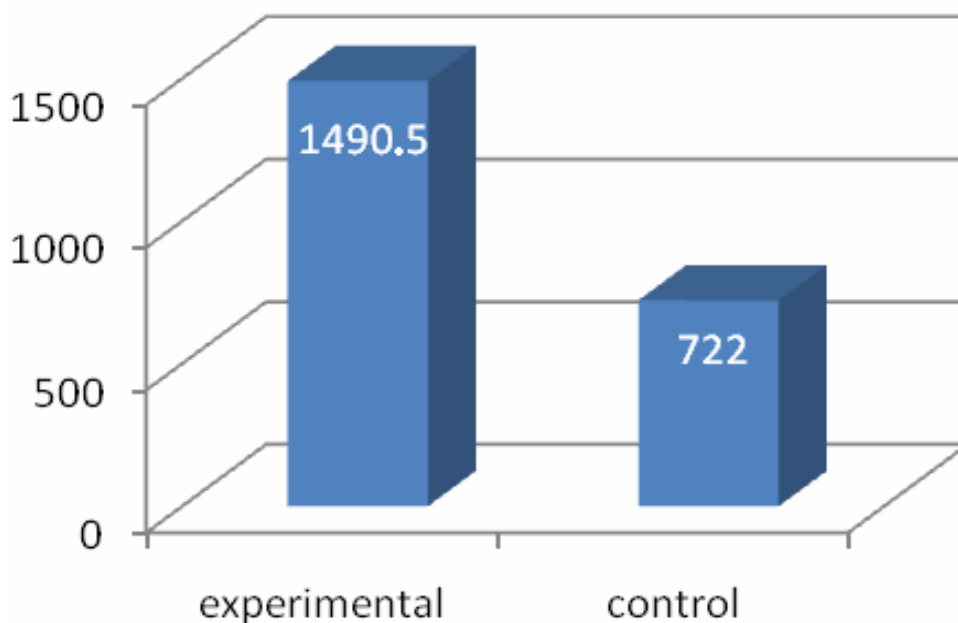
"Paragraphs are short"

"I don't understand this paragraph"

More samples can be found in Appendix J and Appendix K and the files in the CD.

The total mean scores to the comments in 225 essays by both raters are illustrated below:

**Figure2**  
**Quality Score Means of Peer Feedback Given by the Experimental and Control Groups**



Although the number of the essays written by the experimental and the control group were similar, the number of the comments and the total scores for those comments were significantly different. 702 comments of the experimental group got about 1490 whereas 432 comments of the control group got only 722 as a total score. This result indicated that the quality of the comments given by the participants in the experimental group were much higher. Thus, it can be claimed that peer feedback training program helps students to give more qualified comments.

In conclusion, the statistical analysis of the data revealed that the students in the experimental group produced better writing quality than the ones in the control group. The results also indicated that training students for peer written feedback led to significantly more and better feedback.

#### **4. 4. The Comments Made by the Experimental Group on Peer feedback Application**

In order to obtain the views of the participants in the experimental group about the applied program on peer feedback, they were asked some oral questions in

group and one-to-one interviews by the researcher and the second rater, and answers were recorded and transcribed. Almost all participants speaking in the audio recordings commented positively about the peer feedback training program. These recordings and scanned essays were copied on a CD and given to the institute for other researchers who will be interested in this subject.

Consequently, after transcribing the oral comments of the experimental group, four underlying themes (Student-centered Process, Assessment Skills, Sense of Audience and Duration of Writing Course) emerged about the peer feedback program. Some of the sample comments for these themes are shown in table 5 below.

**Table 5**  
**Samples of Students' Opinions for Some Common Themes**

Common Themes	Samples of Students' Opinions
Student-centered Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-This is a student-centered process which gives self confidence and makes us more responsible.</li> <li>-We realize our mistakes and do not make them again.</li> <li>-We open new windows according to our friends' feedback.</li> <li>- As a second year student in prep class, I realized that I had written in the same writing style in L1 and L2 for years, but I've started writing in different styles after doing peer feedback activities. I am happy with the result.</li> <li>-I liked seeing that my peer revised his paper according to my suggestions.</li> <li>-We've become more self-confident with the help of peer feedback activities.</li> <li>-I was a bad essay writer. My peers corrected me many times and I've become a better writer now. Professional writers do like this, don't they? I've also noticed that my scores have been higher.</li> </ul>
Assessment Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Each paper should be checked by more students.</li> <li>-Our classmates' responses were as useful as the teacher's.</li> <li>-Sometimes an essay should be checked by all the students to have various comments even for the same mistake.</li> <li>-We've learned how to criticize others.</li> </ul>
Sense of Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-While writing we think twice because we consider whether our readers will understand or whether they find lots of mistakes in our papers.</li> <li>-Considering that my classmate will read my paper before the teacher makes me a more careful writer and I spend much effort while writing.</li> </ul>
Duration of Writing Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The number of the hours should be increased.</li> <li>-I prefer to have more writing hours because when we become good writers and ready to write better, the end of the academic year comes.</li> <li>-The content and the time limit should be extended.</li> <li>- Peer feedback training program should be given in a separate course.</li> <li>-Peer feedback training program should start earlier and should be more condensed.</li> <li>-Writing course should be at least 6 hours a week because we need to do more practice in foreign language; not to memorize grammar rules.</li> </ul>

After receiving these comments, the researcher decided to demand at least four hours for the writing course from the administration and implement a detailed peer feedback training program in the following academic year. Furthermore, he became determined to arrange seminars and panel discussions to ensure his colleagues and administrators that peer feedback training program is a necessity for writing schedules.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5. 1. Introduction**

This study on the impact of training on peer feedback in process approach implemented EFL writing classes was carried out in prep classes of School of Foreign Languages, Dokuz Eylul University. The participants were seventy five Turkish university students studying at four intermediate level prep classes and the researcher was the instructor of the course. This study tried to identify students' achievement in writing after having a detailed peer feedback training program. The aim of this training program was to introduce the peer feedback process to students and to emphasize the importance and advantages of it in addition to familiarizing students with the genre of the student writing, introducing students to the process of giving and responding to peer feedback, and encouraging students to be collaborators.

This study also tried to specify the quality of the feedback the students gave to each other. An eight-week-long peer feedback training program was designed to do these. For this study both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The essay question in Appendix A which was given both before and after the training program served as the quantitative data. Moreover, the recorded interviews were transcribed as the qualitative data.

After examining the studies on peer feedback, the researcher realized possible stones on his way while he was trying to apply his training program and take some precautions to avoid them. Possible solutions were given in the training program in the methodology section. He also made the students in the experimental group aware of these problematic issues which would prevent them achieving in the writing course. The summary of the drawbacks below during peer feedback activities would get other researchers to pay attention before their applications.

## 5. 2. Possible Drawbacks of Peer Feedback without a Training Program

Under the light of the studies in this area, problematic areas can be classified under seven topics. The first one is “the roles of the participants” in the feedback process. In all groups there can be weak and strong writers and naturally this can lead to taking on a dominant or silent role in the feedback process. Secondly, “the quality of the responses” can be disappointing due to limited knowledge or proficiency in the target language. In addition, responses that are non-specific, overgenerous, prescriptive, unhelpful, inaccurate and inappropriate may discourage even a motivated student to benefit from the peer feedback process. Dealing with surface matters and giving inefficient feedback would obviously lowers the quality of peer response. Thirdly, responses that display “negative manners” can also destruct the collaborative atmosphere. Fourth one is “the technical aspects” of the process. If students don’t know how to give efficient feedback and are uncertain about the purpose and advantages of participating in a peer feedback activity, every effort can be in vain. Fifth, the “group structure” is also very important in a training program. Heterogeneous groups that are formed with students of different levels of proficiency can cause problems. They might have difficulty in working well together and might prefer studying alone. Sixth, “age or gender” can cause prejudice, lack of trust or a defensive manner against the opposite sex and it would be difficult to maintain group harmony. Last but not the least is “the teacher’s role”. S/he would find the process too long and difficult to adjust with the curriculum. S/he would worry also about how to control, oversee or monitor groups and pairs.

As for the results of the studies on this matter; similar to the findings of Allei and Connor (1990), Nelson and Murphy (1993), and Mangelsdorf (1992) in this study, the participants in the experimental group mentioned the limited knowledge of their peers as the major drawback. However, encouraging students to be critical to their peers’ comments and consulting to dictionaries and course materials when they have any doubts about the truth value of their peers' comments might decrease the effect of this problematic feature. The learner has two options: blindly accepting the comment of the peer or being critical to the peers' comments. Reading the comments of the peers' with critical eyes results in more improvement in student writing. In this



current study, some of the subjects reflected that they referred to dictionaries and their notes taken during the course when they had a problem and this helped to improve their writing ability.

Another drawback for peer feedback mentioned by Paulus (1999) was that students belonging to different cultural backgrounds might view peer feedback differently. As this study was conducted in EFL setting where all the students belonged to the same cultural and linguistic background, this did not create any problem for the current study. However, this factor should be taken into consideration in settings where students come from different cultural backgrounds.

