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COMPUTER-MEDIATED PEER RESPONSE AND ITS IMPACT ON REVISION
IN THE COLLEGE SPANISH CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY

by

RUTH ROUX-RODRIGUEZ

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
College of Arts & Sciences and College of Education
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Keywords: asynchronous communication, L2 writing, process writing instruction,
Spanish as a foreign language, written feedback

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DEDICATION

To Marco,
and to my sons, Etzel, Marco and Rafael

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Computer-Mediated Peer Response and Its Impact on Revision
in the College Spanish Classroom: A Case Study

Ruth Roux-Rodriguez

ABSTRACT

Peer response in which students work together in dyads or small groups to critique and provide feedback on one another's writing is compatible with communicative approaches to foreign language teaching and process approaches to the teaching of writing. Computer-mediated communication has been considered a viable tool for both the teaching of languages and the teaching of writing. There is, however, scant information on how computer-mediated peer response functions in the foreign language classroom. This dissertation investigated how college Spanish learners provided feedback to their peers and the impact of feedback on revision. It also examined the factors that influenced how students wrote their comments, and how they perceived the use of computers for peer response. Case study methodology was used to collect and analyze data from two writing tasks performed as part of a semester-long course. Data sources consisted of written feedback, first and second drafts, interview transcripts, learning journals from 12 participants and the teacher-researcher field notes. Analysis of data indicated that peer response is a complex event, influenced by a variety of contextual factors. Results also indicated that

the participants used feedback depending on their needs. Students used reacting, advising and announcing language functions when providing feedback, and focused mostly on content. The revisions made by the participants contradicted the idea that peer feedback directly influences revision; more than half of the revisions made by the participants originated in the writers themselves and not in the suggestions given by their peers. Analysis of the revisions made, based on peers' suggestions indicated that the impact of peer response was strong on the length of the essays, limited on their language below the clause level, and weak on the essays' communicative purpose. The participants' language proficiency and the characteristics of the writing task were perceived by the participants as factors that influenced how they wrote feedback for their peers. Finally, although the students considered that using the word processing language tools allowed them to learn about language and focus on content, the role of technology was perceived as supplementary to oral peer response.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language (FL) educators at all levels are faced with the dilemma of how to better incorporate writing activities into their courses. For the teaching of Spanish at the college level, for example, most textbooks approach writing as a support skill for speaking. They include exercises, generally at the end of a lesson that focus on dictation, transcription or manipulation of phrases. In some courses, short compositions are assigned for homework, but no attention is given to the complex processes involved in written communication.

In the search for research-based approaches for the teaching of writing, a literature review was conducted in the fields of second language acquisition (SLA), second and foreign language (L2) writing and first language (L1) writing or composition studies. In the literature of SLA, authors advocate the use of peer response tasks in which students critique and provide feedback to one another's writings as activities that may generate the collaborative dialogue necessary for second language learning (Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli-Beller, 2002). Researchers have investigated the cognitive processes learners deploy in peer response, by attending to the talk and the writing generated (Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Storch, 1999, 2001; Villamil & Guerrero, 1996, 1998). They have found that collaboration through dialogue engages students in the cognitive, social and

linguistic activities necessary for language to develop. However, students' lack of knowledge or understanding on how to provide useful feedback may negatively affect collaborative dialogue. Instructing students on how and why to collaborate is considered important when they learn to write in a second language.

In the literature on L2 writing, authors suggest the use of writing process approaches (Barnett, 1989; Greenia, 1992; Hewins, 1986), which originated in L1 writing classrooms. Process approaches view writing as a dynamic, non-linear, recursive activity that occurs in stages, which may differ from writer to writer. Instruction, from this perspective, should encourage students to engage in multiple drafting and revision activities (Daiute, 1986; Faigley & Witte, 1981; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Sommers, 1982). Revision is perceived as a process through which writers make changes throughout the writing of a draft to make it congruent with their changing intentions. Ideally, revision improves writing because it helps students shape their ideas recurrently until they are clear for the reader (Sommers, 1980).

Process approaches underscore the importance of peer response as a technique to facilitate the revision processes. It is assumed that when students receive feedback from their peers, they can more easily learn whether or not they have communicated their intended meanings. It is also assumed that when students provide feedback, they acquire the skills needed to find and evaluate important points in an essay and these skills may later transfer back to their own

writing. Research in L1 and English as a Second Language (ESL) settings has found that when readers and writers comment on one another's papers, they adopt an active role in learning to write (Mendonça & Johnson, 1994), gain confidence and the critical skills needed to analyze and revise their own writing (Leki, 1990; Mittan, 1989), develop a better sense of audience (Mittan, 1989; Gere, 1987), and acquire knowledge on a variety of writing styles (Spear, 1988).

Peer response and revision are recommended as viable tools in helping students learn how to write in a second language, and some studies have focused on the impact of peer response on revision (Berg, 1999; Connor and Asevanage, 1994; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992; Hewett, 2000; Lee, 1997; Mendonça & Johnson, 1994; Nelson & Murphy, 1993; Nystrand & Brandt, 1989; Paulus, 1999; Tang & Tithecott, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Villamil & Guerrero, 1998;). Results from these studies have been contradictory. Some researchers have found that few of the revisions students make are a result of peer response (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Spivey & King, 1989; Tsui & Ng, 2000), but others contend that students use their peers' suggestions more when they interact in a cooperative manner (Nelson & Murphy, 1993) and that students use their peers' ideas selectively (Mendonça and Johnson, 1994). Most studies, however, involve students of English as a first (L1) and as a second language (L2); few studies investigate how students who are native speakers of English discuss their texts

in Spanish, even though this language is the most popular second language in the United States and one of the most spoken languages in the world.

With the increasing use of educational technology in language classrooms, peer response can take place electronically. Electronic mail and electronic bulletin boards are potential tools for students to comment on each other's papers in the writing process. Researchers in L1 writing, however, point out that little is known about how students comment online (Honeycutt, 2001; Mabrito, 1992) and how their response comments influence revision (Hewett, 2000; Honeycutt, 2001; Marbrito, 1992). Most of the studies are comparisons of face-to-face and computer-mediated peer response and their findings are contradictory.

More recently, computer-mediated communication research in L2 settings has found that students that interact synchronously through networked computers participate more equally (Sullivan & Pratt, 1996; Warschauer, 1996a), express themselves more in the target language (Beauvois, 1994; Kelm, 1992), generate more language and improve their attitudes towards learning the language (González-Bueno & Pérez, 2000), increase their motivation to communicate (Kaufman, 1998), and become guides of one another in language learning (Beauvois, 1997). These studies, however, focus on tasks such as responding to a question posed by the teacher, discussing a text, writing dialogue journals, or writing to key pals. Few L2 studies have examined the

language of students when they critique each other's writing through asynchronous computer-mediated communication.

Statement of the Problem

An overview of the studies on face-to-face and computer-mediated peer response in L2 suggests that there is little information about how students engage in and use peer response. Specifically in Spanish classrooms, there is scarce information on how students provide, use and perceive asynchronous computer-mediated peer response, and how peer response impacts revision. This information is needed to understand the extent to which computer-mediated peer response can be used in the foreign language classroom, the role that the computer plays in peer response, and the extent to which students use peer response to revise. The scant information available on these phenomena is contradictory and vague. The problem is that peer response, revision and technology use, are multi-dimensional phenomena that require a research strategy that captures their complexity and conserves the diversity of the participants involved.

Purpose of the Study

Motivated by previous studies on peer response and revision, existing gaps in this literature, and personal observations made in the college Spanish classroom, the overarching question addressed in this study concerned how L2 students provide and use asynchronous computer-mediated peer feedback to

revise in a foreign language. The study was designed to broaden our understanding of the nature of the language used for peer response and the ways in which this language influenced L2 students' revision activities. This study examined the ways in which a group of learners of Spanish provided computer-mediated feedback on each other's writing, the impact of peer feedback on their revisions, and the students' perspectives on the processes involved. Specifically, the study will involve written peer feedback sent as attachments through e-mail because this format allows more planning and processing time for student writers. A case study was conducted in which both quantitative and qualitative analysis was performed on the data.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do participants provide computer-mediated feedback on their peers' writings?
 - a) How do participants provide feedback on their peers' writing in terms of language functions?
 - b) What is the participants' approach to providing feedback?
 - c) What do participants focus on when they provide feedback?
2. How do participants use computer-mediated feedback given by peers about their writing?
 - a) How does peer feedback impact the participants' revisions?

- b) What reasons do participants give for their revisions?
3. What factors influence the ways in which participants write computer-mediated peer feedback?
 4. How do the participants perceive the use of computers for peer response?

Significance of the Study

The study was conducted for both theoretical and practical reasons. At a theoretical level, the study aimed at contributing to the growing body of knowledge on the processes of peer response and revision in two ways. First, the study provided the much-needed information on the nature of peer response in computer-mediated environments and in Spanish as a foreign language. Second, this contribution was made through the choice of a methodology that is sensitive to the complexity of the processes, leaving open the possibility of discovering diversity and commonality in peer response and revision, both within and between writers. Specifically, a case study strategy guided by theory was used.

The study also provided practical information for language teachers who need to make informed decisions about writing activities that involve peer response and the use of computer technology in foreign language settings.

Definition of Terms

1. *Computer-mediated communication* (CMC) - process of human communication via computers. This communication may be carried out in

- synchronous (e.g. “real-time” chat) or asynchronous form (e.g. e-mail and electronic bulletin board). This study involved the use of word-processed documents sent as attachments through e-mail.
2. *Language functions* - linguistic choices that reflect the social purposes for which language is used (Halliday, 1973). In this study nine categories of language functions were distinguished in written peer comments: pointing, advising, collaborating, announcing, reacting, eliciting, questioning, responding, and clarifying.
 3. *Peer response* - process in which participants provide feedback on each other’s writings. This study involved written peer response sent as attachments through e-mail.
 4. *Focus of attention* - focus of consciousness reflected in a peer response commentary. Attention may be focused on writing aspects such as content, purpose, audience, organization, style, grammar, or mechanics.
 5. *Revision* - textual changes, alterations or modifications that appear on a second draft when compared with a first draft.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Peer response, in which students work together in dyads or small groups to critique and provide feedback on one another's writing, is compatible with different approaches to SLA that emphasize the dialogic nature of language. These approaches view dialogue in a broad sense, meaning not only direct face-to-face vocalized verbal communication between persons, but also verbal communication of any type (Voloshinov, 2001). Dialogue approaches to SLA claim that dialogue, inherent to peer response, mediates the social, cognitive and linguistic processes necessary for language use and language acquisition (Donato & Lantolff, 1990; Swain, 1997, 2000; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002). Peer response is also supported by the process approaches to the teaching of writing as a useful technique to foster revision under process approaches. Writing is assumed to occur in a series of recurrent stages in which the writer approximates the expression of an intended meaning through continuous revision (Leki, 1992; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Peer response is thought to aid revision because when peers engage in dialogue, they recognize alternative interpretations of the meaning expresses and the writing task. As a consequence, they revise and improve their writing.

The theoretical schemes of dialogue SLA and process writing support the implementation of peer response in face-to-face or computer-mediated communication (CMC). CMC has been demonstrated to be effective for specific aspects of language learning and therefore, it could be useful for peer response activities. However, scarce information was found on the ways in which learners use the medium to comment on their peers' writings in a foreign language, and on the impact of their comments on revision behaviors.

This chapter contains three parts. The first part presents an overview of the theoretical support for peer response, focusing on SLA and process writing theory. The second part describes the ways in which computers are used in the writing classrooms for feedback purposes, the role of peer response in L2 learning, and the findings of research on L2 learning in computer-mediated environments. The third part discusses the methodological features and main findings of studies on face-to-face and computer-mediated peer response, in L1 and L2 settings.

Theoretical Support for Peer Response

Peer response is supported by SLA theories that emphasize the dialogic nature of language and writing theories that highlight the process rather than the final product of writing. The following section will discuss the principles pertaining to these theories that advocate the use of peer response as a writing instruction technique.

Dialogue Approaches to Second Language Acquisition

The dialogue approach to second language acquisition draws from theories of different fields that share the assumption that language develops when individuals seek to understand and to be understood. These theories conceive language as the medium of dialogue, and dialogue as the realm in which language develops. This section will discuss the ways in which some of the theories that nurture the dialogue approach to second language acquisition support peer response.

Peer response is congruent with second language acquisition theories that claim that dialogue mediates language learning (Donato & Lantolf, 1990; Swain, 1997; Swain, 2000; Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli Beller, 2002). Researchers contend that when language learners engage in dialogue, they may be urged to create linguistic form and meaning and in doing so, discover what they can and cannot do, gradually moving to more accurate production (Swain, 1995; 2000). In the process of dialogue, learners not only have more opportunities for noticing the target language form (Ellis, 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1996), but they can also test their hypothesis about how the target language works (Ellis, 1994; Swain, 2000).

Not all dialogue, however, promotes learning. Opportunities for language acquisition are only possible if the social activity in which students are engaged provides them with a purpose to communicate or interact (Nakahama, Tyler, & van Lier, 2001). Peer response tasks engage students in dialogue to seek

solutions to their writing difficulties and therefore offer multiple opportunities for using and attending to language for purposeful communication. Tasks involve producing and interpreting written and oral language, which increases the chances for noticing and hypothesis testing.

Advocates of dialogue SLA maintain that the type of dialogue of particular significance in language learning process is *collaborative dialogue*, or that which occurs when peers use language to help each other solve the linguistic problems they encounter (DiCamilla & Anton, 1997; Storch, 2001; Swain, 1997, 2000). This view is based on the idea that all knowledge appears first when the individual is involved in cooperative social activity with others, and then it is internalized using language as a tool (Vygotsky, 1999; Swain, 1997). Studies that focus on language form have found that students that work together in writing activities make statistically significant progress in their learning of specific grammatical items when they later work alone (Storch, 1998), and their collaboration has positive effects on the grammatical accuracy of their writing (Storch, 2001). Collaborative dialogue has also been found to generate discussion among students about unclear issues of their writings, making explicit their knowledge on rhetorical aspects and contributing to their learning about writing. Results of peer response studies show that when students collaborate, they engage in fuller understanding (Lockhart & Ng, 1995), they are more likely to use their peers' suggestions in revising (Nelson & Murphy, 1993), they produce more revisions

(Stanley, 1992), and they produce writings with higher scores in content, organization and vocabulary (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992).

Researchers in both dialogue SLA and peer response have found that collaboration is not spontaneous and that teaching students how and why to collaborate enhances peer-mediated learning (Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mangelsdorf, 1992; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Nelson & Murphy, 1992; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002; Zhu, 1995). Professionals in the field of writing instruction debate on the most effective ways of training for peer response, covering issues such as the number of students involved per group, the manner of peer response, the amount of teacher intervention, the goals set for peer response groups, and the amount and type of training (DiPardo & Freedman, 1988; Gere, 1987; Spear, 1988, 1993; Zhu, 1995).

Peer-peer dialogue is conceived as a mediator in the cognitive, social and linguistic processes involved in language learning. In terms of cognition, dialogue contributes to learning when students working together have opportunities to awaken each other's processes of development (Wertsch, 1991). Vygotsky (1978) affirmed that learning occurs when the individual is guided or aided by a more knowledgeable peer, and he coined the term *zone of proximal development* (ZPD) to refer to the distance between what a learner can do alone and what he or she is able to do with help. Peers acting in their respective ZPDs use instructional strategies or *scaffolding* during the interaction to help each other

(Bruner, 1978). In peer response groups, students are knowledgeable at many different levels, which make them appropriate environments for students to participate in the give and take necessary to work in their individual ZPD.

Vygotsky (1978) claimed that the only “good learning” is that which is in advance of the individual’s development and, in peer response groups, some students can always be more knowledgeable than others in some aspect. Some students may have more experience in writing, whereas others may have a higher proficiency level in the target language.

In relation to the social processes, dialogue promotes learning when there are opportunities for *multivoicedness*, i.e. when learners are exposed to the juxtaposition of many voices (Dysthe, 1996; Hoel, 1997; Voloshinov, 1978). Contrary to the view of dialogue as face-to-face oral communication, dialogue perspectives conceive it as simultaneity of diverse voices in any type of verbal communication in which individuals with different knowledge, different points of view, and different backgrounds struggle for the creation of meanings (Voloshinov, 2001). In this struggle learners cultivate new understandings and have opportunities to assimilate the speech of others. When reading and commenting on each other’s texts, students in peer response groups are exposed to the language -written and oral- used by their peers, which they can appropriate and use further in their own writing and speaking. According to Voloshinov (2001) we learn language “... – its lexical composition and

grammatical structure – not from the dictionaries and grammars but from concrete utterances that we hear and that we ourselves reproduce in live speech communication with people around us” (p. 83). Peer response tasks immerse students in the language they are learning.