### **5. 3. Findings and Discussion**

This study tries to focus on the contribution to a feedback training program on writing achievement and the quality of feedback by searching for the answer to two questions:

1. Are there any significant differences between the writing achievement of the students who receive feedback training and those who do not?
2. Are there any significant differences in the quality of the feedback between the students who receive feedback training and those who do not?

To answer the first research question, the essays of both the experimental group and the control group were evaluated and the statistical data from the scores of the essays were evaluated and discussed by the researcher. The analysis of this data revealed that there was a significant difference between the two groups in their post-tests score means. In other words, there was a significant difference in their level of writing achievement after the application of the peer feedback training program. The findings of this research support the hypothesis that ‘the training program applied to experimental group has a positive effect on students writing achievement.’

In relation with the literature review, the findings of this study are going to be compared with the other studies’ findings. For instance, while Leki (1990) was discouraged to find that peer feedback could not have the desired effect on students’

writing achievement, the present study found that the students got much higher scores in the post-tests as a result of the well-organized peer feedback training program. Thus, it can be said that a peer feedback training program has a positive effect on the achievement of writing skills.

Furthermore, this study agrees with Mendonca and Johnson's (1994) study that almost all students found the peer feedback beneficial since they could see the points that were clear and needed revision in their drafts with the comments of their peers. In addition, students pointed out that they enjoyed reading their peers' essays as they could compare their work with their peers and learn some more new ideas about writing. Therefore, the results of these studies support the claim that peer feedback is a valuable form of feedback in L2 writing instruction. S17 admitted: "I was a bad essay writer. My peers corrected me many times and I've become a better writer now. I've also noticed that my scores have been higher".

Likewise, this study supports the findings of Stanley (1992) that students who received coaching were seen to look at each other's writing more closely and to offer the writers more specific guidelines for revision than did the uncoached students. Hence, the coached groups dealt "more often in concrete, specific issues and more often gave the writer a blueprint for revision" (Stanley, 1992: 229). S3 stated: "I didn't know what to do at the beginning but now I feel myself like an expert in giving peer feedback after this training program and gave more specific comments to my classmates' papers. They commented on my essays more specifically, too".

After the pre-test and the post-test results were compared and contrasted, the quality of students' feedback was looked for to get the answer to the second research question. After applying the well-articulated peer feedback training the number of the comments and the total scores for those comments of the experimental group were significantly different. The total score of the experimental group was about 1490 whereas it was only 722 for the control group. This result indicated that the quality of the comments given by the participants in the experimental group were much higher. Thus, it can be claimed that peer feedback training program helps students to give comments of high quality.

The findings for the second research question leads to similar statements with Zhu (1995) that quantitative analysis of students' written feedback on peer writing revealed that students trained for peer revision provided significantly more and significantly better comments on each other's writing. Qualitative analysis helped to explain the quantitative findings; students trained for revision could provide more and better feedback because they participated more actively in peer revision groups, attended to the more global concerns of writing, and engaged in more extended negotiation. Similarly the students' responses to the questionnaire revealed that the students for peer revision demonstrated better attitudes towards it. S19 said: "I totally agree that peer feedback training improved our writing quality. We have opened new Windows according to our peers' feedback. Our essays have become much better". Berg (1999) also reports that training results in more successful peer response in terms of revision type and writing quality. S11 pointed out: "When our peers warn us about irrelevant or inappropriate expressions, the quality of our writing becomes better".

The results of some of the studies in Turkey were similar to the results of this study specifically for the second research question. Subaşı (2002) found that the experimental group produced better writing quality than the ones in the control group. She also reported that training students for peer written feedback led to significantly more and better-quality feedback. S22 indicated: "Because our peers have different views for the same topic, they contribute us to write better essays of high quality". Mistik (1994) found that peer feedback seemed to be effective with respect to the experimental group's writing quality in the areas of content, organization and language use when compared to teacher feedback. She also found that almost all students have positive attitude towards peer feedback.

Another interesting aspect of the present study was the comparison of the number of peer comments given by the students in the experimental group and control group. Although the numbers of the participants for both groups were similar (39 in the experimental group and 36 in the control group), there were more than 700 comments in the experimental group's papers whereas there were about 400 in the

control group's papers. Likewise, the total mean score of the experimental group was almost twice as much (1491 to 722).

This study was limited to 8 weeks; if there had been more time, the quality of the feedback given by the experimental group members would have been better. In addition to this, the number of the comments would have been more, too.

Lastly, their audio records about their impressions about the whole program were investigated. During the interviews, students in the experimental group were questioned about the positive and negative aspects of peer feedback. They were asked to discuss their impressions throughout the application. What's more, they were requested to give suggestion for further applications. The records indicated that students were happy with the application of a peer feedback training program. Students listed a variety of positive aspects of peer feedback activities. Similar to Matthusuashi, et al (1989), they expressed that peer feedback helped them to improve the content, vocabulary, grammar, and organization of their papers. S18 compared his two years at prep class: "I see how beneficial the peer feedback activities are when I consider the situation in the previous year". Moreover, students revealed that when they recognized a mistake made by their peers, they not only corrected it but also avoided making the same mistake on their papers. Matthusuashi, et al (1989) also stated that peer feedback activities enable students to collaborate.

The majority of the students in the experimental group had positive feelings towards a well-organized peer feedback training program. When the interviews were analyzed, it was found that the 8-week training program had an impact on enabling students to be aware of the importance and necessity of peer feedback activities. Furthermore, students reported that they would like to receive peer feedback in their other studies. Similarly, Sengun (2002) found that the training program resulted in significant attitude changes of students. Kastrá (1987) also tested ninth-grade writers' attitudes towards writing after peer response and teacher response. She found that students who participated in peer evaluation demonstrated a more positive attitude toward writing. S37 pointed out: "Since our peers have the same status and proficiency level, they are more understanding than our teachers while evaluating our

papers. Furthermore, we spend more time on discussing our papers with our peers. These cause a more positive atmosphere in the classroom”.

On the other hand, Connor and Asenavage (1994) investigated the impact of peer responses on subsequent revisions, comparing comments from the teacher with other sources. The results showed that the students made many revisions but few of these were the result of direct peer group response, approximately 5% of the revisions resulted from peer comments, 35% could be described as resulting from teacher comments and about 60% of the revisions occurred as a result of self/others. Different from the results of Connor and Asenavage's study (1994), in this research it was reported that after the training program the majority of the students in the experimental group admitted making use of their peers' feedback in their second drafts. S18 stated: “At the beginning the general comments of my peers so much but later they turned out to have better quality and I started to pay attention to them and incorporate them in my second drafts”. S15 also supports this: “We became more careful in our second drafts when we got feedback from our friends about the points we hadn't realized”

In contrast to the findings of Jacobs et al, (1998) who concluded that students who are familiar with different feedback types value peer feedback and students who have no experience with peer feedback attach little value to peer feedback, in this study it was observed that students, though they did not have any experience with peer feedback did not have negative feelings at the beginning of the study. To add, at the end of the study majority of the students agreed to incorporate peer feedback into writing classes. Similar to Mangelsdorf (1992) and Muncie (2000), students in this study had positive feelings towards peer feedback. S2's expression supported this: “Before this training program we felt ourselves unskillful in writing and didn't like the writing course at all, but then we got self-confidence and our attitude towards writing changed completely”. On the other hand, the findings of Sengupta (1998) contradict the results of the current and the above mentioned studies. In her study, Sengupta (1998) revealed that students have negative feelings towards peer feedback. However, her study was carried out at a secondary school, while all the other studies, including this current study, were conducted with university students. Therefore, the

proficiency level of the secondary school students might be a factor affecting their attitudes towards peer feedback. Moreover, Sengupta's study (1998) was conducted in Hong Kong where "the traditional roles of the teacher and learners in the school curriculum seem so deep-rooted that the only possible interpretation of knowledge appeals to be is that it is transmitted from teachers to learners, and not constructed by the classroom community" (Sengupta, 1998:78) That is, students were not accustomed to see their peers as evaluators of their papers and to view themselves as student teachers. This might be another factor which caused students to have negative attitudes towards peer feedback.

In this study, it was observed that during the peer feedback activities, students collaborated, exchanged ideas, and had interactive and enjoyable sessions. Specifically, during the conferences held after the peer feedback sessions students had chance to exchange ideas and ask for clarification for the comments made by the peer editors. Moreover, the researcher observed that the students benefited from the conference sessions because problems, such as difficulties related with handwriting or minor misunderstandings, were easily solved during the conferences.

Furthermore, similar to Chaudron (1984) and Keh (1990), students reflected that peer feedback activities helped them to improve their critical thinking and analysis skills. S7 explained: "We've learned how to criticize others". S3 supported S7: "We've also improved our criticism skills". That is to say, peer feedback helps students to read with critical eyes. Finally, it was observed that the peer feedback activities contributed to students' learning. Not only the students with low proficiency level but also the ones with high proficiency level benefited from these activities. The former had a chance to be tutored by their peers. That is, their peers informed them about their weak points and provided solutions for their problems. As for the latter "they gain academically because serving as a tutor requires thinking deeply about the relationships and meanings of a particular subject. In other words, tutoring their peers also contributes to the students with high level of proficiency. Another advantage of peer feedback is that it is time saving for the writing teacher. Since the papers were checked by the peers and revised by the writer before they reached the teacher, the teacher did not see the mistakes on students' first drafts.

Therefore, the time spent for each paper decreased. This might be seen as a benefit for teachers who have heavy schedules and responsibilities like the researcher himself.

In answering the research questions, it can be stated that the results of this study have met the researchers' expectations.

#### **5. 4. Pedagogical Implications**

Overall, this study supports the claim of many researchers (Rollinson, 1998: 26; Caulk, 1994: 184; Mendonca and Johnson's, 1994: 766; Chaudron, 1984: 13; Tsui and Ng, 2000: Elbow, 1981: 64; Keh, 1990: 298; Nelson & Carson, 1994: 124; White & Arndt, 1991: 39) that peer feedback is a valuable form of feedback in L2 writing instruction. One of the purposes of a composition course should be to make students more confident and more independent writers. Peer response groups help to accomplish this purpose. In addition, good responders tend to become better writers. For most students, as their ability as responders improves, their ability to revise their own compositions also improves because they have a better sense of how to approach the task. However, teachers should not expect all the members of response groups to gain the same benefits from the experience. Teachers need to tolerate some partial failures even though they may have worked extensively with individuals trying to improve their performance. They should not forget that one of the important goals of peer feedback is to improve students' writing through communicative and interactive processes of meaning negotiation.

It can be concluded that peer feedback activities can be very productive, but many studies show that the productivity does not come without a considerable investment of time and effort in preparing students for pair work. So, both teachers and students have vital roles in the process of providing feedback for better student writers. Teachers should create a comfortable environment for students to establish peer trust, provide students with linguistic strategies, instruct students in how to ask the right questions and monitor student and group progress.

### **5. 5. Suggestions for Further Research**

First of all, a longitudinal study carried out with a greater number of students might provide more reliable results. While the results of this study would indicate that peer feedback training have positive effects on students writing skills, more research is needed in this field with other pedagogical suggestions for the teachers showing how those programs should be implemented.

Further studies on the comparison of peer feedback with other types of feedback (teacher, self etc.) might be very useful to understand the whole picture. Besides, most of the studies on peer feedback are conducted with university level students, who have reached a certain level of proficiency. The number of the studies conducted with students who have lower level of proficiency is very few. Therefore, comparative research studies conducted with all levels (beginner, elementary, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced) might provide a more realistic picture of peer feedback. Similarly, classes having younger students (under 17) might be interesting settings for future researches.

Moreover, in Turkey, the number of studies which are conducted on peer feedback is very limited. Therefore, there is an urgent need for further research in Turkish context.



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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A : The question which was asked in both pre-test and post-test:**

**- Write an opinion essay on what you think about the problems of the education system in Turkey?**

**Time limit: 60 minutes**

## Appendix B : The ESL Composition Profile

### CONTENT

30-27	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> knowledgeable*substantive*thorough development of thesis* relevant to assigned topic
26-22	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> some knowledge of subject* adequate range* limited development of thesis* mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail
21-17	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> limited knowledge of subject* little substance* inadequate development of topic
16-13	<b>VERY POOR:</b> does not show knowledge of subject* non-substantive* not pertinent * OR not enough to evaluate

### ORGANIZATION

20-18	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:</b> fluent expression* ideas clearly stated/supported* succinct*well-organized*logical sequencing*cohesive
17-14	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE:</b> somewhat choppy*loosely organized but main ideas stand out*limited support* logical but incomplete sequencing
13-10	<b>FAIR TO POOR:</b> non-fluent* ideas confused or disconnected* lacks logical sequencing and development
9-7	<b>VERY POOR:</b> does not communicate* no organization*OR not enough to evaluate

**VOCABULARY**

<b>20-18</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range* effective word/idiom choice and usage* word form mastery * appropriate register</b>
<b>17-14</b>	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range* occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured</b>
<b>13-10</b>	<b>FAIR TO POOR: limited range* frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage* meaning confused or obscured</b>
<b>9-7</b>	<b>VERY POOR: essentially translation* little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form* OR not enough to evaluate</b>

**LANGUAGE USE**

<b>25-22</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions* few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions</b>
<b>21-18</b>	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions* minor problems in complex constructions * several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured</b>
<b>17-11</b>	<b>FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions* frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions * meaning confused or obscured</b>
<b>10-5</b>	<b>VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules dominated by errors does not communicate OR not enough to evaluate</b>



**MECHANICS**

<b>5</b>	<b>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing poor handwriting meaning confused or obscured</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, handwriting illegible OR not enough to evaluate</b>

Adapted from Jacobs, et al. (1981). Testing ESL Composition: A Practical Approach. Boston, MA: Newbury House.

### **Appendix C: The Rating Scale for Students Written Comments**

A "3" comment or suggestion is 'relevant and specific'. It (a) correctly identifies the strengths and / or weaknesses in a piece of writing in concrete terms, (b) raises a relevant question about a particular area of writing, or (c) provides correct and clear direction for revision.

A "2" comment or suggestion is 'relevant but general'. It may correctly identify the strengths and weaknesses in a piece of writing, but fails to address them in concrete, specific terms. It may also raise a relevant but general question about the writing. Furthermore, it may provide correct but nonspecific direction for revision.

A "1" comment is 'inaccurate or irrelevant'.

Adapted from Zhu (1995). "Effects of training for peer response on students' comments and interaction". *Written Communication*. 12(4), 492-528.

## **Appendix D : Essay Checklist**

1. Introduction: Does it grab the reader's attention? Does it set the tone of the essay?
  
2. Thesis statement: Does the thesis statement name the topic, show the writer's position or feelings on the subject, and set out the main points of the essay?
  
3. Support: Has the writer supported all generalizations with concrete details and examples?
  
4. Topic sentences: Is each topic sentence followed by a series of other sentences that develop the main point through a combination of examples, description, details, facts, or anecdotes that directly relate to the topic sentence?  
Has the writer carefully examined each paragraph to be sure that no sentences are included which do not support the topic sentence of the paragraph?
  
5. Unity/paragraph development: Does each body paragraph have a topic sentence that corresponds to one of the points in the thesis statement?
  
6. Coherence: Has the writer used transition words and phrases to facilitate a smooth and logical progression from one sentence or paragraph to the next?
  
7. Content: Is the essay significant and meaningful — a thoughtful, interesting, and informative presentation of relevant facts, opinions, or ideas?
  
8. Conclusion: Does the conclusion summarize and reaffirm the thesis?

Adapted from Chaudron (1984). "The effects of feedback on students' composition revisions". *RELC Journal* 15. 1-15.

## **Appendix E: At-a Glance Student Guidelines for Preparing a Peer Response**

- 1. Read your classmate's writing carefully several times.**
- 2. Focus your attention on the meaning of your classmate's text.**
- 3. Because it is difficult for writers to separate information they wish to express from the actual words on their page, you can help your classmate discover differences between his or her intended meaning and what he or she has actually written.**
- 4. Avoid getting stuck on minor spelling mistakes or grammar errors unless they prevent you from understanding your classmate's ideas.**
- 5. Keep in mind that peer response is used by writers of all ages and types, including student and professional writers who want to know if their writing is clear to others.**
- 6. In responding to writing, try to be considerate of your classmate's feelings, and remember that it is very difficult for most writers to write clearly.**
- 7. Realize that you have the opportunity to tell your classmate what you do not understand about his or her writing, to ask questions about it, and to point out what you like about it. This is important information to the writer.**
- 8. When a peer responds to your writing, remember that you, as the writer, have the ultimate responsibility for making final changes.**
- 9. The peer response activity provides several sources of ideas for how to improve your writing, including your classmate's comments about your writing; your classmate's texts, from which you may learn new words, expressions, and ways of organizing writing, as well as discover errors you may have made in your own text; and discussions of issues you may not have thought about before.**
- 10. If you have any questions or do not know how to respond to your classmate's writing, be sure to ask your teacher for help.**

Berg (1999a). "Preparing ESL students for peer response". TESOL Journal. 8, p: 22.

**Appendix F: Sample Lesson Plan for the First Week**

Course: Academic Writing

Subject: Peer feedback Training

Time: 45+45 minutes

Content:

1. Discuss what peer feedback is and its possible benefits in the writing process.
2. Have the students examine the papers and the peer feedback given to them in the previous year's writing course.
3. Explain the responsibility of both the reader and the writer.
4. Get them to realize the possible risks of the peer feedback process (e.g. focusing on only linguistic accuracy, seeing their peers or themselves inadequate in target language, coming to class unprepared etc.)
5. Give them peer feedback checklists and make sure they understand each item clearly.
6. After brainstorming on a topic have them start writing an essay (informative, comparative or cause & effect type)
7. If the remaining time is not enough, ask them to finish their essays at home and bring them to the class the following week.