In reference to the linguistic processes, dialogue favors learning if it creates the need to interact for a variety of functional purposes (Christie, 1989). Dialogue approaches conceptualize language as a system of choices that accounts for the meanings students make when using it (Halliday, 1976). Students make these choices based on the functions for which they try to use the language. Peer response is an environment in which students can use a wealth of language choices and understand the consequences related to those choices when they, for example, suggest, question, clarify, or describe ideas in their texts. These language functions are barely acquired and practiced in activities that do not demand them or in activities that are led by the teacher. Peer response provides an infrastructure with plenty of opportunities for language functions to develop in students out of their need to mean. As Halliday suggests, “learning a language is learning how to mean, and it can only be accomplished in social interaction” (1978).

Research in L2 writing has examined the cognitive, social and linguistic issues of peer response for almost twenty years. Studies that examine students’ interactions have found that peer response is an environment in which student

writers may access a wide range of language functions that enable them to help each other in solving the problems of their writing (Lee, 1997; Mendonça & Johnson, 1994; Stanley, 1992; Tang & Tithecott, 1999). Readers can ask questions about things that confuse them and suggest ways for the writing to convey its point more clearly. Lockhart and Ng (1995) for example, found that readers that adopt an interpretative stance in peer response, describe, evaluate and suggest ideas, whereas those that take a probing stance, ask for clarifications and elicit explanations. The results of the study by Mendonça and Johnson (1994) show that readers mostly restate ideas, explain opinions and request explanations, and writers restate ideas, explain content and explain opinions. Few of these studies, however, have examined the interactions of students when they are using languages other than English. Information about how learners of different languages respond when their proficiency is emerging is essential to decide on the feasibility of the technique in a variety of settings.

Writing Process Approach

Peer response is a pedagogical technique commonly associated with the process approach to the teaching of writing. The process approach emerged as an instructional notion in the 1970's when the need to help untraditional students gain access to higher education in the United States led researchers in both composition studies and cognitive psychology to investigate the nature of writing, and the ways in which writing is learned. In the area of composition studies, the

work of Emig (1971) was particularly useful in understanding how writers write. Utilizing case study methodology, Emig found that (a) the processes of writing do not proceed in a linear, but recursive sequence, (b) there is no monolithic process of writing, but processes of writing that differ because of aim, intent, mode and audience, (c) the rhythms of writing are uneven and particularly slow when a significant learning occurs, and (d) the processes of writing can be enhanced by working with other writers.

Researchers in the field of cognitive psychology corroborated these findings. Using observations, think-aloud protocols and experimental designs, they investigated what writers think and do as they write, aiming to develop a model that explained the writing process (Hillocks, 1986). Flower and Hayes (1977) for example, observed that writers employ recursive processes in which they plan, write and revise moving back and forth as they compose. They concluded that writing is a highly complex, goal driven ability, which develops over time, as writers move from the production of egocentric writer-based texts (writing what they know without considering the needs of the reader) to reader-based texts (writing with the reader in mind).

Emig's and Flower and Haye's findings in L1 settings gave rise to a paradigm for teaching writing that changed the focus from the written product to the processes through which writing develops (Hairston, 1982). The process paradigm was introduced in the L2 writing classroom in the 1980s as a result of a

number of studies that showed that L2 and L1 students use the same set of composing processes (Raimes, 1985; Zamel, 1983), and that the strategies students use when composing in L2 function independently of their L2 proficiency (Cumming, 1989).

The process paradigm places revision at the heart of the writing process because it assumes that it is through revision that ideas emerge and develop, and meanings are clarified (Lehr, 1995). Revision also plays an important part in learning because it involves reorganization or change of some kind (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980). The term revision has been used to refer to the changes the writer makes in a piece of writing (Wallace & Hayes, 1991), the changes the writer makes in the procedures for producing writing (Flower, 1986), the part of the composing process in which the changes are made (Zhang, 2001) or the ability to detect and fix text problems (Hayes, 1985).

It is important to note that revision, in any of its meanings, is not a simple activity. Revising involves recurrently shaping the idea that needs to be expressed and this shaping may occur with different levels of difficulty at any point during the writing process. Many researchers in L1 and L2 have found that inexperienced writers change words or sentences rather than making modifications to meet the needs of the rhetorical situation (Bridwell, 1980; Faigley & Witte, 1981; Sommers, 1980; Wallace, 1996; Zhang, 2001) because they cannot detect the problems or do not have the ability to fix them (Hayes, 1985;

Wallace & Hayes, 1991), or because they are not able to coordinate both types of skills at the same time (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1983). For example, even when students can revise aspects of syntax or audience one at a time, they may not be ready to handle these aspects simultaneously. Another source of difficulty is that sometimes writers do not see the relevance of revision for certain types of text. Research indicates, however, that when students receive indication or support, they change their revision behaviors and improve their writing (Hillocks, 1982; Lehr, 1995; Matsuhashi & Gordon, 1985; Sengupta, 2000; Wallace, 1996; Wallace & Hayes, 1991).

Peer response is thought to facilitate the revision processes because when students receive feedback they find it easier to reconceptualize their ideas to match the expectations or needs of the audience (Mendonça & Johnson, 1994; Mittan, 1989; Moore, 1986; Nystrand, 1986; Nystrand & Brandt, 1989; Tsui & Ng, 2000; Witbeck, 1976) and they improve their essays (Berg, 1999; Fathman & Whaley, 1990; Paulus, 1999). Peer response has been found to help students revise issues of content and organization (Freedman, 1992; Gere, 1985; Mangelsdorf, 1992), meaning (Berg, 1999; Paulus, 1999), and genre or topic (Nystrand & Brandt, 1989; Mangelsdorf, 1992). On the other hand, when students provide feedback to their peers, they acquire the critical skills that they need to revise their own writing (Leki, 1990; Mittan, 1989). In particular, L2 learners appear to expect and accept feedback and to make greater

improvements than L1 learners do when they get such feedback (Radecki & Swales, 1988).

Despite its facilitating qualities, peer response faces challenges in its application. Students sometimes do not feel skillful enough to provide their peers with helpful comments (Tang & Tithecott, 1999) or they are uncertain about the validity of their classmates' comments (Mangelsdorf, 1992). At other times students neglect larger revising issues and focus too much on surface aspects of writing (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Paulus, 1999). Particularly in L2 settings, oral peer response has been found problematic because students find it difficult to understand their peers' pronunciation or to express ideas and opinions about their peers' writings in the target language (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998; Tang & Tithecott, 1999).

Writing process theory claims that revision contributes to writing and peer response contributes to revision. This theory further contends that there are many writing processes that differ from task to task and from writer to writer. The complex nature of writing does not allow interpretation of research findings detached from their context. In some L2 contexts, students make few revisions as a result of peer response (Connor & Asevanage, 1994), while in others, students incorporate their peers' feedback into their writing more willingly (Mendonça & Johnson, 1994; Nelson & Murphy, 1993; Tang & Tithecott, 1999; Villamil & Guerrero, 1998). In some situations students consider peer response

helpful (Mendonça & Johnson, 1994) whereas in others, they find it difficult to understand their peers' oral comments and feel inadequate giving oral feedback (Tang & Tithecott, 1999).

Peer Response, Second Language Learning, and Computer-Mediated Communication

The following section discusses (a) the origins of peer response as a writing instruction technique and its role in ESL and FL classrooms; (b) the ways in which computers have been used for peer response; and (c) the ways in which computer-mediated communication has been used in language learning.

Peer Response and Second Language Learning

Peer response became popular in ESL instruction in the 1980s in association with writing process pedagogy. As in L1 settings, researchers of the writing process found that L2 composing is a “non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning” (Zamel, 1983, p. 170). A number of studies also demonstrated that although the composing process patterns in English as a first and as a second language are similar, composing in ESL is more difficult and less effective (Silva, 2001). In terms of revision, it was found ESL involves more revision, and revision is more difficult and more of a preoccupation. To alleviate these difficulties, ESL teachers of process writing encourage students to collaborate by reading and evaluating other students' texts to develop their own

texts and processes (Krapels, 1990). Peer response is thought to help build ESL students' skills to revise their writing and reduce their apprehension (Leki, 1991), and to develop their linguistic skills during the writing process (Mangelsdorf, 1989). Much research has been developed in the area of peer response in L2 writing process classrooms (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Mendonça & Johnson, 1994; Tang & Tithecott, 1999; Villamil & Guerrero, 1996, 1998).

In contrast, process writing was not introduced in FL instruction in the US until the 1990s (Reichelt, 1999). In the 1940s and the 1950s with the popularity of audiolingualism, writing skills were given a secondary role to the development of oral skills. At present writing is still sometimes perceived as a support skill involving word level or sentence level practice of target language forms (Gass & Magnan, 1993). At the college level composition is taught after two or more years of language study and it typically focuses on grammar (Jurasek, 1996; Kadish, 2000; Kern, 2000). Students read and analyze a text, and then model their writing after the example text. Writing is done in isolation, generally as a home activity. Students hand in the product to the instructor, get written feedback and put aside the writing. In the cases in which writing is taught within the first two years of college, it is usually incorporated as support to the learning of grammar forms, vocabulary and spelling (Hardley, 2001). It is seldom used for a communicative purpose (e.g. to question, persuade, and express ideas).

With the publication of the ACTFL proficiency guidelines (1983) and the beginning of the proficiency oriented approaches to FL teaching, some foreign language researchers started advocating the use of process oriented composing (Barnett, 1989; Dvorak, 1986; Hewins, 1986; Magnan, 1985; Scott, 1995) and peer response in particular (Amores, 1996; Greenia, 1992; Long, 1992; Magnan, 1985). Peer response fits in naturally at different points in the process of writing, and it is a potential means to promote communicative competence because it can involve and improve writing, reading, listening and speaking. Process writing and peer response groups should be more frequently used in the FL classroom.

Peer Response and Computer-Mediated Communication

Since computers became widely available in the 1980s, L1 and L2 writing instructors and researchers have been enthusiastic about their potential to facilitate students' writing processes. Computers are sometimes perceived as a solution to some of the problems that students confront in face-to-face peer response. The use of computers for feedback on writing has followed two trends. One trend focuses on the learners' interaction with computers; the other, on the learners' interaction with other learners via the computers. Instructors and researchers of the first trend adopt writing tools such as interactive adaptive software that walk students through the composing process; text analyzers that check grammar, spelling and style; and programs that respond in preprogrammed dialogue to student writing. Specifically for writing in Spanish,

Palabra Abierta by Houghton Mifflin, *Composición Práctica* by Wiley, and *Atajo* by Heinle and Heinle, are applications that present strategies for different aspects of the writing process. The use of these kinds of applications has been controversial. Whereas some think that the tools provide guidance for novice writers (Kozma, 1991), others argue that the applications can force writers into a mold as if all individuals composed in exactly the same way (Sirc, 1989); that the tools can not “understand” the context or logic of a document (Lewis & Lewis, 1987); and that the applications offer responses that are overly simplified and generic (Sirc, 1989).

The second trend in using computers for feedback in the writing process favors the use of networked computers to extend the possibility of communication in synchronous or asynchronous form, facilitating the sharing of documents and discussion about texts. Researchers in L1 have discussed the advantages of computer-mediated communication for peer response activities in terms of the social and pedagogical dynamics it promotes. On a network, teachers must yield power and the reduction in their authority translates into increased empowerment for the students, which is essential in the process of creating knowledgeable and skilled writers (Cooper & Selfe, 1990; Spitzer, 1990). Furthermore, the social context of the network may overcome some of the limitations of face-to-face peer response. For example, the network provides students with an immediate audience that is not concerned with correcting their

papers but with seeking certain information (Barker, 1990; Spitzer, 1990). This can help students divert their attention from surface issues of writing and attend to the needs of a real audience, clarify the need for revision, and facilitate their revising activities.

Another advantage of participating in computer-mediated peer response discussed by L1 researchers is that the strategies that students acquire may become a powerful generalizable heuristic. Students may become more likely to question their own opinions and the information presented in the course and to learn how knowledge develops when opinions and ideas come into contact because they have opportunities to read, re-read, compare and contrast the views of their peers on a particular issue. As Cooper and Selfe (1990) suggest, “Teachers and students can learn to listen to multiple voices and learn the importance of different truths” (p. 851).

Computer-mediated communication could help L2 learners in peer response activities because they would not have to struggle with their listening comprehension skills or with their peer’s foreign accent. Previous studies have found that L2 learners engaging in computer-mediated communication can not only express themselves in the target language at their own pace, having more time to plan and avoid code-switching (Beauvois, 1994; Kelm, 1992), but they can also bridge from written to oral expression (Beauvois, 1998). These studies, however, did not involve students in peer response activities.

Research on computer-mediated peer response is incipient in both L1 and L2 settings, and very few studies examine the language that students use in their feedback or critiques. Even fewer analyze the impact of peer response on the students' revision activities. Information on these issues would contribute to our knowledge about how computer-mediated peer response might promote or hinder our students' commenting and revision behaviors.

Computer-Mediated Communication and Second Language Learning

Although FL instructors have been receptive to the use of networked computers to open new opportunities for communication between learners, this medium has been scarcely explored in relation to peer response activities. Teachers see the potential of computer-mediated communication for learning languages in new ways, and researchers have explored the new learning environment with different interests. Authors contend, for example, that the shared writing environment created by the network originates a special linguistic community that is essentially different from that of the classroom (Beauvois, 1997; Kelm, 1992). In contrast to what happens in the classroom, in a networked community all members can participate more equally because there is no turn taking (Sengupta, 2001; Sullivan & Pratt, 1996; Warschauer, 1996). The teacher intervention is minimized and students are in control of the flow of discussions (Warschauer, 1999). Reticent students seem less inhibited in their communication because they are not "put on the spot". Generally in the

classroom only students who are more verbal are quickly identified but not the more silent. In the networked community the students' names are posted with their messages, and names are associated with faces when the class resumes in the classroom.

The language that students use to communicate through the computer is different as well. Researchers have found low frequency of code switching (Beauvois, 1994; Kelm, 1992). Students tend to express themselves in the target language at their own pace and with less anxiety than in the oral classroom discussion. They also produce more words, more sentences and more turns in synchronous than in oral discussions (Kern, 1995; Ortega, 1997). Exchanges on the computer are longer, although the level of interaction is lower because students express their own ideas rather than respond to questions (Warschauer, 1995). Learners' output shows a higher proportion of simple sentences over complex ones, in comparison to face-to-face talk (Chun, 1994; Kern, 1995). The nature of the language use is completely new; it is neither traditional writing nor traditional conversation and it is therefore referred to as hybrid (Ferrara, Brunner & Whittemore, 1991; Faigley, 1992).

The ways in which L2 students learn is also different when mediated by the computer. Because the thoughts of the participants become visible online, it is possible for students to become guides of one another (Beauvois, 1997). The electronic medium slows down the process of communication and allows the

students to reflect and compose messages at their own pace. Their “conversations in slow motion”, as they have been called, allow students to scaffold each other while interacting (Beauvois, 1998). Students whose oral skills are not adequate to allow for full expression of ideas in the target language can bridge from written to oral expression.

Finally, the L2 students’ attitudes are positive when they use networked computers (González-Bueno & Pérez, 2000) and when they are allowed the necessary time to communicate for a task. Students of some studies report that communication in the lab setting is easier than in the classroom (Kelm, 1992; Kern, 1995), and researchers observe that students working on computers seem more willing to participate (Beauvois, 1992).

Warschauer and Kern (2000) have pointed out that the corpus of research on network-based language teaching does not capture data on the ways students in those settings come to understand, account for, take action and manage information provided by their peers. Not much is known, for example, about the extent to which students actually use the feedback they get through computer interactions. Most of the studies involve students engaged in responding to a question posed by the teacher or commenting on a reading. Very few studies were found in which L2 students were engaged in commenting about their own texts.

Studies on Peer Response

The following section will discuss the main results and methodological aspects of research on L1 and L2 peer response (for a summary table of the studies see Appendix 1). The section is divided in two parts. The first part includes studies on face-to-face peer response and the second part describes the studies carried out in computer-mediated environments.

Studies on Face-to-Face Peer Response

Research in L1 and L2 has focused on different aspects of peer response. One strand of research has examined the effects of training students for peer response tasks (Berg, 1999; Hacker, 1994; McGroarty & Zhu, 1997; Stanley, 1992; Lane & Potter, 1998; Zhu, 1995). Using quasi-experimental designs these studies have employed different training procedures and results have been consistently positive. Berg (1999) for example, investigated whether trained peer response shaped ESL students' revision types and writing quality. She made a two-group comparison by assigning international students of English to one of two groups based on their TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores. Approximately equal number of students in each group received training on peer response. All students wrote a first draft, participated in one peer response session and were instructed to revise according to the comments received during the session. Berg focused on the written products to count the frequency of meaning changes. She adopted the definition by Faigley and Witte,

which states that a meaning change involves “the adding of new content or the deletion of existing content” (1981, p. 402). The frequency of meaning changes in students’ revised drafts revealed statistically significant effects for training. To determine the quality of the pre- and post- peer response session drafts, the researcher used the Test of Written English scoring scale (a holistic or global rubric with six levels or bands, used to score a large-scale standardized instrument). Results showed that trained peer response positively affected the quality of the students’ texts. Although insightful on the importance of peer response training to improve revision and writing, the study by Berg does not give account of what happened in the sessions for which the students were trained and how it related to the process of revising.

Using a different approach, Stanley (1992) gave differential training to 31 ESL students with a mean TOEFL score of 548. Her purpose was to investigate whether more elaborate preparation would result in more fruitful conversation and revision. The peer response sessions were audio taped, transcribed and coded in terms of type of response, mean number of turns per speaker, per session, and mean length of turn. Responses were coded in terms of language functions, according to a scheme that included seven categories for the evaluator (pointing, advising, collaborating, announcing, reacting, eliciting and questioning) and four categories for the writer (responding, eliciting, announcing, and clarifying). The final drafts, written after the peer response sessions, were

examined to determine the extent to which students responded to their peers' comments, by making changes in their work. Results showed that groups that received more extensive training produced more comments, provided more specific responses, were more assertive in getting advice, and revised more than the groups that received less elaborate training. Responses that produced more revisions were pointing, advising, collaborating and questioning. Stanley's findings shed light on the different roles that writer and responder play in peer response activities, and the linguistic functions that may be taught to L2 learners in order to foster successful peer response sessions. In relation to revision, however, the method only accounted for the frequency of revisions in relation to type of linguistic function, but no analysis was made on the nature of the revisions.

A second line of research in face-to-face peer response has investigated the processes of peer response (Freedman, 1992; Gere & Abbott, 1985; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Nelson & Murphy, 1992; Nystrand, 1986, 1997; Villamil & Guerrero, 1996; Zhu, 2001). In L1 settings studies have generally been large scale and longitudinal, with elementary, middle, high school and college participants, examining the ways in which context influences peer response (Freedman, 1992; Nystrand, 1986, 1997) and the nature of peer response talk itself (Freedman, 1992; Gere & Abbott, 1985; Nystrand, 1986). With an interest in the latter, Freedman (1992) divided the

language in transcripts of two ninth grade classes in terms of episodes and coded the episodes inductively according to linguistic functions. She found that students avoided negative evaluation, helped each other and discussed content. In another study Gere and Abbott (1985) segmented the talk of elementary, middle and high school participants into idea units and coded them in terms of language functions (inform, direct or elicit), area of attention (writing or group), and specific focus (process, content, form or context). They found that students offered directives to the group about the writing process and focused on content. The quantity and type of idea units differed according to the mode of discourse dictated by the assignments. These findings suggest that peer response groups give students access to a function that in the classroom is generally reserved to the teacher: offering directives. The study also indicates that through the assignments, the teacher may still constrain the functions for which students use language.

In L2 contexts, research that focuses on the processes of peer response has examined the language of students during peer response tasks with an interest in the aspects of the task students attend to and the social dynamics within the group (Nelson & Murphy, 1992; Villamil & Guerrero, 1996). L2 studies have also analyzed students' interactions to determine the stances readers take in peer response tasks (Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992). For instance, Lockhart and Ng (1995) used the constant comparative

method to examine the language used by 27 dyads during peer response tasks. The constant comparative method is an inductive approach that allows categories to emerge from the data, rather than imposing preconceived categories on the data. The researchers identified four reader stances: authoritative, interpretative, probing and collaborative. Probing and collaborative stances engaged students in fuller understanding of the writing process because the writers were encouraged to articulate the intended meaning of the text. In another study Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger (1992) identified interpretative, prescriptive and collaborative stances. The researchers found that the larger number of stances that 60 ESL students took in one peer response session were prescriptive; readers identified faults in the text and subordinated meaning to form.

A third strand of research in face-to-face peer response has focused on the impact of peer response on students' revisions (Berg, 1999; Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992; Mendonça & Johnson, 1994; Nelson & Murphy, 1993; Nystrand & Brandt, 1989; Paulus, 1999). Revision has been widely acknowledged as a crucial component in the development of writing in both L1 and L2 (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Revision, however, is a complex process that depends not only on the writer's competence but also, and very importantly, on the feedback or response received. Researchers have explored what goes on during peer response tasks and how response influences revision

activities and writing. In an L1 study, Nystrand and Brandt (1989) analyzed the language functions in the oral comments of 96 freshman composition students during peer response tasks, their written explanations about their own revision processes, their drafts, and their responses to a survey. The researchers found that: (a) students who wrote for the teacher treated revision as editing and students who wrote for each other treated revision re-conceptualization, (b) students who wrote for each other had higher quality in writing and more insight into their writing, and (c) extended talk led to more revisions, and talk that focused on clarifying and elaborating yielded revisions at the level of genre, topic or commentary.

Responding in L2, however, presents different challenges for students than responding in L1. Because L2 students are in the process of learning the language, they may not find the right words to express their ideas and negotiate with their peers. Furthermore, they may mistrust other learners' responses to their writing and, therefore, may not incorporate peer suggestions while revising. Some studies have been conducted in L2 settings on the effectiveness of peer comments compared with teacher comments on revision behaviors (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992; Mangelsdorf, 1992; Paulus, 1999; Tsui & Ng, 2000). Results show that students make few revisions as a result of peer response (Connor & Asenavage, 1994), they favor teacher comments and reading peers' compositions more than peers' oral and written

comments (Tsui & Ng, 2000), and they do not trust their peers and their own ability to critique (Mangelsdorf, 1992), although students who participate in peer response perform better than those who receive written feedback from the instructor (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992).

Some studies of the impact of teacher and peer response on revision have suggested that students who receive both types of feedback produce revisions that more often involve meaning-level changes than the revisions they make on their own. Paulus (1999) for example, was interested in identifying changes that either affected meaning or did not affect meaning, the source of these changes, and the extent to which revision improved the quality of writing. She focused on the types, sources, and reasons for revisions and improvement of writing quality of 11 undergraduate international students enrolled in a pre-freshman composition course in a public university in the US. The sequence of data collection procedures consisted of students (1) writing a first draft, (2) participating in one peer response session, (3) revising the first draft based on their peers' comments, (4) turning-in the second draft to receive written comments from the teacher, and (5) revising the second draft based on the teacher's comments. To reveal types of revisions, Paulus employed a number of different taxonomies. The researcher used Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy of revisions – with categories for surface changes (formal and meaning preserving) and meaning changes (macrostructure and microstructure) – to code

second and third drafts of 11 ESL students. The researcher also recorded the students' peer response sessions and collected the teacher's written comments to code the revisions in drafts a second time, as either resulting from the peer review session (peer), the teacher feedback (teacher), or some other source such as the writer's own ideas (self/other). Additionally, data were collected through two think-aloud protocols per student, one as they revised their essays based on the peer review discussion, and the other as they revised based on the teacher feedback. The purpose was to identify the sources of and reasons for the revisions made. Lastly, the first and the third drafts were scored using the Essay Scoring Rubric to determine whether the overall quality of the essays improved as a result of the feedback and the revision processes.

Paulus found that teacher and peer feedback contributed to the revision process, with teacher feedback influencing more meaning-level changes and being prioritized more by students. Findings also suggest that revision significantly improved the essay scores of the class.

The methodology used in the study by Paulus reflects a view of revising as a recurrent shaping of ideas, rather than a separate stage at the end of the writing activity. Revision changes were collected and analyzed as they evolved in a three-week period of time and a three-draft writing process. However, revisions were only accounted for in terms of their sources and not in terms of the effects they produced on the writing. A description of how revisions produced piecemeal

changes on the text would have been insightful. In addition, the examination of the revision processes could have included the views of the writers on how they revised and why they revised the way they did. Allowing L2 writers a voice is important, especially in L2 contexts since many of the assumptions about the writing process have been transplanted from L1 writing theories, and pedagogical adjustments need to be made to ensure effective instruction for L2 learners. A final observation on the study by Paulus is that although its purpose was to examine the effect of teacher and peer feedback on revision, the focus was exclusively on revision with no analysis of the feedback.

Studies in L2 contexts that involve only responses from peers and their impact on revision have examined the trouble sources (problems, errors or deficiencies perceived in the text) in peers' talk and the types of revisions made. For example, Villamil and Guerrero (1998) used an iterative method of analysis and found that 74% of the comments made by 14 intermediate ESL students in two peer response sessions were incorporated into the final draft. They also found that students focused equally on grammar and content when they revised in the narrative mode and predominantly on grammar in the persuasive mode of writing. This study confirms that many students do use their peer comments, when they do not have the teacher's feedback as an alternative. The study, however, does not inform about the nature of the language that students use to respond and how that language relates or not to revision behavior.

Other studies of peer response and revision investigate the extent to which L2 students incorporate suggestions made by peers. Nelson and Murphy (1993) collected data from 4 intermediate ESL students in 6 peer response sessions and found that when writers interacted with their peers in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to use the peers' suggestions in revising. When students interacted in a defensive manner or did not interact at all, the writers were less likely to use the peer's comments. The study utilized as data sources the transcripts of the peer response sessions and the drafts produced by the students. A third source of information, the students' views, for example, would have given a deeper understanding of the rationale for their revision activities.

Other studies have analyzed peer response in terms of linguistic functions and have included the writers' views as a source of information about the relationship between peer response and revision. Lee (1997), Mendonça and Johnson (1994), and Tang and Tithecott (1999) have investigated peer response in the United States, Hong Kong, and Canada, respectively, to describe the language functions used by ESL students, their use of peer comments in revision, and their perceptions of the usefulness of peer response. Mendonça and Johnson used analytic induction procedures to code the language functions in the interactions of 12 advanced ESL students. Considering the comments of both responders and writers together, Mendonça and Johnson found that students used the target language to ask questions, offer explanations, give

suggestions, restate what peers had written or said, and correct grammar mistakes. Then the researchers obtained percentages of the revisions that were suggested by peers, the revisions that were not suggested by peers, and the suggestions that were not considered in revision. Results indicated that in 53% of the instances of revision, students incorporated their peers' comments; in 10% of the instances of revisions students did not revise a given part of their texts even though it had been discussed with a peer; and in 37% of the instances of revision, students revised parts of their essays that had not been discussed with a peer. In post-interviews students reported that peer response was helpful because (a) they could see points that were clear and points that needed revision on their essays, and (b) reading their peers' essays allowed them to compare their writing with that of their peers to learn new ideas about writing.

Lee (1997) used a coding scheme that combined elements of the schemes designed by Mendonça and Johnson (1994) and Stanley (1992) to examine the peer response interactions of 4 ESL students in Hong Kong. The comments of responders and writers were coded separately. Results showed that suggesting and evaluating were the most frequent negotiations made by reviewers, whereas explaining and accepting remarks were the most frequent negotiations of writers. Revisions were analyzed utilizing the same procedures as Mendonça and Johnson (1994) and results indicated an encouraging number of students' revisions as a result of comments from their peers. In the interviews

participants said they enjoyed the process and found it useful because the teacher commented on language only, whereas peers gave them ideas on how to improve content. These results seem to contradict the findings by Connor and Asevanage (1994) who concluded that students make few revisions as a result of peer response. The results also contradict the findings by Mangelsdorf (1992) who found that students do not trust their peers' and their own ability to critique.

Lastly, Tang and Tithcott (1999) analyzed the language, revision behaviors and perceptions of 12 participants from different Asian countries studying English in Canada. Their proficiency ranged from upper intermediate to lower advanced, with an average TOEFL score of 520. The researchers focused on the activities students engaged in, the linguistic functions used, the percentages of suggestions adopted, and the percentage of positive and negative attitudes toward peer response. Transcriptions were examined in light of the research conducted by Villamil and Guerrero (1996). It was found that students concentrated mainly on reading, evaluating, pointing to trouble sources, writing comments and discussing task procedures. They used a variety of language functions (instructing, announcing, justifying, requesting, giving directives, requesting clarification, clarifying, eliciting, responding to elicitation and reacting) and used their peer comments in 58% of the instances of revision. Their perceptions of peer response sessions varied from student to student and changed over the course of the semester. Their main concerns were that it was

difficult for them to understand their peers' pronunciation and meaning, and that they felt inadequate giving feedback.

End of Section Summary

L1 and L2 peer response studies that focus on language functions and their impact on revision have shed considerable light on several issues of peer response. They have provided information on the type of language that yields more revisions, the aspects of writing on which peers focus during peer response tasks and during revision, and the students' perceptions of peer response in learning to write.

These studies, however, seem limited in three aspects. First, they provide data only on the percentages of revisions suggested and not suggested by peers, but they do not inform on how the revision processes take place and how the peer response processes impact revision.

Second, the studies on peer response and revision inform on the students' views on the usefulness of peer response in general, but they do not clarify on the participants' rationale for the specific changes they make on their texts as a result from their peers' suggestions. This points to the need for studies that include the emic perspective on why suggestions are incorporated into the text or not, and how this incorporation is made through the revision processes. The perspective of the students is important because it can help us understand their

assumptions or the background knowledge they use when deciding what and how to revise.

Third, peer response and revision are complex processes influenced by variables of many kinds. The nature of the task, the teaching method used, and the students' previous experience with writing are a few of the myriad of factors that may be generating contradictory results. The study of peer response and revision requires a research strategy that copes with a multiplicity of variables and explores a variety of outcomes.

Studies on Computer-Mediated Peer Response

Research on L1 and L2 peer response in computer environments is in an incipient stage. Studies are either two-group-comparisons (Honeycutt, 2001; Huang 1998; Mabrito, 1992; Palmquist, 1993; Schultz, 1998), or studies that analyze the influence of computer-mediated interaction on revision (Hewett, 2000; Huang, 1999). It is important to note that, as in face-to-face peer response, all studies involve participants who use English as a second or a foreign language, except for the study of Schultz (1998), which involved learners of French.

Research has compared face-to-face and computer-mediated interactions. In an L1 study Mabrito (1992) used a case study design to examine the language functions and specific focus of attention of 15 college students of business composition in the U.S. participating in peer response tasks. He used the coding

scheme developed by Gere and Abbott (1985) and found that when students used a real-time computer network in the university lab they were more willing to give direction, their responses were more substantive and text specific, and their participation was more equal than in face-to-face meetings.

In the L1 setting also, Honeycutt (2001) compared synchronous and asynchronous peer response. She made a content analysis of the chat and e-mail transcripts of 73 engineering students in terms of nominal phrases. Through inductive procedures, she identified seven categories for coding: document references, content references, rhetorical context references, writing task references, response task orientation references, personal pronoun references, and miscellaneous references. Students made greater reference to documents, contents, and rhetorical contexts through e-mail, and they also made greater reference to writing and response tasks through this medium. A week after the peer response sessions were completed, students filled out a survey – with closed, open and Likert scale types of questions – on their preferences for each medium in terms of formulation, reception, and usefulness of comments in revising their final draft. Qualitative analysis of the open-ended written responses showed that students preferred e-mail because it afforded them longer periods of uninterrupted time in which they could scan the author's paper, reflect and organize detailed comments. For the revision process, e-mail was also preferred because the elaboration of messages was helpful when referring back to the

transcript of response comments. Students considered the chat sessions off-topic, confusing, and disruptive of the commenting task.

Another two-group comparison study in the L1 setting that investigated the influence of computer-mediated and face to-face peer response on revision is the one by Hewett (2000). She examined oral comments, transcripts of synchronous and asynchronous comments, initial and final drafts for three tasks, students' journals, transcripts of interviews, and observation notes collected in two sections of a college composition class. To analyze the talk functionally, she coded the peer response conversations and written prompt responses using a modified version of Gere and Abbott's (1985) coding scheme. Both groups used the "inform" and "direct" functions most often and nearly equally. The majority of the talk of the groups directed the attention to the writer rather than to the group. Regarding the focus of consciousness, the groups in both environments focused more on content of the writing-in-progress than on form. The functional analysis of the students' talk was complemented with a qualitative analysis. It was found that oral talk focused on global idea development, whereas computer-mediated talk focused on concrete writing tasks and group management. As to revision changes, Hewett used the coding system developed by Faigley and Witte (1981), which includes 6 categories (addition, deletion, substitution, rearrangement, distribution, and consolidation). She followed an iterative procedure to determine revision patterns, identifying three main types: direct, intertextual, and self-

generated. She found that revisions from oral talk included more frequent intertextual and self-generated idea use, while revision from computer-mediated talk induced more frequent use of peers' ideas. The researcher concluded that speculating about writing in progress may be more challenging in an online than in an oral environment; however for suggesting concrete revisions on content or form, both environments work well.

This study is one of the few that bring the methods used in face-to-face peer response to its new computer-network context. Hewett examined the language of students in computer-mediated peer response tasks in terms of language functions, although the categories used refer to language functions in general and not to the specific functions of language in peer response tasks. As to the analysis of revision changes, Hewett coded for types of revisions in terms of their sources, but not in terms of the nature of the revisions made.