**Appendix G: Sample Lesson Plan for the Second Week**

Course: Academic Writing

Subject: Peer feedback Training

Time: 45+45 minutes

Content:

1. Revise the benefits of peer feedback in writing.
2. Have the students give their essays to one of their classmates and request for a written feedback.
3. Remind the students to read the papers first as a whole and then consider the items in the checklist while reading for the second time.
4. Have the students discuss their comments on the essays with their peers.
5. Monitor the peers and help when they ask for something.
6. Ask them to make the necessary changes in their first draft and rewrite their essays on a neat blank sheet of paper.
6. Get both the rough first draft with comments and the second polished one to see whether they understand the peer feedback process and to score them.
7. Examine a sample paper of one of the students and get feedback from every student for that paper only. (Optional)

**Appendix H : Essay Scores For The Experimental Group**

CODE	CLASS	RATER 1		RATER 2	
		pre-test	post-test	pre-test	post-test
S1	B3	78	88	60	70
S2	B3	73	77	60	70
S3	B3	67	78	55	75
S4	B3	70	76	75	75
S5	B3	53	60	50	70
S6	B3	67	80	75	70
S7	B3	68	73	65	70
S8	B3	67	85	65	70
S9	B3	70	82	55	85
S10	B3	60	70	50	65
S11	B3	68	76	70	78
S12	B3	74	70	60	65
S13	B3	63	74	65	70
S14	B3	70	77	65	70
S15	B3	68	85	66	70
S16	B3	55	60	60	62
S17	B3	35	60	40	45
S18	B3	60	65	55	67
S19	B3	80	93	70	80
S20	B5	45	83	55	65
S21	B5	63	70	72	72
S22	B5	58	68	53	55
S23	B5	62	68	71	75
S24	B5	57	70	64	70
S25	B5	70	85	80	60
S26	B5	48	60	57	58
S27	B5	58	75	62	85
S28	B5	44	63	49	60
S29	B5	66	65	69	75
S30	B5	56	75	71	75
S31	B5	32	60	41	50
S32	B5	49	63	60	55
S33	B5	48	70	55	60
S34	B5	45	67	54	65
S35	B5	54	70	63	55
S36	B5	61	78	66	70
S37	B5	43	60	51	55
S38	B5	60	75	65	68
S39	B5	41	50	49	55

Appendix I Essay Scores For The Control Group

CODE	CLASS	RATER 1		RATER 2	
		pre-test	post-test	pre-test	post-test
S40	B2	80	72	55	55
S41	B2	73	67	60	60
S42	B2	70	70	55	58
S43	B2	75	73	55	70
S44	B2	58	60	60	55
S45	B2	70	68	65	65
S46	B2	64	62	60	64
S47	B2	78	82	70	72
S48	B2	68	71	50	55
S49	B2	69	70	50	58
S50	B2	60	60	60	70
S51	B2	60	64	50	56
S52	B2	60	72	50	75
S53	B2	76	77	50	75
S54	B2	78	75	50	55
S55	B2	70	75	60	68
S56	B2	77	80	60	62
S57	B2	65	68	65	65
S58	B2	57	62	50	52
S59	B2	61	65	50	50
S60	B2	80	82	55	60
S61	B2	72	76	50	57
S62	B4	51	50	52	47
S63	B4	49	50	47	55
S64	B4	56	60	58	50
S65	B4	52	50	54	60
S66	B4	65	72	60	75
S67	B4	45	41	35	40
S68	B4	56	60	56	55
S69	B4	52	55	49	56
S70	B4	61	71	65	55
S71	B4	58	55	53	55
S72	B4	51	55	49	60
S73	B4	37	57	45	48
S74	B4	67	72	59	65
S75	B4	67	70	60	65



## Appendix J: Sample Essays of the Students in the Experimental Group

Compare - Contrast

### LONELINESS OR MORE FUN

In our lives we need people who live with us. Some people doesn't prefer to live with their families or friends. They want to live alone. Sometimes living alone gets negative points. It can be harder than living with relatives or friends. In fact some people enjoy it so it doesn't matter for them. Some of them doesn't live alone always they need somebody when they are alone at home. They are happy living with relatives or friends. There are several differences between living alone and living with relatives.

At first glance, living alone is seem to be enjoyable. You can't be comfortable when you are living alone. However sometimes people need somebody to eat or to talk. If you are alone, you can be bored. On the other hand living in a crowded family can be interesting. Because at home there are always noise, there are always people who talks with you or who enjoy with you. I don't think, if I had lived in crowded family, I could be happy. Living with relatives is different from living alone. For example if you live alone you should deal with all the house jobs on your own. In contrast if you live with your relatives it is easier. Because there must be person to deal with them.

For example, my mother, when she was a child, she lived in a crowded family. They lived together their uncles, their cousins and then their grandmothers. Sometimes it could be very difficult. Because they were five children at home, and grandmother was an aggressive person. So when the children wanted to do something, she didn't get permission. Then, they can argue sometimes like these reasons. But generally they were happy to live together.

In conclusion, everybody can't live alone. If you don't bored easily, you can live alone. However living with relatives have different experiences. In addition to you enjoy more than living alone and you shouldn't deal with hard house jobs. But if you want to be a silence life, you can live alone.

I think you should write living alone and living with relatives in separate paragraphs. And you should give your example in the same paragraph. You used the same sentences a lot. But generally you can understand the topic. You can try to explain this topic.

I think the title is nonsense. Because it compare two things but they can't be related with each other.

Peer Editor

PE-512 WR-56

The Problems of Global Warming <sup>Too simple. (write a good title)</sup>

In our world, there are many problems. Global warming is the biggest and the most serious problem. Climate changes are happening and its effects are real. If people don't take it seriously, it will have serious consequences. That is very bad about all species. Global warming depends on many reasons and these reasons result in many effects.

This is a paragraph

There are several causes of global warming. One and the most important cause is people. People damaged the world. They are cutting trees, pollute seas, nature... So these materials are harmful for nature. Moreover climate changes can be dangerous. Because all species are used to live with a stable temperature. <sup>Remove one of them.</sup>

This two sentences are almost same.

If global warming increases, it may soon have serious problems with nature and all species. A group of professors wrote about some of the effects of global warming. One important effect is climate changing. If climate changes are not, all lives in the world will be in danger, they can't survive. On the other hand, temperature increases and that is why the sea levels rise and for this reason many lowland islands are covered.

You can mention about these problems. What are they?

In conclusion people should prevent. Because if global warming grows up more than now, our world will be out of use. But, I think we can't heal the world anymore.

Good summarize

WR-55

\* Please, learn a pretty writing style. Or write in pc.  
\* Well Done! But, you can write better.

Peer Editor:

First draft

## HOLIGANISM

In Turkey, lots of men go to the stadiums for watching matches, especially football matches. Football is a lifestyle of Turkish men. We like adrenaline and stress. Both are included in football matches. This causes hooliganism. There are many different causes for hooliganism in the world.

Hooliganism is mainly caused by bad attitudes of football clubs. Before important matches, footballers, especially high profile ones, team managers <sup>or swear</sup> swear and shout at each other. They make provokes. So, fans <sup>get excited</sup> are going to be excited and aggressive. They <sup>swear to</sup> swear to other teams fans and footballers.

Another cause is television and TV speaker. Before the match, they increase the adrenaline. People who <sup>watch</sup> watched these programmes are <sup>become</sup> going to be furious. They attack other people or police officers out of the stadium.

Nowadays, lots of people <sup>are</sup> afraid <sup>of</sup> to go <sup>to</sup> matches. This way, bookie offices don't sell all tickets. It <sup>effects</sup> <sup>of</sup> teams' <sup>by</sup> incomes. So, football don't take their fees. If people or media don't be attentive, lots of people will suffer <sup>from</sup> harm.

"You're in the right way to explain the subject and your examples are suitable but not enough I think. You should use more supporting sentences to be more clear. On the other hand, there are lots of grammar mistakes. Try to be more careful!... Good luck!"

Checked by:

S13

WR-520

**CAUSES OF DIVORCE**

→ you can find a more beautiful title

A man and a woman loves each other and they decide to get married. Firstly everything is perfect. Then after months, years, arguments start. Sometimes, because of this <sup>ese</sup> arguments the divorce happens. There are many causes for divorce.

good point

← The first cause is getting married at a young age Because they don't know each other enough. So they have got a lot of problems. This problems depend on lack of experiences. The couple is very young and that's why they don't understand each other and maybe their expectations from life are different. Also traditional way marriages can end up with divorce Since they don't know each other well. Even maybe they don't see and meet. Another cause is violent quarrelsome between couple. For this reason they argue and lose authority. If they have got children, they affect a lot. Their pysicsology ~~affects~~ <sup>is effected</sup> badly.

good

talk about reasons of violent quarrelsome

Third cause is alcohol, gambling and cheating <sup>on</sup> with someone. People have many responsibilities for their family. If they use alcohol or play gambling, they can't pay attention <sup>to their</sup> for family. And also this <sup>ese</sup> behaviours affect family budget. On the other hand trust is the most important thing for <sup>o</sup> relationship. For this reason cheating <sup>on</sup> is the most serious cause <sup>to</sup> divorce.