Turning now to computer-mediated peer response in L2, Huang (1998) compared face-to-face and computer-mediated peer response by examining the oral comments and synchronous comments of 17 ESL university students enrolled in a two-semester ESL composition class in Taiwan. The discourse produced by the students was classified into 18 types of discourse functions. The researcher found that in the computer-mediated context the participants spent a greater proportion of time stating problems and suggesting revisions, and a smaller proportion of time explaining, giving reasons or reacting.

Another comparison study in L2 is that by Schultz (1998), who examined the drafts, transcripts of synchronous comments, and transcripts of oral comments of 54 university students of intermediate French. Schultz designed a quasi-experiment to compare face-to-face and computer-mediated peer response. She examined the number and types of changes (content, organization, style and grammar) made by the students on their drafts following peer response, and made a qualitative analysis of the face-to-face and the computer-mediated peer response transcripts. Results indicated that face-to-face interaction produced quantitatively and qualitatively more changes in content among the less advanced. Face-to face peer response focused on content, whereas computer-mediated peer response focused on content and organization. As studies previously discussed, this quasi-experiment does not provide information on how students provide peer response and how peer response impacts the communicative properties of the students' writing.

In one of the few studies that involve computer-mediated peer response and is not aimed at comparing two groups of students, Huang (1999) examined the influence of computer-mediated peer response on the revisions made by ESL students. The purpose was to investigate the extent to which students used ideas provided by their peers and the quality of the peers' comments. He asked 17 ESL students to mark the comments they incorporated for writing their final drafts on the transcripts of two computer-mediated peer response interactions. Then, the

researcher classified the peer suggestions provided into four categories, according to the extent to which the comment affected the writing as expressed by the students: (1) an idea that caused a student to choose or abandon a certain topic, (2) an idea that caused a macro-level change that affected the overall structure or focus of a whole essay, (3) an idea that affected the writing of a whole paragraph, and (4) an idea that affected the writing of part of a paragraph. Huang found that students did not use peers ideas often, although the quality of the comments used was good: almost half of the ideas used were concerned with macro-level composition issues or content, and about one fourth were related to paragraph level issues. The study, however, only examined the readers' comments through the interaction transcripts, and the writers' views on the readers' comments through the interviews. No analysis was made of the actual revisions on the students' texts. The students were individually interviewed in their native language (Chinese) about whether the discussions influenced their choices. Paradoxically, students considered computer-mediated peer response as the least useful compared to other resources for idea generation such as textual information from books and handouts.

End of Section Summary

The overview of the studies in face-to-face and computer-mediated peer response suggests three considerations for further research in the field. In relation to the first area of interest in the proposed study, peer response,

research on computer-mediated environments can adapt coding schemes already developed in face-to-face peer response to analyze the language functions specific to peer response tasks, instead of using coding systems that were developed to interpret language independent of its context of use.

Adaptation is essential, since CMC lacks the nonverbal and social context cues inherent to face-to-face communication (Eldred & Hawisher, 1995). The scheme developed by Stanley (1992) seems adaptable to asynchronous peer response because it provides categories to code the specific language functions of a writing evaluator.

Turning now to the second area of interest, revision, research has generally identified the sources or the amount of revisions, rather than the nature of the revisions made by the student writers. Gosden (1995) provides a functional model for the classification of revisions based on how writers manipulate written discourse as they progressively change their rhetorical goals. This model seems particularly useful to analyze revision as a process by which the writers shape and reshape their writing as a function of the comments they receive from their peers. The analysis of revision should also include the students' views on how and why they decide to revise or not, on the basis of their peers' comments. The discourse-based interview, which allows understanding about the perceptions of students on the conceptual demands that writing tasks make on them, is an example of a potential instrument.

Considering the relationships of the two areas of interest, peer response and its impact on revision, the review of literature suggests the need for a balanced approach to the analysis of both the language of peer response and the nature of revisions. Several studies either place all the attention on the language of peer response inferring issues of revision, or focus exclusively on revision and give no account of what happened during peer response. A research approach that focuses on both aspects can account for the role that they play in the writing process.

Finally, research designs that compare face-to-face and computer-mediated peer response may be misleading because not only does the medium affect how students perform in peer response, but other variables such as the instructional methods used, the content that students deal with, their abilities with computers, their writing abilities in the target language, the characteristics of the task, and the students' experience with peer response activities all influence how students perform in both face-to-face and computer-mediated situations. Researchers in educational technology indicate the need for naturalistic studies that, instead of comparing different media, qualitatively examine how specific learners use a type of technology for the purpose of peer response, in order to have a deeper understanding of the multiple factors that influence its effectiveness (Newman, 1989; Thompson, Simonson and Hargrave, 1996).

End of Chapter Summary

Peer response is supported by several teaching approaches and related theories. SLA theories that claim that collaborative dialogue enhances the cognitive, social and linguistic processes necessary for second language acquisition, find in peer response an appropriate learning environment. It is assumed that when learners engage in collaborative dialogue they help each other solve their linguistic problems and immerse themselves in a wide variety of language functions. Writing process approaches that place revision at the heart of learning to write view in peer response a facilitator in the students' processes of revision. Peer response and revision, however, may be difficult tasks for L2 learners, whose emerging proficiency can interfere with the production and interpretation of feedback or critique. Revision is also more difficult in L2 than in L1 and students may not always know how to revise.

Research in L2 face-to-face peer response has contradictory findings. While some students find peer response useful, others do not trust their peers' and their own abilities to critique. Also, while some results indicate an encouraging number of students' revisions that result from peer suggestions, other results show that students make few revisions as a result of peer response. Peer response is a complex activity influenced by student and contextual variables. The interplay of these variables could be a possible explanation for the differences in findings.

Studies that focus on the impact of face-to-face peer response on revision, have mostly classified revisions as suggested or not suggested by peers, but the nature of the revisions made and their role in the writing process are not examined. Also, there are studies that account for the participants' views on peer response. However, the participants' rationale for incorporating their peers' comments or not in their revisions is missing.

It is claimed that computers can overcome some of the problems of face-to-face peer response because the visual nature of computer language provides students with more time to formulate and process comments at their own pace and opportunities to clarify the need for revision. However, research on computer-mediated peer response and its impact on revision is scarce and it generally involves learners of English. Studies in computer-mediated peer response have been mostly carried out to compare them with face-to-face peer response and results are contradictory. Whereas some researchers point out that in computer-mediated environments students state problems and suggest more, others find that in face-to-face peer response students produce more suggestions. Again, the complexity of peer response, revision, and technology use, makes it difficult to interpret results separated from their specific context.

Finally, few studies have examined peer response, oral or computer-mediated, in Spanish classes. A study that provides interactional, textual and emic data about the language functions of computer-mediated peer response

and their relationship to revision in Spanish language will definitely contribute to the growing body of knowledge on peer response and revision. Such a study requires a methodology that captures the complexity of the variables involved and leaves open the possibility of discovering how specific learners use computer-mediated peer response and revision in their writing processes.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This section describes the participants and pedagogical context, the design of the study, the procedures and the methods of data analysis.

Participants and Pedagogical Context

The participants of the study were twelve students of intermediate Spanish in a public university in the southeastern United States. They were enrolled in one section of a Spanish IV class that met twice a week for one hour and fifteen minutes. Ten of the participants were Spanish majors and minors, in their junior, senior and sophomore years, and two of them were non-degree seeking students. Ten of the participants were 19 to 23 years of age, while the remaining two were 69 and 71 years old, respectively. Except for one native speaker of Portuguese, all students were native speakers of English. The class was composed of 9 female and 3 male students.

Information obtained through a background questionnaire indicated that all participants in the study had taken Spanish courses before. The number of semesters of study ranged from 2 to 14 semesters. Ten students perceived their level of proficiency in Spanish language as intermediate, whereas two students considered they were novice. Two students had never participated in peer response activities. Another two reported that they didn't have a computer at

home. Eight of the twelve students considered themselves advanced in the use of word processing programs and two students considered themselves at an intermediate level.

The course was offered by the World Language Education Department of the College of Arts and Sciences, which has established as part of its mission, to provide language instruction to the community, to undergraduate and graduate students, and to engage students in the study of human language. The department offers BA and MA degrees in Spanish and, in conjunction with the College of Education, a Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology. The department promotes opportunities for graduate students in its programs to experiment with innovations in educational technology for language teaching by serving as a research laboratory. Under the guidance of faculty members and with prior consent of students, diverse research projects take place. This study was one of such efforts.

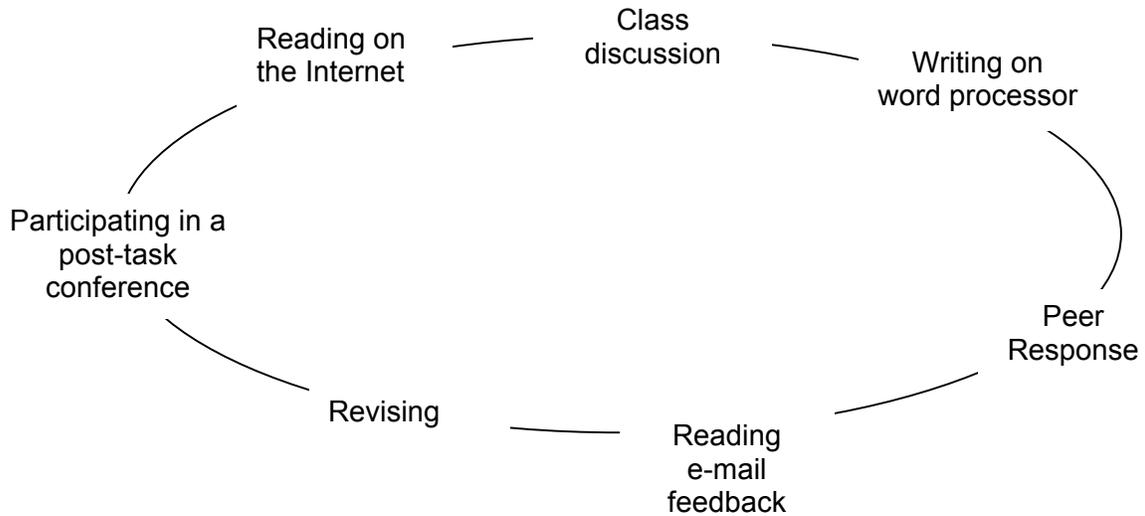
The Spanish IV course aimed at helping students develop their abilities to communicate at an intermediate level in oral and written Spanish (see course outline on Appendix 2). It was content-based and grammar was approached from an inductive, functional perspective. Students learned how to read from multiple sources and they used these sources to perform different types of writings, which engaged them in analysis, synthesis and critical evaluation activities. The units covered in the course dealt with overviews of the history and the culture of

different Latin American countries. Students read the textbook and extended their knowledge on the topics of their interest by searching and reading on the Internet. They read and wrote about, for example, a historical place, an artist, or a cultural product (e.g. Peruvian markets). All reading and listening materials used in the course were in Spanish. The written papers of students were also required in Spanish. Based on the principle that the first language mediates the learning of a second language (Vygotsky, 1978), teacher-led and student-centered discussions used both English and Spanish. For example, as the teacher of the course I used my students' mother tongue to contrast L1 and L2 language use, sometimes to check understanding and clear up doubts, and sometimes to talk about their learning processes.

Peer response and revision were an integral part of the course. It was specified in the course outline that these activities were required and accounted for in the students' grades. Peer response was used frequently and consistently throughout the course for a variety of goals. It was used to help students learn collaboration skills, develop their critical thinking, clarify the ideas they wanted to write about, raise their audience awareness, share their knowledge about the language and about writing, and edit grammatical and mechanical aspects of their writing. All this was aimed to help students revise and, ultimately, improve their writing.

From the beginning of the course, the students were introduced to a process-oriented approach, which engaged them in a series of four writing cycles. Each writing cycle lasted two weeks and consisted of the production of a 400- to 500-word paper in Spanish. This length of writing would allow the students to demonstrate the use of different points or arguments and different sources of information in their writing. The cycle started with the students reading Web pages on a topic of their selection. This was followed by face-to-face peer discussion in class. Then the students wrote their first draft individually on a word processor in the language lab, and sent it to a peer by e-mail. The students then read one of the papers written by a peer, and wrote a 150- to 200-word feedback paper for the writer. The feedback comments were sent as attachments through e-mail. The participants read the feedback on their own work, revised their first draft, and sent the modified version (second draft) to the instructor. Finally, the students attended a writing conference with the instructor to discuss the content of the paper, their revision procedures, or solve questions and concerns. Figure 1 represents the activities involved in each of the four writing cycles. Data were collected from the second (Task A, evaluative essay) and third (Task B, persuasive essay) writing cycles. The first writing cycle was used for the peer response preparation, while fourth cycle was used to member-check information from Tasks A and B, when necessary.

Figure 1. The writing cycle



As part of the course, the students were instructed on the use of *Blackboard*, an Internet infrastructure program for online teaching and learning, supported by the university where the course was offered. *Blackboard* was used to create a course Web site that included learning materials (e.g. schedules of class activities, guidelines, task descriptions, and links), e-mail to communicate with peers and instructor, and a digital drop box to send first and final drafts, and learning journals to the instructor. Students used *Blackboard* either at home or in the computer lab, where they spent approximately 30% of class time. The lab had 23 IBM computers with Internet connection arranged in traditional rows-facing-forward fashion. In the lab, students read advertisements, letters, poems, songs, and stories embedded in Web pages, written by native speakers of Spanish. They also wrote essays, summaries, descriptive and evaluative reports,

poems, critiques and feedback commentaries for peers. All the students' written products were archived in a section of the class Web site called *Nuestros Portafolios* (Our Portfolios). The use of portfolios was considered appropriate for the course to highlight the relationship between the process and the product of writing (Condon, 1997), to emphasize revision (Yancey, 1992), to foster collaboration (Melograno, 1996), and to motivate students to assume responsibility for their learning (Murphy, 1997). The electronic portfolios facilitated access to and retrieval of documents for the students and the teacher without occupying physical space (Kahtani, 1999).

As the teacher of the course, I used a process approach to writing instruction. I provided sufficient class time for students to engage in the pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing stages of writing. My role consisted of facilitating the process of composing by suggesting topics, helping students find information, and assisting them in focusing their writing. I varied the process depending on the task and the energy level of students. As a rule, I promoted discussion before writing and avoided over-evaluating. Activities such as brainstorming, free writing, journal writing, teacher conferences, mini-lessons on aspects of language, teacher feedback for revision and editing, peer response, and revision, were parts of the course. I modeled peer response by enacting an exchange of ideas and providing facilitative commentaries. I

emphasized matters of content, focus, organization, and purpose, and I took advantage of the many uses of praise.

Design of the Study

This study used case study methodology. The term “case study” is used by different disciplines to mean different things. Empirical researchers in writing use the term to refer to a carefully designed project used to systematically collect information about a writing event or a small group of writers for the purpose of exploring, describing, and/or explaining an aspect not previously known or considered (MacNealy, 1998). Case study research has contributed much to what is known about the writing processes. For example, the case study by Emig (1983) provided evidence that traditional methods of teaching writing were questionable, and the one by Hayes and Flower (1983) described the different writing strategies used by novice and expert writers.

This study used a case study approach for two reasons. First, classrooms are always diverse and this method, rather than masking diversity to obtain generalizations, assumes that individuals are unique and conserves their differences. Case study methodology does not see in diversity an inconvenience, but an inherent trait of human activity that needs to be accounted for (Bissex, 1990). Second, writing classrooms are complex, with many variables acting at the same time. Case studies, rather than isolating and measuring the effect of a

single factor, allow an intensive view of individuals and the many factors that influence their behaviors (Bissex & Bullock, 1987).

This case study took a “top-down” approach to knowledge, commonly represented in writing research (see Bruner cited in Bissex, 1990). “Top-down” case studies are guided by theory (Lauer & Asher, 1988), and although authors contend that at present there is no coherent, comprehensive theory of L2 writing (Silva, 1993; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996), the field has adapted the theoretical frameworks from L1 rhetoric and composition research (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998). Two principles of L1 writing theory relate to this study. First, writing is complex recursive process in which individuals use higher order thinking and problem solving skills such as planning, defining rhetorical problems, revising, and editing (Hayes & Flower, 1983). Second, writing is an inherently social or transactional process that involves mediation between a writer and an audience (Berlin, 1987). Peer response and revision are pedagogical strategies derived from these principles.

In this “top down” case study, data were collected in a variety of ways and for different purposes to obtain a picture, as complete as possible, of the students’ peer response processes. Students’ drafts, their written feedback on their peers’ writings, their responses during interviews, and their learning journals were the sources of data. My observations of the students’ behaviors during the writing tasks were secondary sources of information that were also analyzed.

Analysis was made in quantitative and qualitative terms following Yin's suggestion that "...case studies can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence." (1994, p. 14).

Finally, this study was characterized as a "bounded" case; i.e. it had a defined temporal, social and physical boundary (Stake, 1998). The case was bounded in the Fall 2002 semester, in which 12 students were engaged in drafting, revising and peer response activities in a Spanish IV course. Within the case, two learning tasks were examined: one that involved the construction of an evaluative text and one in which the participants wrote a persuasive text (see Tasks on Appendices 3 and 4). These text types were selected because they were longer and more cognitively demanding than other tasks in the course.¹ Obtaining data from the students working with two different text types allowed a more comprehensive view of how the students gave and used feedback from their peers to revise their writings in Spanish.

Procedures

The study did not require the creation of special writing activities; the focus was on the group during two of the typical writing tasks of the course. The participants, however, were informed that their work and the information they provided were going to be examined for research purposes. The objectives of the study and the procedures for data collection were explained to the students and

a consent form was signed by those who voluntarily participated (see Appendix 5). The procedures for the execution of the study are described below.

Participants' Self-Ratings of Writing Proficiency

On the second week of classes, a self-rating sheet was distributed to the students together with a copy of the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. The students were first asked to read the guidelines to find the stage that described their abilities. Then they marked their perceived level of proficiency in a scale from *novice low* to *distinguished* for listening, speaking, reading and writing. The participants were told to contact the teacher, either by e-mail or in class, if confronted with a doubt or question. The following class one student asked for the meaning of the word *cognates* and another inquired about the term *utterance*. The students were provided with explanations and examples. For this study, only the self-ratings for writing proficiency were considered.

Peer Response Preparation.

Peer response preparation took place during weeks 3 through 6 of the 15-week course (see the schedule of research activities on Appendix 6). Prior to the first preparation session, I asked the participants to complete a background questionnaire (see Appendix 7) to obtain demographic data and their previous experiences with writing in general, and peer response in particular. The questionnaire was also used to obtain information on the participants' experience with Spanish language and computers. This information facilitated the adaptation

of the peer response preparation to the needs of the participants. The questionnaire was piloted in previous semesters to examine its efficiency. Students of the pilot study reported that they found it easy to interpret the questions, and all items were answered in the way the researcher intended.

The first peer response preparation session took place during the third week of classes, after the students had developed their first short writing in class. The session started with a discussion, which focused on the arguments in favor of peer response. Specifically, the students were told that they would gain confidence about their writing in Spanish by reading their peers' papers and seeing their strengths and weaknesses. They were also told that they would learn to be more critical of their own writing, by writing critiques on their peers' papers. The importance of writing with attention to the needs of the audience was emphasized, and students were encouraged to critically consider their peers' comments for revision. The value of a trustful and supportive environment was mentioned and students were encouraged to adopt a friendly, interested and collaborative stance when responding. They were advised to offer encouraging responses, identify the purpose of the text, raise questions, and offer suggestions to their peers. They were told to focus on content during peer response. Then, students were provided with guidelines for acceptable responses in terms of language functions (see Appendix 8). They used the guidelines to write their first peer feedback commentary.

During the following three weeks, the students participated in four peer response preparation sessions. They had diverse opportunities to understand and practice the process of peer response. For example, essays from students of previous semesters were read by the class and the teacher on the overhead projector. The students discussed possible comments, and the teacher wrote the comments that pointed to strengths of the writing and raised specific questions. The students also participated in short oral peer response sessions focusing on writing issues such as gaps of information, text organization, and the use of examples, referential ties, conjunctions, and transitional expressions. Wrap-up activities consisted of whole-class discussions about the aspects they learned about through peer response and the problems they encountered. Students wrote notes at the end of each preparation session that would help them in writing their first journal entry. Peer response preparation activities were in English and Spanish.

Peer Response and Revision Sessions.

The students worked in self-selected pairs in the preparation (discussing readings and sharing outlines) and the peer response activities of Tasks A and B. Pairs were chosen because students would have more time to discuss, and to read and write their comments when they work with one person only; in classrooms that use computers time is a concern. The students selected their partners for peer response after they had several opportunities to work with

different classmates. They worked individually in the writing and revision activities of each task (A summary of the peer response preparation features can be found on Appendix 9).

For both, Tasks A and B, one entire class period (one hour and fifteen minutes) was devoted to the writing activity (a 400- to 500-word paper). The following class was dedicated to the peer response activity (a 150- to 200-word feedback/critique paper), and the subsequent class was used for revision. For the three activities, participants were given the opportunity to finish their work at home.

For each of the two peer response sessions for Tasks A and B respectively, the students submitted their first drafts through *Blackboard*. They were told to read the paper of one of their classmates, write comments and suggestions on the computer, and post their comments on *Blackboard* to the writer and to the instructor. In the following class period, students were told to read and analyze the comments received, and to incorporate into their revision those comments they consider useful. When they finished revising, they posted their second drafts to the instructor for feedback. Students were able to revise again after receiving feedback from the teacher if they decided to, although in such cases the third draft was not collected for analysis.

Learning Journals

Throughout the semester, four rounds of learning journal entries were collected, each written immediately after the completion of each writing task. The entries gave the participants opportunities to reflect on their learning experiences and express their thoughts. Learning journals allowed students to nominate topics of interest and they were outlets through which students could express their feelings and their attitudes towards the writing activities (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). To facilitate the expression of the students and the interpretation of the researcher, the students were asked to write in English. Students were requested to either nominate topics of their interest, or discuss topics nominated by the instructor (see instructions on Appendix 10). The submission of the entries was accounted for in the students' grades, although entries were not evaluated. The topics given to the students at the end of the first writing task were (a) Describe the difficulties you confronted in the peer response activities and how you solved them. (b) Describe the types of peer comments or feedback you found more useful and explain in which ways they were useful. Or, describe the types of peer comments that were less useful and explain why such comments were not useful. (c) Explain how using the computer for peer response helps or hinders your learning. (d) Discuss the things that you have learned by participating in peer response activities. Of these suggested topics some participants selected (a), (c), and (d); none of the participants wrote on their journal on topic (b).

Interviews

The class was expected to have up to 21 students. Therefore, originally the interviews were going to be made only to a sample of *information-rich* participants following Patton's (1990) procedures for purposeful sampling. However, 18 students enrolled in the class, of whom three dropped the course in the third week, two submitted only their drafts but not their feedback or learning journals (Jodi and Benjamin), and one was a native speaker of Spanish (Jonathan). Jodi, Benjamin and Jonathan signed the informed consent, although their work could not be considered for the analysis. The remaining 12 students submitted drafts, feedback and learning journals and were therefore all interviewed.

After the completion of Tasks A and B, the participants attended a 40-minute and a 50-minute interview, respectively. Since the purpose of the interviews was not to observe the level of Spanish but to elicit the participants' insights and reflections, they were conducted in English and tape-recorded. One interview (after the completion of Task A) took place in the instructor's office. The second interview (after the completion of Task B) was carried out in a conference room. Both interviews were scheduled for the class session immediately after each task was finished, to ensure that the participants' experience with the Tasks was still in their memory.

The interviews included open-ended, semi-structured questions and discourse-based questions. The semi-structured, open-ended questions (Fontana and Frey, 1998) were used to elicit from the participants their perceptions on different aspects of peer response and the usefulness of computers for peer response. The questions were focused, providing no cues for the answers (see introduction and questions of the semi-structured interview in Appendix 11).

Discourse-based questions were used to identify the writers' rationale for their revisions (Odell, Goswami, & Herrington, 1983). To prepare for the discourse-based interviews, each interviewee and I compared the first and the second drafts in each task, and the student bracketed each occurrence of revision on the second drafts. During the interviews I pointed to each instance of bracketed text and asked the participants "Why did you change this part?" See introduction to discourse-based interview in Appendix 12

Field Notes

After every class, I recorded my observations of the participants' behaviors during the writing tasks. These notes were used as a supplementary source of information. The purposes for recording the field notes were (a) to record relevant incidents observed in the behaviors of the participants during the data collection process and (b) to record the participants' comments during member checks.

Data Analysis

Data collected for analysis consisted of (a) written peer comments for two writing tasks (b) first and second drafts of these tasks, (c) tape recordings of interviews, and (d) four journal entries. Data analysis was supplemented with field notes.

Instrumentation

Two predetermined instruments were used in this study: (a) a coding scheme for language functions, and (b) a coding scheme for textual revisions.

Coding Scheme for Language Functions

The coding scheme used in this study to analyze the participants' written comments to their peers was an adaptation of Stanley's (1992) system for coding language functions during peer response (see coding scheme on Appendix 12). Stanley's system has been used by others in the writing research community (Lee, 1997; Zhu, 2001). It was chosen because it presented advantages in relation to other predetermined schemes. First, it was developed for L2 learners, specifically in a peer response context. Stanley developed the categories for a study that analyzed the impact of training for peer response and obtained an intercoder reliability of 92%. Although the purpose of the proposed study was to examine the impact of peer response on revision, the participants were trained for peer response as well. Second, the coding scheme was considered appropriate because it contains categories for a wide variety of language acts in

a manageable number of categories, for both the reader and the writer. In this study only the categories for the reader were used. The reader scheme includes seven categories (pointing, advising, collaborating, announcing, reacting, eliciting, and questioning). Five of the categories (pointing, advising, announcing, reacting and questioning) contain sub-categories, which makes the coding more specific and efficient.

The applicability of the scheme was tested on a group of 12 students of Spanish III in the Spring of 2002. Before the task, these students received a 20-minute preparation in which different types of feedback (advising, collaborating, praising, eliciting, and questioning) were explained and exemplified. After the mini-preparation session, the students exchanged the first draft of a 400-word evaluative essay they had written in Spanish. They were given 30 minutes to read the drafts and write their comments, which were attached to an e-mail message and sent to the writer to the text and to the instructor. Results of the pilot study indicated that students used reactive (56%), advising (15%), collaborating (14%), announcing (6%), pointing (4%), eliciting (2%), Acting as audience, (2%), and questioning (1%). As a result of the pilot testing, Stanley's scheme was adapted by adding one category: acting as audience (see table of results of pilot test of coding scheme for language functions on Appendix 13).

Coding Scheme for Textual Revisions

The second instrument used in this study is a coding scheme for textual revisions, which is an adaptation of the instrument used by Gosden (1995) to analyze the revisions made by L2 writers of research articles (see Appendix 14). Although this study involved an evaluative and a persuasive text, the scheme's categories are not intended to identify the specific characteristics of the genres, but the nature of textual revisions in terms of how they approximate the goals of the writer in relation to the topic of writing, the audience, and the purposes for communicating. Gosden used the scheme to examine the revisions of 7 novice researchers, non-native speakers of English. The scheme was deemed useful for this case study because it provides information of simple types of revisions such as *adding detail* and *polishing of language below clause level*, as well as more sophisticated types of revisions such as *changes that relate to the writers' purpose and the expression of reasons*. This variety of revision types was judged appropriate to be used in the college L2 classroom where the range of abilities is generally diverse. In addition, the instrument is effective in accounting for the specific impact that peer response has on revision. For example, peer response can impact the students' revisions below the clause level (polishing), or it can impact revisions at the discourse level (e.g., rhetorical machining of purpose).

The applicability of the scheme was pilot tested on the drafts produced by the same group of learners of Spanish III in which the coding scheme for language functions was piloted. Results indicated that students revisions consisted of polishing the language below the clause level (36%), adding detail of statement (25%) reshuffling statements (8%), and modified text in relation to the writers purpose (8%). Deletions, textual changes that relate to the rhetorical machining of discourse structure were revisions not made by this group of students (see results of pilot test of coding scheme for textual revisions on Appendix 15).

Methods of Analysis

Frequencies and percentages were obtained to analyze the participants' (a) language functions, (b) focus of attention, and (c) textual revisions.

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative analysis was performed on the language functions and the focus of attention of the participants' feedback. Quantitative analysis was also used for the textual revisions of the participants' drafts. Miles and Huberman (1994) justify the quantification of qualitative data in the cases in which identification of patterns or corroboration is aimed.

Language functions. The language functions were examined using a three-step procedure:

1. The 23 feedback commentaries written by the participants in Spanish for two tasks were segmented into “idea units”. Idea units are “segments of discourse that coincide with a responder’s focus of attention” (Chafe, 1980, cited in Gere & Abbott, 1985, p. 367). For example, the sentence “*El tópico que escogiste es interesante y tu estilo es fácil de leer*” (The topic you chose is interesting and your style is easy to read) contains two discourse units. Greetings such as “I hope you’re doing well”, “here are my comments” or “see you in class” were not considered peer response idea units and were coded as [0].

After discussing the concept of idea unit and coding together two transcripts from a different group, a second reader and I worked independently to divide 23 transcripts of feedback commentaries into idea units. An overall agreement of 82% was achieved. In the cases in which we did not agree on the limits of an idea unit, we discussed our segmentation until achieving consensus. For example, Rena, in her feedback comments to Julie, wrote: “A few suggestions, however. In the first paragraph you need to write ‘The authors are going to eliminate the section’.” I had coded this comment as a single idea unit, whereas the second reader had coded the same segment of discourse as two different idea units. After discussing the specific case, we agreed to code each sentence as a separate idea unit because the first sentence focused on all the suggestions that followed and not only on the suggestion that appeared in the immediately following sentence.

2. Each idea unit was examined in terms of language functions using the coding scheme developed by Stanley (1992). The coding scheme, with the descriptions of its categories, is included in Appendix 12. The second reader and I discussed the descriptions in the scheme and independently coded the transcripts. An overall agreement of 85% was achieved.

Data on language functions were used to respond to Research Question 1a: How do participants provide on their peers' writings in terms of language functions?

Focus of attention. The idea units were analyzed to identify emerging categories for primary focus of attention, that is, the specific writing aspect that the participants attended to in their feedback commentaries. No attempt was made to use a coding scheme for focus of attention to allow the categories to emerge from the data. The categories that emerged for focus of attention were: content, organization, rhetoric, vocabulary, mechanics, and grammar. When the comments focused on aspects not related to the writing, they were coded as "not specified" [NS]. The second reader and I achieved a 91% of agreement on the independent coding of the idea functions for focus of attention. These categories were then quantified to obtain frequencies and percentages. This analysis responded to Research Question 1c: What do participants focus on when they provide feedback?

Textual revisions. The quantitative analysis of the textual changes made by the participants on their drafts were coded following three methodological procedures:

1. All textual changes made by the participants from draft 1 to draft 2 were coded using Gosden's (1995) coding scheme for types of textual revisions. This classification scheme was applied to the drafts by the researcher and a second reader, who independently read and analyzed each draft for Tasks A and B. For these independent readings, an overall agreement of 87% was achieved. In cases in which the readers did not agree on a category, the revision was discussed until consensus was reached on how to code it.

2. The types of textual revisions were verified against the corresponding feedback comments for each draft, to find if each of the revisions was suggested or not suggested in the feedback. The textual revisions were coded as R-PR (Revision suggested in Peer Response), and R-NPR (Revision Not suggested in Peer Response). For example, Becky chose to write about Machu Pichu, the historical landmark in Peru. On her first draft she wrote:

*Un arqueólogo que se llamaba
Hiram Bingham se fascinó con Perú y
en 1911 tomo el camino de
Urumbamba.*

An archaeologist named Hiram
Bingham was fascinated with Peru and
in 1911 took his way to Urumbamba.

On her second draft Becky added a few words to her sentence. The following is her revised sentence, which was coded as: (a) addition of detail or statement [Ad].

<i>Un arqueólogo norteamericano,</i>	An American archaeologist,
<i>graduado en Yale y que se llamaba</i>	graduated from Yale and named Hiram
<i>Hiram Bingham, se fascinó con Perú y</i>	Bingham, was fascinated with Peru
<i>en 1911 tomo el camino de</i>	and in 1911 took his way to
<i>Urumbamba.</i>	Urumbamba [Ad].

To verify if Becky's revision was suggested by a peer or not, the feedback she received was examined. It was found that the feedback contained two language functions that suggested the revision: pointing to specific word choices [P2], and advising [Ad]. This is the segment of the feedback that suggested the revision.

<i>También note que incluiste el</i>	I also noted that you included
<i>nombre de la persona encargada de</i>	the name of the person in charge of
<i>este descubrimiento. Puedes dar un</i>	this discovery [P2]. You can give a little
<i>poco mas de información sobre él.</i>	more information about him [Ad].

The feedback comments evidenced that Becky's revision had been suggested by a peer and therefore, the revision was coded as R-PR (Revision suggested in Peer Response).

These procedures were followed by a second reader and the researcher, working independently. For the independent analysis, an overall 84% was achieved. In the situations in which the readers did not agree, consensus on how to code the revision was reached through discussion.

3. To identify the feedback types that resulted in revisions, the language functions in the feedback of suggested revisions were quantified. For example, in the case of Becky's revision explained previously, her revision (addition of detail) resulted from two language functions: pointing and advising.