In conclusion, if we want to have a good marriage, we should choose our husband or wife carefully. Because marriage includes big amount of our life.

Good job

→ Education is also a problem for divorce. You should talk about it.

→ Your conclusion is very good.

WR-59

S2

Peer Editor ⇒

WR-27

## THE MAIN PROBLEM FOR COUNTRIES

Overpopulation is a serious problem for developed countries. Lots of problems' solutions depend on population. In countries, if there are some matters about population, development is really hard.

There are lots of causes of overpopulation. For a sample, people immigrate from other countries. As they may not find a job, they may want to have a good life-style, a qualified children, lots of money. All of these causes people to immigrate, so it is getting hard to develop for countries. Also overpopulation makes countries hard to live.

This is not cause. Overpopulation effects lots of things. For example people need to have qualified hospitals, schools...etc. It is impossible in crowded countries.

Government should do something for overpopulation. People have to be conscious, because the way of development depends on population.

PE-16

\* I think thesis statement isn't appropriate. You didn't mention about you will write about causes.

\* You wrote "Overpopulation effects lots of things" but you didn't write much things. Effect paragraph is really small, not enough. When I read your thesis I thought you will write about overpopulation's effects on development, but you didn't. You can write how it prevents development.

o What do you mean with these sentences.

## POLICE

Police work is dangerous. Sometimes police put in situations that excessive force is needed. But some officer use these extreme measures in situations when it is not, police brutality should be addressed. The use of excessive force not be large problem, but it should be looked into by both the police and public. → this first sentences is very good I think unnecessary. At first glance, Police brutality is defined as involving unnecessary and unjustified use of force be that either physical or verbal. After that? Excessive police force against blacks has always been tolerated, because as a formally enslaved minority African Americans are trapped in a cultural context specifically designed to inhibit their development and thus minimize their threat to white hegemony. Other than the police stopping brutality internally, the use of civilian review boards can be used. These boards must be able to receive all the evidence in a case, including the police audio tapes. in order to make fair judgment? if excessive force was used or not. if excessive force is present in cases, these review boards must be able to punish the police or they are almost useless. → this sentence very good

In conclusion, after taking everything into consideration I think. these excessive police and brutality police. should be ended up. Because. these police are effected. to real police.

WL- 511

\* You should have used phrases

\* You should have done two paragraphs

peer editor

51

## TERRORISM IN TURKEY

Terrorism is the most terrible problem haunting Turkey. Many countries are struggling with this problem. Turkey is just one of them. Firstly many young soldiers are killed young soldiers are killed in young ages every year. Next, people live with the threat of terrorism. Also terrorism slows down development of Turkey. And last the demonstrations of terrorism supporter cause provocation in Turkey.

Firstly, a lot of young Turkish soldiers are killed by the terrorists every year. Some of them have children and wife. Some of them are not yet married, some of them are married and some get killed before they able to see their newly born babies and their families live a life of sorrow when their sons are killed by terrorists.

Secondly, terrorism is the most important pressure on people in the region where terrorism exists. Those people feel that they could get killed anytime. Their positions can be taken away or their houses can be destroyed.

At last, terrorism is a major problem in undermining development of the country. To prevent this, Turkey spends a huge amounts of money every year. If terrorism were not in Turkey, this money could be used for development of Turkey. It could be very useful for Turkish Nation. Last, the minority which supports the bloody actions of terrorist groups stage demonstrations at time. What they want to do is to provoke the Turkish Nation and drag the country into a civil war.

Finally, a lot of young Turkish soldiers perish every year. Some people live in terror. A great deal of money is lost eradicate because of terrorism, the provocations by supporters have a bad effect on the mood of Turkish People and Nation.

You wrote a good essay.  
I think you made a good point.  
You told us real events.

PE-54

WR  
58

Can you write these two paragraphs as a paragraph?

## YOUR DECISION

If you have to choose ones, which do you chose? Living alone or living with your family and relatives. There are many differences between them.   
can you change this. Because you said contrast things. "and" isn't suitable for me.

Firstly, you can learn life is very hard with living alone. Because you haven't someone <sup>which helps you.</sup> And you know your profit what you do. On the other hand <sup>it may be who</sup> living with family isn't as difficult as living alone. You can be near your family everytime and find help. But it can be harmful sometimes. For instance if you want to make a career you shouldn't live with your family. Because you have to make decision yourself and you must be self-confident. For example english is too important nowadays. You can't go America and learn first degree. But if you used to live your family you can't deal with living alone. So developing yourself is difficult for living with family. you emphasised very important spot You are more independent when you living alone. On the other hand you have to do what your family's want.

→ (when you live with your family) → add it please  
 Life is a race. You have to make your decision. You will see many opportunities. If you choose free opinion, you can win the race. But if you have chosen living with your family, you would have left the race.   
 WR - 510

I think you should write two paragraph and you should talk about living alone in first and in second you should talk about living with your family.

Peer editor

55

L3B



P Editors - 59 x 58

Cause and Effect

your thesis sentence isn't enough. You should add effects, too!

## QUICK DECIDE EFFECTS ON DIVORCE

In these days, people can't understand each other easily. They don't show respect to other people who is in their lives. Because of this reason marriage is a big problem in our lives. Getting divorce <sup>rate</sup> will increase more than today if people can't show respect <sup>to</sup> each other and if they can't understand each other. There are several causes of getting divorce.

There are some causes of getting divorce. One cause is respect. People should show respect each other if they want to live together. Before they get married, they don't think about it. So living together <sup>is</sup> becomes harder when they don't show respect <sup>of</sup> their lives. For this reason we can see a lot of divorce in our daily lives. Another cause is understanding each other of two people who wants to live together. For example some people can't listen <sup>to</sup> each other and that is why they get divorced. In marriage this is an another big problem. Before marriage they decide quickly on marriage. As a result of this quick <sup>sign</sup> decide, they get divorced easily.

If getting divorce is increasing like now, in the future marriage won't have any importance. One important effect is at social life. If marriage won't have any importance in the future, we can't see any families. Everybody will live alone. Another effect is important too. If they have children who gets divorced, it can be effective for this children badly. Children who has a separate mum and father has lots of serious problems. Therefore this is bad for our social life in the future.

In conclusion people should thinking a lot before getting married. Getting divorce is really influences person's life badly. Nobody wants to live it. So before marriage decide <sub>decision</sub> they come to show respect and understand to each other.

WR-56

\* You can use more conjunctions.

\* You used so many "important"

Good job!

First draft

## HOLIGANISM

In Turkey, lots of men go to the stadiums for watching matches, especially football matches. Football is a lifestyle of Turkish men. We like adrenaline and stress. Both are included in football matches. This causes hooliganism. There are many different causes for hooliganism in the world.

Hooliganism is mainly caused by bad attitudes of football clubs. Before important matches, footballers, especially high profile ones, team managers <sup>as swear</sup> swear and shout each other. They make provokes. So, fans <sup>get excited</sup> are going to be excited and aggressive. They <sup>swear to</sup> swear other team fans and footballers.

Another cause is television and TV speaker. Before the match, they increase the adrenaline. People who <sup>watch</sup> watched these programmes are <sup>become</sup> going to be furious. They attack other people or police officers out of the stadium.

Nowadays, lots of people <sup>are</sup> afraid <sup>of</sup> to go <sup>ing</sup> matches. This way, <sup>by</sup> ticket offices don't sell all tickets. It affects <sup>names of teams</sup> teams' incomes. So, football don't take their fees. If people or media don't be attentive, lots of people will suffer <sup>from</sup> harm.

"You're in the right way to explain the subject and your examples are suitable but not enough I think you should use more supporting sentences to be more clear. On the other hand, there are lots of grammar mistakes. Try to be more careful!... Good luck!"

Checked by!

S13

WR-520

CC-T

→ Idea 4 like this

**TRY IT OR LOSE IT**

In our culture people normally don't live alone, that isn't an acceptable way of living. But sometimes people have to live alone even if they didn't used to it. And that new lifestyle brings some difficulties with it. Sharing your problems, or arranging your money, dealing with problems that may last forever.

At first glance that comes my mind is when you won university. Especially it's another city. You began to be alone and not sharing your problems with someone. Because you feel yourself completely alone. But on the other hand you began to learn how to deal with the problems and bring some sensible solutions and your life is fixed. But that's not the only problem. Both of them mean are the same.

You can make sensible solutions but you can't live without money. Second thing you learn in being alone arranging your budget. You started to make your payings lower. You only got necessary things for you. You can only enjoy how much your money left. Although you didn't used to do these kinds of things. Lonely life teaches you that. You should improve this.

These things I mentioned above is some little thing that come my mind at the time of that little time. But whereas there are problems with living alone. This grow you even you can't realize. Against the these little things I think everybody should try living alone once. Because there is something I can't see pulling me inside. Maybe it's difficulties but I like that. And also I wish I had money that time it would be more colorful. Maybe its nature law that one is given second is for finding.