Quantitative analysis of textual revisions responded to Research Question 2: How do participants use computer-mediated feedback given by peers about their writing? And 2a: How does peer feedback impact the participants' revisions?

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data from the commentaries, the interviews and the learning journals were analyzed inductively to identify patterns in the participants' approaches to providing feedback and their perceptions on different aspects of computer-mediated peer response. Results were thoroughly described using specific responses as illustrations.

Since this case study is guided by theory, no attempt was made to build grounded theory. Merriam (1997) argued for the use of the constant comparative method independent of grounding theory: “the constant comparative method of data analysis is widely used in all kinds of qualitative studies, whether or not the researcher is building a grounded theory” (p. 18). Data from the participants’ responses in the interviews and their learning journal entries were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Following coding, a narrative was written to describe the data and their analysis.

In accordance with the constant comparative method, the transcripts of the interviews, the feedback comments and the learning journals were first read to become familiar with their content. Emerging concepts were noted on these transcripts, next to the text that suggested them. From these concepts, categories were labeled, and codes were developed to manage the different concepts and categories.

To ensure the quality of the analysis, it was discussed with a debriefer who is knowledgeable in the areas of writing instruction and research methodology. The debriefing activities focused on probing my biases, exploring meanings, and clarifying interpretations. The debriefer acted also as an auditor, who examined the process, the data, the findings and the interpretations, to attest that they were internally coherent. Debriefing activities took place twice

during the data collection/analysis process (after each of the two writing tasks) and in six sessions during the data analysis/reporting process (see debriefing calendar on Appendix 6).

All data, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions were attested with the participants as well. This member check was done once after each of the tasks ended. Member checking consisted in eliciting comments and insights from the participants. The member check provided opportunities to verify intentionality on the part of the participants, and to correct errors of interpretation on my part. Member checks were done with individual students and with the whole class. For example, one student wrote his feedback using third person singular instead of second person singular and I did not know if this could lead to relevant information as to how he provided feedback. When asked about why he had used this pronoun form, he said, "I guess this is what they have to fix and hopefully that will give me enough to get an A from the professor." My interpretation of his comment was that Joseph's intended audience for the feedback was the instructor rather than his peer.

Finally, the qualitative research paradigm within which this study was formulated, assumes that the researcher is an important part of the research process that is linked to the topic and the people under study. The researcher biases enter into play from the moment of the selection of the topic and the people involved. However, knowledge construction, under this perspective, is

only possible through the interaction of the researcher and the researched. To allow this interaction I sought the participants' perspectives without suggesting approval or confirmation, and asked questions without endorsing a particular response. I assumed the study as a process in which the participants are the experts and I am the learner of all sides of an argument to narrate (Mehra, 2002).

The procedures for the qualitative analysis of the different types of data are provided below.

Peer response approach. To define the feedback approach taken by the participants, I followed three steps:

1. First, I examined each entire commentary to identify (a) the language functions that they used more, and (b) how these language functions were used by the participants to provide feedback. I observed that different segments in the commentaries used different combinations of language functions to achieve different feedback purposes. Seven feedback purposes were identified: (a) giving positive comments, (b) focusing on what is contained in the text, (c) suggesting additional ideas, (d) giving suggestions to fix things, (e) giving suggestions to reshuffle text, (f) focusing on what is confusing (g) focusing on the deficiencies of the text.

2. Then, I looked for patterns in the feedback purposes manifested in the commentaries. I noticed that the purposes found in the initial parts of the commentaries showed three distinctive patterns. The commentaries started by

(a) giving positive comments, (b) focusing on what is contained in the text, or (c) focusing on the deficiencies of the text. The subsequent parts of the commentaries seemed to pursue other purposes, although they sometimes returned to the initial purpose.

3. Then, I examined the responses to the interview question: “How do you provide feedback?” Three categories that emerged from the participants’ responses: “looking at the good / positive things”, “looking at the main points of the paper” and “pointing to what the text lacks”.

4. The participants’ approach was determined when the initial purpose in their commentaries coincided with their perception on how they provided feedback. Three approaches to providing feedback were identified: (a) “supportive”, (b) “interpretative” and (c) “evaluative”.

The purposes in the initial segments of the commentaries were considered important for the analysis for two reasons. First, the purposes in the opening segments were the only ones that manifested patterns. Second, the initial segments of the commentaries provide the first impression of the feedback to the writer. The opening parts can motivate the writers to continue reading the feedback and possibly adopt the suggestions, or they can discourage the readers and reduce the chances that they adopt the suggestions provided.

5. The interview transcripts were examined for contextual variables that explained the participants’ approaches in specific situations.

For example, Margaret used reacting and announcing language functions on the majority of the idea units of her feedback commentaries for Task A and Task B. The initial purposes of both of her commentaries were “giving positive comments”. Her response to the interview question “How do you provide feedback?” was “You tell them ok, this was good, and the reason I thought it was good.” (p. 5) Margaret manifested a “supportive” approach to providing feedback. The contextual variable that seemed to influence her approach was her assumptions on the role of peer response, since she reported that providing feedback was “Just giving each other a hand actually, before you turn it [the essay] in to the professor.” (p. 3).

This process was discussed with the debriefer to clarify interpretations and refine the description of the categories. This analysis responded to Research Question 1b: What is the participants’ approach to providing feedback?

Rationale for revisions. The discourse-based portions of the interviews were transcribed and analyzed using the constant comparative method. The discourse-based questions focused on the reasons given by the participants for the specific revisions they made on their writings after reading the comments made by a peer (see the introduction to the discourse-based interview on Appendix 16). Information about the reasons for revision indicated the specific situations that stimulated the participants to incorporate their peers’ comments. For example, Monica made five revisions on her draft for Task A and three

revisions on her draft for Task B. All eight revisions consisted in additions of detail to the texts. In the discourse-based interviews for Tasks A and B Monica was asked why she had added to her text. For Task A her rationale was: “I added about two hundred and fifty words after I read through his paper and read his response.” For Task B Monica’s reasons were: “She told me in the peer response maybe add better examples of what you can get at the markets. So I added all of that stuff.” Monica definitely added detail to her writing as a result of peer response.

This analysis responded to Research Question 2b: What reasons do participants give for their revisions?

Perceptions. The semi-structured portions of the interviews and the learning journals were examined to identify the participants’ perceptions on peer response and the use of computers for peer response activities. To analyze the information participants provided, first I read all the participants’ responses to each of the specific interview questions. Then I used the constant comparative method, and excerpted specific interview comments to illustrate each generalization.

For example, the participants were asked their reactions to the use of the computer for peer response. Alice’s response related to how she used the spelling and grammar checkers in the word processing program. Specifically, she talked about how the tools helped her to spell the words correctly in Spanish

when she was writing her peer response: “A lot of words that you just hear or pick up, then it would tell you that you weren’t hearing right and your spelling was wrong. Then I could go back and look them up so that I had the right word.” (p. 6). However, when she was asked what things she would change in the course she mentioned her perceptions on the need to use oral language in peer response rather than just written language through the computer: “If you could do something so that more Spanish was actually spoken in peer response, rather than just write in the computer.” (p. 11).

This type of analysis was used to respond to Research Questions 2 (How do participants use computer-mediated feedback provided by their peers?), 3 (What factors influence the ways in which participants write computer-mediated peer response?) and 4 (How do participants perceive the use of computers for peer response?).

Summary of Research Study Characteristics

This study was guided by four research questions about a content-based, Web enhanced class of intermediate Spanish at college level: (a) How do participants provide computer-mediated feedback on their peers’ writings? (b) How do participants use the computer-mediated feedback given by peers about their writing? (c) What factors influence the ways in which participants write computer-mediated peer response? (d) How do participants perceive the use of computers for peer response? To respond to each question, I developed a

bounded, “top-down” case study for the collection and analysis of data from two of the typical writing tasks of the course. The case study provided qualitative data on the language functions in the feedback the participants provided, their approaches to providing feedback, and the focus of attention of their feedback comments. It also generated qualitative data on the types of revisions the students made on their drafts, their reasons for revising, and the impact that peer response had on revision. Finally, this case study examined the participants’ perceptions on the factors that influence peer response and on the use of computers for peer response. The outcome was a description, in quantitative and qualitative terms, of the results of implementing computer-mediated peer response in a Spanish classroom.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

To provide a context for interpreting the results, I first provide a description of the participants' profiles. Then I present the results pertaining to each research question.

The data to create the profiles were obtained from two sources: (a) the background questionnaire, and (b) the proficiency self-rating sheets, based on the characteristics of the ACTFL guidelines. Both sets of data were collected during the second week of the course, before the students participated in the peer response preparation and the writing tasks.

The Profiles of the Participants

Originally, the class included 18 students. However, three dropped the course in the third week, two submitted their work partially (Jodi and Benjamin), and one was a native speaker of Spanish (Jonathan). Jodi, Benjamin and Jonathan signed the informed consent, although their work could not be considered for the analysis. The remaining 12 students were part of this case study.

The participants' profiles illustrate the diversity of their backgrounds, expectations and views. As Table 1 shows, of the 12 students, 10 were on the range from 19 to 23 years of age, and 2 were in their 70s. Except for one

participant who was born in Brazil, all other students were born in the United States. Half of the students had visited a Spanish-speaking country for a period of six months or less. They were four junior, three senior, three sophomore, and two non-degree seeking students. Nine of them had participated in peer response activities prior to this study. Nine of them had a computer at home. All of them had used e-mail and word processing programs before taking the course.

In relation to their abilities in the Spanish language, of the 12 participants, four had studied two to five semesters, four had studied six to nine semesters, and four had studied 10 to 14 semesters of Spanish. As to their perceived proficiency to write in Spanish, five participants rated their writing proficiency as *intermediate low*, three as *intermediate high*, two as *intermediate low*, one as *novice low*, and one as *novice mid*. The following section provides a description of their profiles in terms of their background experiences in the Spanish language, writing, and the use of computers. The names of the participants were changed to preserve anonymity.

Table 1
The Profiles of the Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Year at University	Semesters of Spanish Studies	Perceived Level of L2 Writing Proficiency	Previous Participation in Peer Feedback Activities (peer correction)	Computer at Home	Use of E-mail, Attachments and Word Processor
Alice	F	19	Junior	14	Intermediate low	No	Yes	No attachments
Andy	M	21	Senior	7	Novice high	Yes	No	Yes
Becky	F	21	Sophomore	9	Intermediate high	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harry	M	71	Non-degree	4	Intermediate low	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jasmine	F	23	Junior	7	Novice mid	Yes	No	Yes
Jenny	F	19	Sophomore	10	Intermediate low	Yes	Yes	Yes
Joseph	M	19	Sophomore	10	Intermediate high	Yes	Yes	Yes
Julie	F	21	Junior	5	Intermediate low	Yes	Yes	Yes
Margaret	F	21	Senior	8	Intermediate high	No	Yes	No Attachments
Monica	F	20	Junior	13	Intermediate mid	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rena	F	21	Senior	9	Intermediate mid	Yes	Yes	Yes
Roxanne	F	69	Non-degree	4	Intermediate low	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: Names have been changed to preserve anonymity.

Alice. She was a 19 year-old junior who wanted to major in Education and minor in Spanish. She had never visited a Spanish-speaking country, although she had studied the language for 14 semesters. In the Spanish courses that she took, writing was practiced through “filling the blanks” type of exercises and writing short paragraphs. The focus of those courses, she mentioned, was on rehearsing specific vocabulary. Alice rated herself at an *intermediate low* level of proficiency in writing, according to the ACTFL guidelines. In the Spanish IV course in which the study took place, Alice expected to improve her listening comprehension and to increase her vocabulary. As to her first language writing experience, Alice had taken English I and II in college. She said she was used to writing research style papers, in which she stated the information she found and drew conclusions. She indicated that she felt extremely comfortable reading and writing in English. She had never participated in peer response activities. In relation to her computer skills, Alice indicated that she had experience searching in the Internet, using word processing programs, and sending e-mails. However, she had never sent attachments. In this case study Alice provided feedback to Joseph on both tasks.

Andy. He was a 21-year old senior student, majoring in political science. He had taken 7 semesters of Spanish classes and rated his writing proficiency as a *novice high* for writing. Andy had visited Spain for a period of two weeks. In this course he expected to acquire fluency in speaking Spanish. He felt extremely

comfortable reading and writing in English. He reported that the political science courses he had taken, which required writing, improved his language usage and organization. His idea was that writing is good when it conveys the author's views and when it is well organized, with few errors. He had never participated in peer response activities. He had experience sending e-mails and attachments, searching the Internet and using word processing programs. Andy provided feedback to Monica and Harry for Tasks A and B, respectively.

Becky. She was a 21-year old sophomore who planned to major in Spanish. Becky had never visited a Spanish-speaking country. She had studied Spanish for 10 semesters and she rated herself as *intermediate high* in writing. While Becky was participating in the study, she was also taking Spanish Conversation I and Spanish Composition I. In the Spanish IV course in which the present study took place, she expected to read, write, and practice spoken Spanish. She had transferred from another university where she participated in peer response in Spanish. In relation to her peer response experience she wrote in the background questionnaire: "It helped us (and the teacher) to get a better grip on the material. Sometimes it's hard to comment, correct and suggest things on your peers' papers. I definitely think peer response is helpful." Becky had never taken any English classes in college, although she felt extremely comfortable reading and writing in English. In her opinion, good writing is "Subject –verb agreement, correct spelling, good punctuation, cohesive

thoughts.” Becky had used email, sent attachments, searched in the Internet, and used word processing programs before she participated in the study. In this case study she provided feedback to Margaret on Task A and to Jonathan, a native speaker of Spanish, for Task B. (Jonathan signed informed consent to participate in this study as receiver of feedback only. His work was therefore not examined).

Harry. He was a non-traditional student, 71 years old. He had spent three months in Costa Rica, Honduras and Colombia, and he had studied Spanish for four semesters. He rated his level of writing proficiency as *intermediate low*. In the Spanish IV course he expected to learn how to read, write, listen and speak effectively in Spanish. Harry had advanced degrees in Physics and Environmental Sciences. He was, therefore, extremely comfortable in reading and writing in English. He said he had participated in peer response activities when writing his professional papers. In his opinion, good writing is “writing that communicates clearly and effectively with the intended audience.” Harry had experience sending emails and attachments, searching on the Internet and using word processors. He provided feedback to Benjamin and Andy on Tasks A and B, respectively.

Jasmine. She was a 23 year-old junior student that wanted to study Spanish and Counseling. Jasmine had visited Puerto Rico on a one-week period vacation. She had taken seven semesters of Spanish. She thought the Spanish IV course would help her in “writing Spanish from my hand instead of looking up

every other word". Alice rated her writing proficiency level as *novice-mid*, the lowest self-rating in the class. She felt comfortable with reading and writing in English. She had taken an English course in college, in which she learned grammar. At the time of the study, she was taking a Modern Literature class to help her on a higher level. Although she had participated in peer response activities in high school, she felt she was not a good enough writer to peer edit someone else's writings. For her, good writing meant "clear ideas that lead from one point to another". Jasmine had practice in sending e-mails and attachments. She had also searched on the Internet and used word processing programs. She provided feedback to Roxanne and Jodi. (Jodi signed informed consent to participate in the study although she did not submit the second drafts and the response commentaries. She therefore only participated as receiver of feedback)

Jenny. She was a 19 year-old sophomore interested in studying Education and Spanish. She had never visited a Spanish-speaking country; however, she had taken 10 semesters of Spanish studies. She rated her writing proficiency as *intermediate low*. Jenny reported that she didn't know what she wanted to do with Spanish in the future, although she wanted to keep practicing it. In the Spanish IV course she hoped to learn new vocabulary, and to practice the phrases used in everyday speaking. Jenny felt extremely comfortable with reading and writing in English. She had taken composition I and II, which helped her learning how to write essays. In those courses, Jenny participated in peer response. In the

background questionnaire she described her experience: “Usually we would have a worksheet with questions like: was the text focused, organized, etc.? Some would switch papers and fill out the worksheet and then switch back and talk to each other about it; asking questions.” In her opinion, good writing is “clear, thorough, good vocabulary.” Jenny had experience in sending e-mails and attachments, searching on the Internet, and using word processing programs. In this case study she provided feedback to Julie for Task A and to Monica for Task B.

Joseph. He was a 19 year-old sophomore, interested in studying Management Information Systems and Spanish. He had never visited a Spanish-speaking country. He had 10 semesters of Spanish studies. He rated himself at an *intermediate high* level of proficiency for writing in Spanish. In the Spanish IV course, Joseph expected to develop his verbal skills and his grammar. He reported that he felt comfortable writing in English, although he indicated he only “survived” when reading, in general. He had previously participated in peer response activities in his English Composition I and II classes. In relation to that experience he wrote: “it was cool because you got so much help on a paper, it made you feel more secure about turning it in.” In his view, good writing is “being able to convey a message while following paper structure.” In relation to his computer skills, Joseph had experience in sending e-

mails and attachments, searching the Internet and using word processing programs. He provided feedback to Alice on both tasks.

Julie. She was a junior student of 21 years of age. She planned to major in International Studies and minor in Spanish. She was born in Brazil and she moved into the United States when she was 11. Julie had never visited a Spanish-speaking country. She had studied Spanish for four semesters and she rated her proficiency in writing as *intermediate low*. She expected to improve her writing and grammar, and to expand her vocabulary. She felt extremely comfortable reading and writing in English. She had taken college Composition I and II. Julie had participated in peer response activities in high school and college. She described the peer response activities as “switching papers to correct our grammar errors.” Her perception was that good writing is organized and easily understood. She had experience sending e-mails and attachments, doing Internet searches and using word processors. In this case study Julie provided feedback to Jenny on Task A. She had selected Becky to work on task B, but since she received Becky’s draft a week late, she was not able to write the second feedback commentary.

Margaret. She was a senior student, 21 years old, with aspirations in International Studies and Spanish. Margaret had taken eight semesters of Spanish studies and had spent six months in Nicaragua. She reported an *intermediate high* level of writing proficiency. Her expectations of the course were

that it would improve her grammar usage and enhance her ability to put thoughts together better. She felt extremely comfortable reading and writing in English. She took English I and II in a Community College. In those courses her learning activities consisted of grammar drills; reading short stories, plays, and poems; and writing about the readings. Margaret had never participated in peer response activities. In her opinion, good writing is “being able to present your ideas in a clear and concise way.” Margaret reported that she had sent emails, searched in the Internet and used word processing programs, although she had never sent attachments. For this study, she provided feedback to Becky and Jodi.

Monica. She was a 20 year-old junior, interested in studying Advertising and Spanish. Monica had 13 semesters of Spanish studies. She had traveled to the Dominican Republic for a three-day stay. According to her self-rating, she had an *intermediate mid* level of writing proficiency in Spanish. In the Spanish IV class, she hoped to become more comfortable in speaking and understanding the language. Monica indicated that she felt extremely comfortable reading and writing in English. She had taken English Composition I and II, where she learned how to use proper grammar and how to provide a better content to her writing. Monica had participated in peer response activities in her Spanish III course. She described the activities as “exchanging papers and correcting our grammar. It was difficult because I always felt I was on a different level from the other students.” In her opinion, good writing had to have correct grammar, had to

flow, and had to be interesting to the reader. As to her computer skills, Monica had experience in sending emails and attachments, searching in the Internet and using word processing programs. She, however, did not like working with computers. Monica provided feedback to Andy and Jenny.

Rena. She was a 21 year-old senior student who wanted to major in International Studies. She had taken 10 semesters of Spanish and she had never visited a Spanish-speaking country. Rena was at an *intermediate mid* level, according to how she rated her writing proficiency in Spanish. Her expectations of the course were to improve her grammar and her pronunciation in Spanish. Rena indicated that she was extremely comfortable with reading and writing in English. She had liked writing since she was in high school, where she had her first experiences with peer response. In these activities, she exchanged papers with her classmates to correct each other's grammar. Rena had sent e-mails and attachments, she had done Internet searches and she used word processor regularly. She, however, did not like computers. In this study, she provided feedback to Becky and Julie.

Roxanne. She was a 69-year-old non-degree-seeking student who rated herself at an *intermediate low* level of proficiency in Spanish writing. Roxanne had been in Honduras and Colombia for three months. She had already taken four semesters of Spanish and she was taking Spanish IV to improve her skills in speaking, writing, and reading. She felt extremely comfortable reading and

writing in English. She had taken writing courses in college, where she participated in peer response. She also took part in peer response in a Spanish Communication course in which she had to give a short response to a peer's oral report. For her, good writing is "keeping the reader interested, conveying the information you want the reader to know and if it is non-fiction, presenting accurate facts." Roxanne reported that she had experience sending e-mails and attachments, doing Internet searches and using word processing programs. She said she enjoyed very much using the computer. She provided feedback to Jasmine for Task A and to Benjamin for Task B. (Benjamin signed informed consent to participate in the study although he did not submit the second drafts and the response commentaries. He therefore only participated as receiver of feedback).

Summary of the Profiles of the Participants

The students' expectations of the course were diverse. Whereas several participants mentioned their interests in increasing their vocabulary, improving their grammar, and developing their speaking skills, only five students mentioned writing as an ability that they expected to develop through the Spanish IV course. The participants' views on and experiences with writing were also mixed. When asked about their views of good writing some students focused on form and others emphasized the writer, the content or the audience.

For this case study the participants self-selected their peers. The pairs that resulted for Tasks A and B are presented in Appendix 17. The following sections are organized around the four research questions of the study. The questions inquire into (a) the ways in which the participants provided feedback, (b) the ways in which they used feedback, (c) their perceptions of the factors that influenced peer response, and (d) their perceptions on the use of computers to perform the writing tasks.

Providing Feedback

Question 1. How do participants provide computer-mediated comments on their peers' writings? This question was examined through the language functions, the approach, and the focus of attention of the participants' feedback. The data to respond to the question were obtained from two sources: (a) the feedback comments that the participants sent as attachments through e-mail to two self-selected peers on two writing tasks, and (b) the participants' responses to the semi-structured interview questions on how they provided feedback.

Data indicated that the participants in this case study used primarily reacting, advising and announcing language functions. These language functions were combined in different ways, depending on their purpose for providing feedback. Students' commentaries showed three different initial purposes, which indicated their approach to providing feedback. Those that had a "supportive" approach started their feedback by giving positive comments to their peers by using reactive and announcing language functions. Others that had an "interpretative" approach to providing feedback first mentioned what was contained in their partners' texts and used announcing and acting as audience language functions. Finally, those that had an "evaluative" approach started their feedback by examining the deficiencies of their partners' texts and used reacting, advising, announcing and pointing functions.

Results also showed that the participants focused on content and organization when providing feedback to their classmates. They focused on content to provide ideas to the writers on what to write. They focused on organization because they wanted to learn how to organize their own texts.

The following is a description of (a) the language functions used by the participants and (b) their approaches to providing feedback, and (c) the focus of attention of their written feedback.

Language Functions

Information on the language functions used by the participants broadened our understanding on how they provided feedback. The data were analyzed in quantitative and qualitative terms

Quantitative Analysis.

A total of 467 idea units resulted from the segmentation of the participants' feedback comments for Tasks A (evaluative essay) and B (persuasive essay). However, the participants' feedback for Task A deployed more idea units (250) than the feedback for Task B (217). Table 2 presents the number of idea units produced by the participants for each task.

Table 2
Number of Idea Units in the Participants' Feedback by Task

Participant	Task A		Task B		Total
	#	Rank	#	Rank	
Alice	22	3	20	4	42
Andy	20	5	23	3	43
Becky	28	1	23	3	51
Harry	21	4	18	6	39
Jasmine	11	8	16	7	27
Jenny	28	1	31	1	59
Joseph	15	7	14	8	29
Julie	19	6	0	10	19
Margaret	20	5	13	9	33
Monica	21	4	27	2	48
Rena	26	2	19	5	45
Roxanne	19	6	13	9	32
Total	250		217		467

Each idea unit was examined in terms of language functions. Appendices 18 and 19 contain the language functions found in the feedback of each of the participants for Tasks A and B, respectively. Table 3 presents the types and frequencies of occurrence of language functions in the totality of the peer response comments produced by the participants for both tasks.

Table 3

Type and Frequency of Language Functions in Peer Response Comments

Response Type	Frequency of Occurrence	
	n	%
Reacting	166	36
Advising	105	22
Announcing	88	19
Pointing	35	7
Acting as Audience	31	6
Eliciting	21	5
Collaborating	17	4
Questioning	4	1
Total	467	100

As shown in Table 3, the most frequent type of language function in the comments provided by the students was reacting (36%). Reactive functions were evaluative remarks that neither pointed to a particular word or phrase in the text, nor advised. Other language functions that occurred in the students' feedback comments were advising (22%), announcing (19%), pointing (7%), acting as audience (6%), eliciting (5%), collaborating (4%) and questioning (1%). Table 4 presents a description of the functions identified along with examples from the participants' comments. Examples are provided in their original (Spanish) and translated (English) forms.

Table 4

Descriptions and Examples of Language Functions

Language Function	Description	Examples
Reacting	Purely evaluative remarks that neither point nor advise.	<i>Por un ensayo corto, yo pienso que tiene muchos aspectos buenos.</i> (Alice, Task A) For a short essay, I think that it has many good points.
Advising	Outlining changes that the writer should make.	<i>Personalmente yo comenzaría a discutir tu sitio Web mas temprano en la introducción.</i> (Andy, Task A) Personally, I would start discussing your Web site earlier in the introduction.
Announcing	“Walking through” the essay.	<i>Ella da información acerca de el, como persona y como líder.</i> (Joseph, Task B) She gives information about him, as a person and as a leader.
Pointing	Pointing to particular words or phrases from the text.	<i>En el tercer párrafo, dices “hay casas sobre al agua”</i> (Jenny, Task A) In the third paragraph you say, “there are houses on the water.”

Note: Table continued on next page.

Table 4 (Continued)

Descriptions and Examples of Language Functions

Acting as Audience	Responding as a reader rather than critique	<i>Después leyendo tu papel sobre Perú, yo pienso que aprendo mas sobre la religión y realizaciones de los Incas.</i> (Jasmine, Task B)
		Alter reading your paper on Peru I learned more about the religion and the developments of the Incas.
Eliciting	“Drawing out” the writer and encouraging his/her participation.	<i>Encontraste un mapa. ¿Un mapa de Venezuela? Y si, ¿incluye las ciudades principales, otros países, etc.?</i> (Becky, Task A)
		You found a map, a map of Venezuela. Does it include the main cities, other countries, etc.?
Collaborating	Paraphrasing the writer’s words or composing sentences for the writer. In involves the reader in the writing. This function shows that the provider of feedback is involved in the writing.	<i>Ud. podría escribir esto: “Nuestra profesora nos dio la oportunidad de convenza a los autores que no cambien el libro.”</i> (Rena, Task B).
		You can write this: “Our teacher gave us the opportunity to convince the authors of not changing the book.
Questioning	Mild challenge put to the writer to question the logic of an argument.	<i>¿La pagina Web te gusta y tiene colores feos?</i> (Becky, Task B)
		You like the Web page and it has ugly colors?

To examine whether or not the tasks affected the functions produced, the language functions were examined for each task, independently. As Table 5 shows, the language functions found in the feedback comments on the evaluative essay were: reacting (34%), advising (23%), announcing (20%), pointing (7%), eliciting (6%), acting as audience (4%), collaborating (4%), and questioning (2%). The feedback comments for the persuasive essay displayed the following language functions: reacting (37%), advising (22%), announcing (17%), acting as audience (10%), pointing (8%), collaborating (3%), eliciting (2%), and questioning (1%). Please note that acting as audience had a higher percentage in the feedback for the persuasive (10%) than in the feedback for the evaluative essays (4%).

Table 5
 Type and Frequency of Language Functions Found
 in Peer Response Comments by Writing Task

Response Type	Task A (Evaluative Text)		Task B (Persuasive Text)	
	n	%	n	%
Reacting	84	34	82	37
Advising	57	23	48	22
Announcing	51	20	37	17
Pointing	17	7	18	8
Eliciting	17	6	4	2
Collaborating	11	4	6	3
Acting as Audience	10	4	21	10
Questioning	3	2	1	1
Total	250	100	217	100

Approaches to Providing Feedback

Data to examine the approaches to providing feedback came from the participants' feedback commentaries and the semi-structured interview transcripts. The participants' approach was determined by three criteria: (a) the majority of the language functions used, (b) the purpose in the opening part of

their commentaries, and (c) the participants' perceptions of how they provided feedback.

Qualitative Analysis

Appendix 20 shows the purposes identified in the feedback commentaries, the descriptions of these purposes, and the language functions used to achieve them. Participants used mostly reacting and announcing functions to give positive comments about the text. They did this by either stating which parts of the text they liked, or by mentioning the strengths in the peers' texts. Participants used announcing and acting as audience functions to "walk through" the essay, when they focused on what was contained in the text. They used different combinations of questioning, eliciting, advising and collaborating to suggest additional ideas to their peers. Students used pointing, collaborating and advising functions to point to things they thought their peers should change or fix in their texts. They used pointing and advising functions to suggest moving statements from one place to another in the text. Students used combinations of pointing, questioning and advising to focus on what they found confusing in the text. Finally, participants used reacting, announcing, advising and pointing language functions to focus on the deficiencies of their peers' texts.

Only the purposes found in the initial part of the commentaries showed three distinctive patterns that reflected the participants' approaches to providing feedback. The purpose of the opening part of the commentary was either: (a)

giving positive comments, (b) focusing on what was contained in the text, or (c) focusing on the deficiencies of the text. The subsequent parts of the commentaries seemed to pursue other purposes, although they sometimes returned to the initial purpose. Appendices 21 and 22 show the initial and subsequent purposes found in the feedback commentaries of each of the participants for Tasks A and B. The names of the addressees of the feedback are given in parenthesis. The number of words of each of the commentaries is also provided.

The analysis of the initial purposes in the commentaries indicated that the participants approached the task of providing feedback by (a) providing positive comments, (b) focusing on what was contained in the text or (c) focusing on the deficiencies of the text.

During the semi-structured interview for Tasks A and B, the participants were asked how they provided feedback. Three categories emerged from the responses: (a) looking at good / positive things, (b) looking at the main points of / interpreting the paper, and (c) pointing to what the text lacks.

Margaret, for example, in her interview for Task B reported that she provided feedback by looking at the good things in her partners' paper. Her response was: "When you write back to their paper you tell them, ok, this was good, and the reason I thought it was good." (p. 5) Andy, Joseph and Roxanne said they provided feedback by indicating the main points of their peers' text or

by interpreting their meanings. In his interview for Task B Andy said, "I just try to understand aspects such as how well does the paper flow from one point to the next. I make sure that the thesis indicates the main points of the paper and that the main points follow from the thesis and go step by step." (p. 3) In the interview for Task A Joseph mentioned, "I got to kind of understand what they were talking about." (p. 5) In the interview for Task A Roxanne indicated: "You interpret what your peer is trying to tell you." (p. 3) Finally, Julie and Alice reported that they provided feedback by focusing on what the text was lacking. In the interview for Task A Julie reported: "What I'm mostly concerned of is problems in the format and how things are worded and the grammar." (p. 20) In the interview for Task B Alice affirmed, "When I read a paper I try to think could he have added something else, or what else is needed."(p. 9)

The approaches to providing feedback were determined when the participants' perceptions and their commentaries coincided on how they provided feedback. Their approaches were classified as "supportive", "interpretative" and "evaluative". The participants that had a "supportive" approach to providing feedback started their commentaries either by mentioning the parts of the text that they liked, or by commenting the strengths of the papers, and they perceived that they provided feedback by looking at the good / positive things. The participants that held an "interpretative" approach started their feedback by focusing on what was contained on the text, and they perceived that they looked

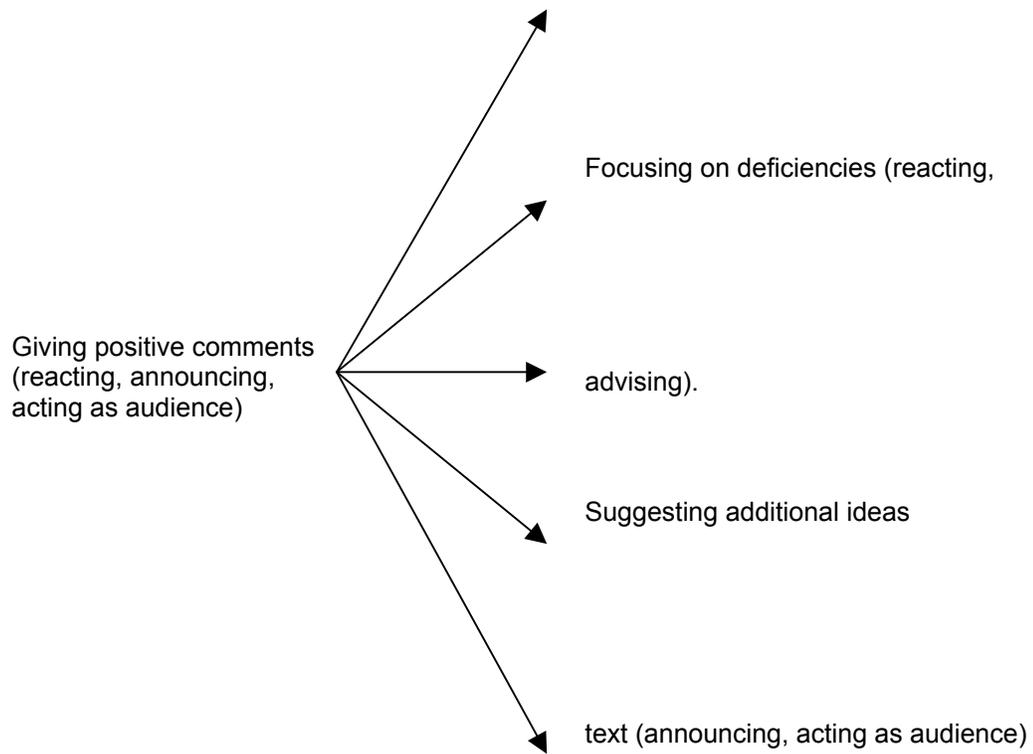
at the main points of / interpreted their peers' papers. The students that followed an "evaluative" approach started their commentary by focusing on the deficiencies of their partner's text, and they perceived that they provided feedback by pointing to what the text was lacking.