WR-S1

- ⊗ Your hand-writing is bad. you should improve this.
- ⊗ Your conjunctions aren't enough.
- ⊗ You used so much "But"
- ⊗ I can't understand your text's sentence because I can't find it

S5

Topic: living alone / with / relatives  
 being / friends  
 CET

## DIFFERENT LIVES

Living alone or living with relatives - Both of them are possible for an adult but also a little bit complicated to deal with. Because each of them has different conditions to live. <sup>what are they</sup> Due to situations of living change to person to person. But it doesn't change the reality of differences of both situations.

Living alone shows us the challenge of individuals. Because a person who lives alone says it can stand on its own feet by itself and it cope with all situations, all problems and all difficulties on its own. This situation also shows us a person who lives alone trust itself very much. Due to, although its loneliness, it deal with all situations with big patience and success. Also individuals living alone don't need anyone <sup>if it is unnecessary</sup> to get something done instead of it. Because they have got accustomed of doing everything on their own. Likewise being used to doing everything, individuals are independent living alone. They don't ask anyone to do anything and also they don't get orders from someone to do something. On the other hand living alone can be boring day by day because of living without someone and without hearing another person's voice - only you and your voice. It's good but also a little bit boring <sup>negative part is short.</sup>

<sup>s phrasal verb</sup> <sup>st include</sup> <sup>ing with</sup> <sup>latives</sup> <sup>st</sup> <sup>iving alone</sup> Living with relatives is more different from living alone. First, you can see a lot of people around you everyday. And also you can do different things everyday with them. Actually it sounds amusing at the beginning until they started to feel yourself more dependent. When you notice that it would be too late. Because when you are alone you feel yourself so lonely and you started to looking for anyone to befriend to you. On the other hand you always ask someone before doing anything to do it just like their thought. And also you always live your relatives' rights and their wrongs. and you can't yourself exactly and you will always live depending on someone near you. So you can't constitute your character absolutely and you can't live without someone. Because you will always want help from somebody, ask anything to them or counsel any idea. It's all desperate situation.

<sup>in conclusion</sup> <sup>= best</sup> In conclusion different two lives have different situation. The most important thing in these situations is be able to yourself and behave just like that.

S35

S19

Peer editor =

-CC 1 =

## INDECISION

Living in a dormitory is more difficult than living in home. You will face with some problems in dormitory. But, if you lived in home, you wouldn't face. However, you have advantages and disadvantages both place. We should see which one is better.

This sentence isn't necessary. This means in 2nd and 3rd sentence.  
 Why a student lives in dormitory? ~~She must be crazy. Because in dormitory~~ It isn't true. That's different things. a problem is always being. The other members of dormitory and you will be source of the problem. If you go well together with others, you can't see a problem. But the opposite circumstance, you will fight until someone graduated. Another problem is windows. When you need some fresh air, you open the dormitory's windows. And someone can say that "I'm cold. Close it now." You are angry with him absolutely. And one day, you don't have enough energy for struggling with problems. At this day, you must leave from dormitory. And move a home with your close friends.

You shouldn't write these sentences.  
 First of all, you should find a cheap and close home to school. When you find it, you will buy some furnitures. It looks expensive, but when you graduated from school, you will sell them to another students. You cook your own delicious foods. And you can do whatever you want. You can watch TV until the morning. You can play some games with friends. And at the exam time, you can bring your successful friends in school to your home. But, however, you will have some difficulties. for example, you must clean the home at least once a week. And you must wash the dishes everyday. Sometimes you can write difficulties in another paragraph. you must pay high electricity and water bills. Despite of this difficulties, I always prefer stay in home.

Finally, you can learn the life's real face both place. But, living in home is looking a bit easier than living in dormitory. Maybe, the best choice is to try both of them.

In conclusion is better than it.

Good finish

Peer Editor

PE-57

WR-514

## THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING TOGETHER

Being together has been the main aim for people since they existed. There is no point not importing beings together. Because it is necessary for people living with other people, however, some people prefer living alone and isolating themselves from people. This preference is only about <sup>isolate</sup> personal thought.

Both alone people and others have some similarities. For instance, both kind of people can live, can see, can eat and can do some similar activity. There aren't <sup>ies</sup> more similarities than this <sup>any</sup> ~~them~~.

There are more differences between them undoubtedly. People can be very happy with their friends, relatives. Because they aren't alone during doing some things. Therefore their friends help them when they need help. People are a bit different from other kind of creatures. Whereas animals are tend to be together for living, this is not <sup>only</sup> a tendencies for people. This is the main aim for people. Because people can exist only with the other people. People can be social only with the others. This is our difference from other creatures. We can supply the peace only with this. We can carry off the difficulties only with this.

WR-27

To <sup>?</sup> summarize, being together is not only having friends and relatives, meanwhile it is having some unknown people. It is the most important thing which people must have. Because the whole other difficulties can be solved if you have real friends. And our nation can carry off everything if we can gather.

PE-21

Firstly, there are some punctuation mistakes. You pay more attention. You could expand ideas, saying some sentences can be boring for readers. You could explain more advantages of the living together. I didn't understand your thesis statement. Therefore, I don't know your supporter sentences. I can't decide which life is better.

## EXTRA IS HARMFUL

World For many years, people are staying in the world. People are developing day by day, however, the world isn't growing so this state is becoming very big problem nowadays. Over population has many causes and effects.

Why we have this problem?

You should give examples about this

Firstly, I want to discuss about our country. Our country is a improving country so we need a lot of workers, although we need a lot of worker, we have a big problem about over population. We must stop over population. Our culture is most different than Europe countries. Turkey's people give more importance family. We always want to improve our family, so it is become cause of over population. However, the other countries struggle to stop over population. For example, China is the most crowded country in the world but they created a law about over population. They don't born second baby for their law in this way they stop their over population.

Secondly, I want to discuss effects of over population. There are a lot of effects over population. If population rise alot, we don't have forests, clear see sides and a good lifestyle which is the most important. People must think about future so we want to stop rising population. In the future the world may not be so good as we wish. → very good explanation.

In conclusion, we have a only world. The world has been receiving people's all necessities. We must respect for the world. We must think our future and world future.

Peer Editor

PE-519

WR-518

WIN OR LOSE

CCT

WON OR LOST

Living with friends is better than living alone. Because human can't be happy when ~~they stay~~ staying alone. According to a marketing survey, human's life continue only living with another people and with talking them. If a person lives alone, ~~some times later~~ <sup>after a period of time</sup>, he can't find the life enjoyable. However, this person will see that the life is <sup>an</sup> only pointless mass. Because of that, everybody needs someone or somebodies in life.

Good points

If you ~~are~~ <sup>live</sup> living alone, life is nothing for you. After a long and difficult day, you come to home. And you see nothing. Nobody is there. Your home is only like a cold fridge. You don't have anything in fact. When it gets dark, you turn back to home. And you want to eat something. You have to prepare your own meal in the kitchen. This situation can be difficult if you make this everyday. When you want to talk someone, you can't find anyone. <sup>Good</sup> Your friends are always TV and PC, I guess. At the weekend, you want to have a picnic or <sup>go to</sup> a cinema. But, you can't fulfil this event without somebody. Summarize, living alone is boring.

In contrast, living with friends is funny. You have always fun in your home. When you come to home, you can find hot meal. And you have friends for talking about something. You can do with them whatever you want. You can share your sadness and happiness with them. Because of living together, you pay the water and electricity bills together. Your friends help you all the time. If a member of your home have a trouble, everyone helps them and tries to solve his/her problem.

If I have to choose one of them, I certainly 'choose' living with friends. Don't forget that, everyone needs somebodies. Alone people can't win anything without somebody.

WR-514

- You made very good points.
- I wish you had given extra advantages about living with friends.
- The conclusion summarized and reaffirmed the thesis it's good.

Peer editor

52



Cause and Effect

Topic: Natural disaster, earthquake

## SOMETIMES WE ARE WEAK

In human life, there are many events which are inevitable and aren't prevented by us. One of them is earthquake which is one of the natural disasters. There <sup>are</sup> some causes and many effects after of earthquakes.

We have a lot of information about causes of earthquake although its mysteries haven't <sup>been</sup> completely solved yet. According to geophysics researches the earth have some deformations which is related to passing time in its stratum. And this fact causes energy accumulation. When this energy surpasses friction strength in stratum, faults start to move and to be broken. And on the earth we can see this action as <sup>a</sup> big and terrible destruction.

By this day, the earth has witnessed a lot of earthquakes. Some of them had little rage and some of them had big rage. But all of them <sup>have</sup> frightened humanity and most of them caused big losses and brought death. People lost their houses, their families, their lives... They remained all alone. All things which were belonged to them were disappeared and they watched everything like watching a horror film. Unfortunately they couldn't do anything.

Shortly we remain very weak for opposing earthquakes. And this disaster teaches us importance of our lives, things which are belong to us and people whom we love...

Second Peer Editor:

You explained causes of earthquake well but you didn't use transition words much. You should use more transition words in all paragraphs.

You shouldn't use this punctuation sign because it's your last sentence of your essay.

L3B

PE-S19

Good + ti WR-8

## FACTORIES

There is only one world and everybody live in the same world. Increasing the population people effected the environment and world's countenance. Everybody must work for living. Factories, companies everythings are for people. When the population of people become rising, opportunity of employment become decreasing. So the entrepreneurs establish new factories. In this instance everybody can find new job easily.

There are lots of factories. People can everythings in an artificial way. Some factories conceive waste production. And if those waste are abandoned in a unconscious way to environment, the world where the people must be live, effected the people population in a bad way. People become ill like cancer. If the dirty waste goes to soil, you can't produce fruit and vegetables. It is known that people have to eat fruit and vegetables for living. If the soil can't be produce some vegetables, the animals what are live in those area(s) can't find food so they attack the people population.

If the dirty waste goes to sea. The animals what are living in the sea, are impressed. The population of sea animals disappears. Those affected birds, people, also world. When the factories smoke goes to atmosphere, it cause a huge problem. The dirty smokes take the atmosphere. Atmosphere has a really serious role. It holds the harmful sunlights. If the world hadn't it, everybody would be burned with sunlight. And the climate would be different. People can live separation of temperature. If the world's degree increase, ice caps what are in the world's pole become melt. Sea's level increase too. And every ~~thing~~ where in the world stay under water.

There are only one rule. Everybody have to pay attention to the world. Not only for himself or herself, but also humanity. Everybody must protect the environment for the future.

WR - 3

Peer Editor

515

1st draft

## Country's and family's future

Working is very important for our country's family life. Everyone wants to earn money for their family. If unemployment rises, there will be a lot of problems.

↑ You can add "with" here.

If people can't find job, people will direct into bad ways to earn money, because people must earn money to live with. For example if a man can't find a job, he may steal something from markets or he may mug someone. It will cause very big social problems.

Government must be aware of unemployment. They must be precautionous in case that to solve this problem, factories may be built or people may be employees in public establishments. In the other hand state can give money to people until they ~~can~~ find job.

not will but may

To conclude, unemployment may be a very big problem <sup>for</sup> country's and people's future. If government can prevent unemployment people live <sup>happier</sup> ~~more~~.

WR-539

PE-537

## ON TV OR IN FIELD

Playing sports and watching sports on TV, both of them can be enjoyable. But, If I had to choose one of them, I would absolutely choose the playing. Because; on TV, everybody is watching other people, but while you are playing, everybody is watching you. <sup>Can you make this sentence stronger?</sup> However; playing sports is won you something. <sup>I think it is the most valuable thing for everyone.</sup> For example; you have a healthy body and it makes you relax <sup>maybe</sup> happy. <sup>what do you mean here? I can't understand.</sup> It is forgotten you bad things in your life. <sup>use a connecting word here.</sup> And also, I will mention watching. We usually eat junk food when we are watching sports. <sup>you could give some or an example here.</sup> When you ate junk food, you will be fat and unhealthy. <sup>It damages your body.</sup> This mustn't be meaning "we never watch sports on TV." <sup>This sentence have same meaning.</sup> Sometimes, we can watch on TV. For example; if the team which is your best have a match on TV, you can watch it. But, we shouldn't watch all the sports on TV. Even if we played a bit of sport, we would never leave to do sports.

Your concluding sentence must be similar with topic sentence. It is a bit of different.

\* Well done !!!

Peer Writer

PE-58

WR-514

CCS

WITH WHO YOU LIVE?

I think it's necessary

Because of the structure of society, there are lots of life style. The population of city where we live in it can effect it. At this point, as a citizen, I'll talk about two life styles in a city with comparing them: Being alone and living with friends or family. Both of them have good and bad sides.

live/are living.

Firstly when you are to live alone, you are responsible just yourself. So you are free to live how you want. It's so good when you have money, however, if you don't have enough money, everything starts going bad. You start to see some papers whose names are bills. Another painfully <sub>bad</sub> point, you have to face them!

Secondly if you live with your friends or family, economic responsibilities reduce. You can buy the jacket which you peer all time when you live alone. On the other hand your social life is always connected to somebody. It can be your father, mother, even your friend.

In conclusion, the most important thing is being happy. It ~~is~~ really doesn't matter being alone or living with somebody. So the society needs happy persons. to improve itself <sub>+themselves-</sub>

WR-26

- \* You start to write your essay with a conjunction, I think, it's not good.
- \* You should give more examples about your topic. And you write your essay with only one side. Economic problems. But, you mention some society problems and effects in your introduction paragraph.

PE-28

CCS

To FEEL ALONE

Aloneless has two meaning. To be alone or to feel alone. There is a difference between them. Feeling alone is worse than to be alone. My motto in that life do whatever you want, whatever you feel. So feeling is very important for people. Someone prefer to feel, live crowded life and some of people prefer more silent life. There are lots of differences between them. Let me try to explain...

First of all everyone has lots of happiness or sadness, problems in the life. So they need to share them with others to increase happiness or decrease sadness. I mean while you are with your friends you could be happier. In another way if you are alone you could become crazy or could have some of important disasters.

If you are living at home lonely you can select the equipments that you use or you can watch a TV channel whichever you want. But if you live with your friends or your family, you have to obey some of the rules. This is one of the good way of living alone. Because rules could be boring or hard sometimes.

In conclusion, sometimes everybody needs to be alone to think about themselves and decide some important decisions about themselves. But this alone time must be very short. Because if you be alone all your life you would feel alone one day. Try to have some good friends...

WR-24

Introduction part grabs the reader's attention. As writer approaches so calmly to the topic. It is relevant with the tone of the essay. In supporting paragraph, writer could explain more information than position of the present time. Sentences follow by a series of other sentences but the sentences are short and easy. He didn't tell details maybe he can add a few examples. The conclusion part summarizes the thesis.

PE-31

## Appendix K: Sample Essays of the Students in the Control Group

### Izmir's Traffic

I'm living in Izmir and I'm student so when I go to school, I must use public transport, like almost everybody. Sometimes using public transport makes me crazy because of this traffic jam. Creating traffic jam depends on many reasons and these reasons result in many effects.

What are these causes? Firstly, Izmir is Turkey's third largest city, so it's very crowded. There are five universities and so many students. Every morning, except Sundays, people go work, students go to schools so ways are made incredibly crowded. Also I think ways aren't enough for Izmir. Some important places they are so narrow.

These causes effect people's mental and physical health. People of Izmir begin day very bad mood I think.

Because you can hear everybody complain about this jam. Some doctors's reports tell us when people arrive jobs, feel headaches. So this makes life irresistible.

To conclude, during the day people should take some relaxing medicines or do sport, so this traffic makes life shorter.

WR - 571

PE - 572

It's good essay, you write many problems and different subjects

First Draft

WR-565

## APARTMENTS and DORMITORIES

Apartments and dormitories are very important in students' lives. A lot of students need both of these to stay in when they come to university. There are lots of dormitories and student apartments in the cities which have university. Apartments and dormitories are similar in several ways.

First, they are both living accommodations that provide a student with a place to sleep, bathe, and keep and keep belongings. They are also alike in that they require living with or near another person. An apartment is usually in a building that houses other people as well. Frequently the person renting the apartment has a roommate to share the expenses. Similarly, in a dormitory there are many rooms and students either share rooms or live next door to each other. Another similarity is that both apartments and dormitories have certain rules by which people must abide.

I am living in apartment and in my past I lived in dormitory. Both of these are very useful for us.

PE-568

This essay is really perfect.  
Well done!



## CAT AND DOG

Cat and dog are the favorite animals on the world for centuries. Some people think they are their child, some people think they are their real friends, some people think they are the best thing to relax and you can add a lot of idea to your list but in fact the real idea is having cat or dog so special for people.

Although cat and dog are completely different when you look them, they have some similarities. For example both cat and dog can be domesticated easily. They never forget what you teach them. They are clever and also they are sensitive like people. If you are rude to them, they get sad and angry so they aren't interested in you, run away from you or don't eat meal, drink water shortly they become stranger.

The one of the similarities is loving their owner so much. Some people think cat doesn't love owner but dog does it isn't completely true because in fact dog love owner and cat does too. They need the same thing, food, water and love. If you give food, water, love to them, you are their family and who doesn't like family even though they are animals.

While there are some similarities between cat and dog, there are some differences too. In some ways they are alike, cat is cat dog is dog. For example dog is more loyal than cat, dog never attacks owner but cat does. You can do everything with your dog because dog likes actions on the other hand cat doesn't like. You can go for a walk or hunting, you can play games or swim with your dog but cat never does it. It eats food, drinks water maybe play with you for a short time and becomes bored. In these ways cat and dog are completely different.

In conclusion maybe you don't love animals but if you want to be happier, you should have one of them because life will more beautiful with cat or dog.

WR-562

Your essay is really good. Good job!

PE-568

WR-550

PE-542

## Preparing Coffee

Coffee is a beverage, which most popular drink, and the majority of people don't know how coffee is made. The process of making coffee is a complex process which make this beverage rich in flavor. The first step in the process of coffee making is picking up every cherry carefully. The picking of cherry is picked up to early it will lack of necessary sweetness, but if the cherry is picked up to late it will be sour. The second step is the process in which they take out all the soft juicy fruit of the cherry and leave the coffee bean peeled. This is called "despulpado". During this process the coffee is separated the by altitude and quality

The next step to follow is fermentation, in this process they leave the coffee beans in long tanks for the coffee to release all the honey left from the pulp. The third step washing the coffee beans. During this process the beans are placed in large tanks filled with water pressure, which leaves the beans with no honey leftovers, it also separates the coffee beans by quality the beans that float are the low quality beans and the ones that are on the bottom of the tank are the good quality beans.

During the drying process all the beans are arranged in a patio outdoors, the wind and the sun are in charge of drying the beans. The last step roasting the coffee, in this process is where the roaster will decide the taste of the batch of coffee beans roasted. All these steps to follow are the steps coffee beans go through before consumers can actually drink it. It is important to have knowledge of things that are involved in our lives, like coffee.

19. 02. 2008  
 CASAMBA

### WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

In Turkey there are many factories and companies which can supply money to Turkey. Day ~~one~~<sup>by</sup> day all of the managers try to find new paths about earning much money. Although all off these good news, I think Turkey still too weak if we compare it's financial with European Countries.

Turkey have been growing up many smart, Intelligent people as manager. They are always trying to give well-planned plans to their investors. So why can't they be as good as the foreign countries? I think there are many reasons about it but, that is the basic one; They don't think what all of the world need? It is separates Turkey and this kind of undevelopment country from the others. Because if you can't find anything usefull, you can't persuade anyone to buy it.

Sometimes in Turkey some good-educated person can find really usefull invent. But they don't know how to develop this invent so some foreign investors help them about ~~how to~~<sup>use</sup> it. That's the other face of Turkey's being poor. It is using may valuable person because of this reason.

In summarise if Turkey wants to change this confused situation it has to find new path to success. I hope they'll achieve to find a good solution at last.

PE-547

WR-541

Peer editors:

WR-547

## TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

Spring is a transition period from cold and rainy days to warm and sunny day. At this period negative changes appear in our metabolisms. So we get the flu easily. Let me tell you about the flu's causes and the way of protect ourselves.  
*That's sounds great!*

Firstly, while the sun is shining in the morning, it can hide behind the clouds in the evening. So temperatures change unexpectedly. Therefore we have several problems about clothing. We can come back in a soaking wet clothes from picnic. Wet clothes damage our weak bodies. Because of this we should watch-forecast carefully and choose suitable clothes for the weather.

Secondly, when our metabolisms get used to this change, our bodies become weak, too. We should eat fresh fruits and vegetables abundantly to <sup>get</sup> make our bodies strong. Moreover we can do some exercises for strong body.

On the other hand, we shouldn't stay public places for a long time. Because everybody has the same problem about getting a flu. for this reason flu can be contagious. Particularly, schools, public transports, places of employments and day nurseries are very dangerous for our health.

Consequently, to choose suitable clothes for the weather to eat fresh fruits and vegetables and not to stay longer in a public places protect our health from gribal infections. Especially Spring is a good period to catch a cold. Take care of your health!

I liked your essay.  
 You used to conj. so good.  
 I have some inf., if I don't know the ins. flu.

PE-541

MY CHOICE → try to find better title

Although living in a detached house seems imposing, I always prefer flats. Everyone wants to be rich and show his richness. Sometimes people are showing off by living in a big detached house or using an expensive car. Of course it is good to have a big economical utilities. <sup>irrelevant sentence</sup> but actually living in a detached house has many problems. It is really difficult to clean it for instance. Also saving this kind of imposing house from the thieves might be too difficult. On the other hand it might be more expensive than you thought to heat the house in winter. But if you have a nice, little flat <sup>Good!</sup> you won't have to spend so much money and you can easily heat and clean it. So you have to decide carefully before choose the house you live in. I agree detached houses are attractive but having a relax life in a little flat is always preferable for me.

use another word

Peer Editor 1 57

4

WR-52

→

## TITANIC 2nd draft?

Nowadays people construct a lot of ships and oceans have many big ships but in 1912 oceans have Titanic and it ~~was~~ the biggest ship in the world and people ~~said~~ <sup>told</sup> about Titanic "This ship never sinks moreover God can't sink this" however Titanic sank its first journey.

Titanic was constructed by white starline in 1909, Ireland. All materials were the highest quality in Titanic, Titanic's owner didn't avoid expense therefore Titanic deserved whole compliment. Titanic Captain's name is Edward John Smith. And Titanic's construct finished in 1912, Titanic got ready for swimming. Although Titanic was the biggest ship, its propellers were very small for Titanic for this reason, Titanic had low manoeuvre talented. Appearance of Titanic was similar to maurentanya.

Titanic got off from Southampton to Newyork 10 April 1912. A lot of famous people were in Titanic and Titanic had 3547 passengers. 15 April 1912 the weather was very cold. Invigilators said "we see huge iceberg" but Titanic hit the iceberg, water entered to Titanic. Two hours later Titanic sank in north Atlantic a round of Labrador. Eventhough Titanic had 3547 passengers, it had almost 40 boats thus firstly women and children were rescued by attendants so dead men's number were more than the others. About 1500 people frozen to death because the weather was very cold and when Titanic sank, people had to wait in cold water.

To summarize, Titanic wasn't famous ship until 1985, In 1985 Robert Ballard found Titanic's carcass. people told a lot of stories about Titanic and Titanic was famous thanks to these stories,

WR-558

PE-551

You must use more conjunction  
I like your essay at all and subject.

Eating is an activity that people do at least two times a day. We live in a world where the variety of food is very much, and we're responsible for what we eat. We decide what we are eat and how <sup>we most know</sup> it will effect our bodies. And we know the differences between eat fresh foods and canned foods. The three main differences are flavor, health benefits and price.

The most important difference is their flavor. Fresh foods have great flavor because they keep all of their natural conditions. On the other hand, canned foods haven't because there are some other chemical products. Because of these products, canned foods aren't delicious like fresh foods.

There is a health factor that effects both of them. Canned foods lose some of the original fresh food nutrients when stored and it has to be tinned with many conservatives and chemical factor that probe the shelf life and apparent freshness of the food but could become toxic if consumed too often.

Another difference between them is cost. Canned foods are more expensive than fresh foods. Benefit of buy canned foods is that they are easier to find.

These are main differences between fresh foods and canned foods. Buying food depend on person but before you buy food, you should really read that and <sup>think</sup> ~~thinking~~ one more time.

\* You wrote an important topic. I agree with you.

PE-561

WR-556-55

"informative"

## TV

The TV which was invented by John Logie Baird is the best invention. In the 21. century, this machine is so important it is improved day by day and a lot of people has one of them. The television provided us a lot of benefit.

Television is the best communication machine. You see and hear all of the news from earth. You have some information about all over the world. For example, if the war was beginning, we could see the situation on the same type. And we could know what happened with alive publication. Also we can find what we want with teletext.

Television is useful because you learn a lot of newness about earth. You watch different documentary. If you support a team, you can learn all of things about your team easily. Except for, television is enjoyable. There is a lot of channel on TV. For example Beyaz show, Disco Krak etc...

Television is relaxing also. When you turn your home from your work or school. Firstly you sit and switch on the TV because you need to have rest and the TV is provide us this.

In conclusion, people like watching TV because TV is enjoyable, relaxing and a good way to learn what happens world.

P.S. It is very clear and beautiful essay. I love it!

PE: 574

WR-566



### LIVING WITH FAMILY OR WITHOUT THEM

Nowadays, going to best schools is very important for students and their families. We know that, in Turkey, students take examinations. Some of these students win and go to universities. Some of them fail. I want to talk about students who go to universities. But I want to talk about an interesting point. When you go to a university, do you live with family or in another city without them?

This subject may be interesting and unnecessary, but I don't think so. Nowadays, teenagers' opinions and wishes are different from adults. When you live without family, you can live with your friend or stay in a student residence. It may be more enjoyable than live with family. Because families always worry about their children. But friends don't. They are only your friends and they don't bore you.

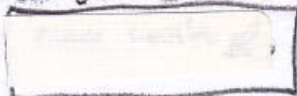
Firstly, opinion which I talked in previous paragraph isn't true. At least, it isn't always true. Because I saw a lot of people living with family and lots of them were happy. I'm living with my family. They always say not too late to come home. But generally they let me to go out with my friends. It is very good, I think. Of course families are different from each other. The thing that worries me about hours. I try to come home early. But sometimes I jealous my friends they are more relaxed than me about this subject.

Secondly, sometimes some students living without their parents are jealous people who live family. According to these people cooking, cleaning etc. are very boring and difficult, especially at period of examinations. So they think that living with family is a big advantage.

Finally, some people are fond of their families. So they miss their families. For example when my cousin went to Ankara for university, she cried and said that she missed her parents. However, we know some student think that going to university at another city is a liberation. According to them, it is an escape.

In conclusion, living with family has a lot of advantages and disadvantages. But I should say, it changes from family to another family. If your parents bore you and don't let you do sth, it is very bad. Because you are a teenager. So you want to enjoy. But your family is relaxed, it is perfect for you. I mean, you are lucky.

P.S: It is a good essay but you could use some other contrast connectors. But generally it's pure and good.



PE-562

WR-574