Each approach was used for different contextual reasons. For example, some participants used the "supportive" approach because they developed close interpersonal relationships with their partners, or because they liked to be given positive comments on their own papers. Furthermore, the participants did not have a fixed approach to providing feedback. They changed their approach according to the specific peer response situation. In the following sections, each one of the identified approaches to providing feedback will be described and illustrated.

The "supportive" approach. This approach was used in 11 of the 23 commentaries. The first purpose of the participants with a "supportive" approach was giving positive comments. For their initial purpose, they used mostly reacting language functions, although announcing and acting as audience functions were sometimes also used. Examples of the comments of this type of opening were, "*Me gusta tu titulo.*" (I like your title. Roxanne, Task B), or "*Tu tesis es muy clara*" (Your thesis is very clear. Jenny, Task A). The positive feedback consisted of one or several sentences in the first paragraph of the feedback commentary. Once the participants provided positive comments on the text, they directed their

feedback to a mixture of purposes. The purposes identified were (a) giving suggestions to fix things in the text, (b) focusing on the deficiencies of the text, (c) focusing on what was confusing, (d) suggesting additional ideas, (e) and / or focusing on what was contained in the text. Figure 2 depicts the characteristics of this approach, which was the most common among the participants. The figure shows the initial purpose of the feedback commentary, and the variety of subsequent possible purposes, with the choices of language functions to achieve each purpose.

Figure 2. "Supportive" Approach to Providing Feedback



Two contextual variables were associated with the supportive approach. Participants used it when they had built a closer relationship with their peers, or they used it because they liked others to look at the positive aspects of their own essays. Monica used mostly reacting language functions, and she manifested the “supportive” approach to provide feedback to Jenny for Task B. Monica started by giving positive comments and then she continued by suggesting additional ideas. Jenny wrote her persuasive essay on the markets of Peru. Her writing purpose was to convince that learning about the Peruvian markets could give a better understanding of the culture of the country in general. She suggested the topic of the markets as the most important in the lesson on Peru. Jenny sent Monica an incomplete first draft. Her e-mail attachment was 228 words long and contained a brief introduction, and a few topic sentences that she expected to further develop into paragraphs. Monica, who was writing on the same topic, provided a 227-word commentary to Jenny. Monica used mostly reactive language functions in the first paragraph of her feedback, and in the second paragraph, she used announcing, advising and eliciting language functions with the purpose of suggesting additional ideas. The following were the first two paragraphs of Monica’s feedback, which exemplify the “supportive” approach to providing feedback. The codes for language functions are included. Please note that R1 stands for reacting generally, R2 for reacting specifically, An3 for

announcing missing elements, Ad1 for specific advising, and E for “drawing out” the writer.

<i>Me gusta la manera en que escribes mucho. Tu escrito coge mi atención inmediatamente. “¡Venga!” como la palabra primera es una idea muy bueno. Es muy interesante y tu introducción es divertida. Conozco que fue una tema difícil, pero pienso que hacías un trabajo excelente.</i>	I like the way you write very much [R1]. Your paper captured my attention immediately [Aud]. “¡Come!” as the first word is a good idea [R1]. It is very interesting [R1], and your introduction is fun [R2]. I know that it was a difficult theme, but I think you did an excellent job [R1].
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<i>Necesitas un poco más palabras, pero no será demasiado difícil para tu. Puedes incluir más sobre el mejor mercado en Lima ¿Por qué es el mejor mercado? ¿Qué es la mejor parte de ese mercado?</i>	You need some more words [An3], but this will not be difficult for you [0]. You can include more about the best market in Lima [Ad1]. Why is it the best market [E]? What is the best part of that market [E]?
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As the feedback segment illustrates, Monica commented what she liked in Jenny’s draft. She seemed to be encouraging Jenny to add more content to her paper by praising her writing and by providing more ideas to write about. In the semi-structured interview for Task B, Monica described how she provided feedback.

By giving her ideas for more information, I think, mostly. She was having a really hard time finding enough information. And I mostly complimented the style that she wrote in. I thought that she wrote really well. Her introduction really got my attention. So I complimented her a lot on that.

(p. 3)

In the semi-structured interview for Task B, Jenny explained why she had not completed her first draft.

It took a long time finding information. Like all day, like eight hours on one day, on Saturday. I sat in front of the computer for eight hours. Six hours trying to find information and then, the last two, trying to think of what to write. (p.2)

Later in the interview, Jenny mentioned that she had talked to Monica about her difficulties and she described how Monica provided feedback to her.

She knew I was having a hard time cause I called her a few times and I was like, I'm still at the computer, four hours later. So she knew I was having a hard time. She tried to say well, I focused on these three things, and what you have is good but I think you need to mention more about this. I remember her saying I needed to mention more of the culture, about how it is important to their culture and how they show their culture (p. 11).

Monica and Jenny reported that they had built a closer relationship with each other. Jenny looked for Monica in out-of-class hours as a source of support

and Monica stimulated her peer to write more in Spanish by advising and eliciting content from Jenny.

Becky, on the other hand, used the “supportive” approach because she liked it when her peers talked about the strengths of her papers. Becky was partner to Jonathan on Task B for the persuasive essay. Jonathan was a native speaker of Spanish who wrote his persuasive essay on Mario Vargas Llosa, a famous Peruvian novelist. He described the life of this author and referred to some of his novels, although Jonathan did not include any persuasive language in his writing. The following are the first two paragraphs of Becky’s four-paragraph feedback commentary. The paragraphs illustrate how she provided feedback by first giving positive comments, and then focusing on the deficiencies of the text. Becky used reactive functions followed by announcing functions to support her peer. Then she used the same language functions to focus on the deficiencies of the text. Please note that the codes An1, An2, and An3, stand for announcing text sections; announcing thesis statements or topic sentences; and announcing missing elements; respectively.

<i>Me gusta mucho tu informe</i>	I like your report on Vargas
<i>sobre Mario Vargas Llosa. Esta bien</i>	Llosa very much [R1]. It is well written
<i>escrito y incluye mucha información</i>	[R1] and it includes a lot of information
<i>sobre su vida y su carrera literaria. La</i>	about his life and his literary career
<i>introducción es muy buena porque tu</i>	[An1]. The introduction is good [R2]

tesis es muy claro. Hablando generalmente, el informe es muy interesante. Observé que escribiste una frase y lo apoyaste con hechos. Le das a un lector ejemplos buenos de su vida y los sacrificios.

Pero como lectora, es un poco difícil leer. Esto es porque tus transiciones y conectores no son muy aparentes. Necesitas párrafos. Solo tienes cuatro párrafos en cuatro páginas. También vi unas cuantas palabras que deben tener los acentos pero no los incluiste. Incluyes tus opiniones y me gusta eso. Tal vez puedes utilizar comillas para referirte a palabras o frases específicas del texto.

because your thesis is very clear [R2]. Generally speaking, the report is very interesting [R1]. I observed that you wrote a phrase and you supported with facts [An2]. You give the reader good examples about his life and his sacrifices [An2].

But as a reader, it is a little difficult to read [R1]. This is because your transitions and connectors are not apparent [An3]. You need paragraphs [An3]. You only have four paragraphs in four pages [R2]. I also saw a few words that need accents but you did not include them [An3]. You include your opinions and I like that [R2]. Maybe you can use quotation marks to refer to specific words or phrases in the text [An3].

In the semi-structured interview for Task A, Becky was asked how she provided feedback. To this question she responded, "I give positive comments. I

accept what's good about the paper, and then not negative comments, not bad comments, but constructive criticism comments. Things that they could improve on their paper or things that don't make sense." (p. 3) Her perceptions on how she provided feedback coincided on how she actually provided feedback; and she provided feedback in the way she liked to receive feedback. In the interview she said, "I like the good things, I like people to tell me that my paper was well written and was interesting and you have good facts and stuff." (p. 6)

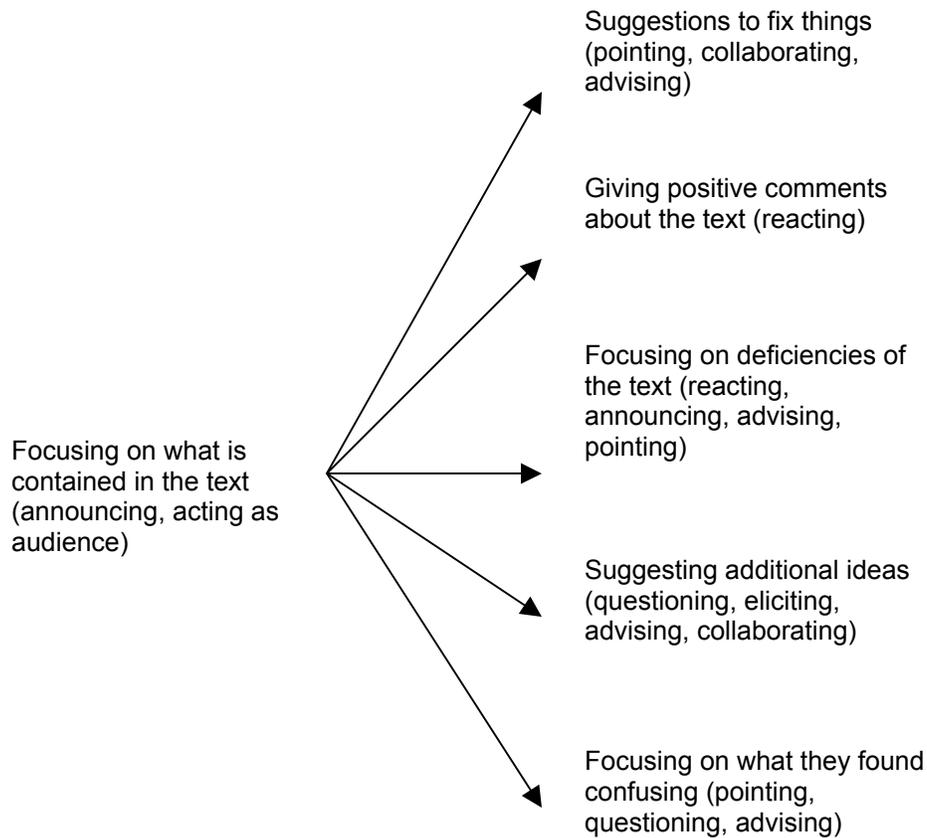
The "supportive" approach was the most common among the participants in this case study. These participants seemed to assume that the function of peer response was to provide help and encouragement to their peers. They therefore helped each other by providing emotional support and serving as a source of content. Stimulating each other to write more in the foreign language was more important for this group of students, than reformulating the ideas on their texts.

The "interpretative" approach. The second most used approach to providing written feedback consisted in starting the commentary by focusing on what was contained in the text. The participants used this approach in 8 of the 23 commentaries produced. They seemed to be laying the ground for providing feedback by first focusing on the main ideas contained in the text. For this purpose, they used announcing and acting as audience language functions. An example of a comment given by a participant that used this approach is "*Ella habla de las ligas en las fotografias a otras partes del sitio*" (She talks about the

links on the pictures to other parts of the text. Joseph, Task A). After commenting on what was contained in the text, the participants directed their comments to different combinations of other purposes, such as (a) giving suggestions to fix things, (b) giving positive comments, (c) focusing on the deficiencies of the text, (d) suggesting additional ideas, and / or (e) focusing on what was confusing. The “interpretative” approach was the second most used by the participants. Its initial purpose and subsequent possible purposes are depicted in Figure 3, together with the language functions used by the students to achieve their purposes when providing feedback.

Figure 3

“Interpretative” Approach to Providing Feedback



One contextual variable was associated with this approach: the participants’ motivation to learn Spanish through peer response. The “interpretative” approach to providing feedback was evidenced in the way Harry responded to Andy for Task B. Andy rated himself as *novice high*. He wrote his essay on a pre-Hispanic fortress in Peru called Sacsahuamán. In his writing,

Andy described how this extraordinary historical landmark was built in the absence of present-day scientific knowledge. From his point of view, the topic of Sacsahuamán was critical for understanding the civilization of this Spanish-speaking country. His writing purpose was to persuade that this topic needed to be the focus of the lesson on Peru. Harry, who self-rated his Spanish writing proficiency *intermediate low*, read Andy's first draft and wrote a 153-word feedback commentary that started by giving a brief overview of some of the ideas contained in the text. The following are the first two paragraphs of Harry's feedback comments.

<i>Su ensayo es interesante, con muchas informaciones de la fortaleza Sacsahuaman, cerca de Cuzco. Describiste las paredes, con sus rocas gigantescas en el segundo y tercer párrafo. También me interese su descripción de "la ultima pregunta misteriosa", i.e. la transportación de las rocas.</i>	Your essay is interesting [R1], with much information on the Sacsahuaman fortress, near Cuzco [An2]. You described the walls, with their gigantic rocks in the second and third paragraph [An1]. I am also interested in your description of "the last mysterious question", i.e. the transportation of the rocks [An1].
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<i>Su estilo es bueno y fácil para leer, pero no soy seguro de unas frases idiomáticas, como: "preguntas</i>	Your style is good and easy to read [R1], but I am not sure of some of the idiomatic phrases like "questions
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tales como esto..." (p. 1, l. 7), "*la estructura se hacen...*" (p. 3, l. 1,) *tal vez sea "se construyen"*. such as..." (p. 1, l. 7), "the structure is made..." (p. 3, l.1) [P2], maybe it is "is constructed" [C].

As Harry's feedback shows, he first focused on what was contained in the text by using mostly announcing language functions. Then, in the second paragraph, he pointed to the things that, from his point of view, needed to be fixed. For this second purpose, he used pointing and collaborating language functions. When Harry was asked during the semi-structured interview for Task B about how he provided feedback, he responded, "I focus on, can I understand what this person is saying, and does the structure of his paper, help me understand." By describing what was contained in the text, Harry seemed to be laying a common ground between his understanding and the understanding of the writer, before proposing changes for the text.

In the learning journal for Task A Harry expressed his interest in peer response as a means to learn the Spanish language, "*La actividad fue interesante porque necesito usar español para expresar otras cosas. Eso es un modo indirecto de aprender la lengua que es más interesante.*" (The activity was interesting because I need to use Spanish to express other things. This is an indirect way to learning the language that is more interesting). He also reported that the class had improved his reading, "The class has strengthened my knowledge and confidence in Spanish. I can now read subject matter, some

poetry and fiction with moderate use of a dictionary. It's a useful thing to do." (p. 4) Then, in the semi-structured interview for Task B Harry reported how he had used peer response as a means to learn language form, "The peer review process through two or three drafts allowed me to learn grammar, spelling and structure in a relatively painless way, meaning in an indirect way. It's interesting, it's not boring." (p. 4) Harry's interest in checking his understanding of the meanings and his knowledge of the Spanish language seemed to be related to his "interpretative" approach to peer response.

Roxanne also used an "interpretative approach" when she provided feedback to Jasmine for Task A. Jasmine had the lowest self-rating in the class, although she had taken 7 semesters of Spanish courses. She wrote a 462-word first draft for an essay that she titled "*Venezuelatuya.com: Una liga muy bien por turismo* [sic] (*Venezuelatuya.com: A link very well for tourism*). In her writing she described what she learned about Venezuela as she navigated through the Web site. She referred to the origin of the name of the country, its natural resources, and its geographical location. In the final part, she stated what she liked about the site. She also pointed out other information about Venezuela that she could not find on the Web page.

Roxanne used mostly announcing functions and some reacting functions in the initial part of her feedback to Jasmine. Her purposes seemed to be focusing on what is contained in the text, focusing on what is confusing, and

giving suggestions to fix things in the text. The following is her entire feedback commentary.

<i>Jasmine es escribiendo sobre la liga: Venezuelatuya.com. Necesita tener su nombre y numero de linea borrado. Me gusta su papel. El incluye alguna historia y alguna descripción de lugares y aumenta sus opiniones también. Además incluye también su reacción a la página, diseño, y contenido. Me gusto la manera en que describió el Río Chico y como recuerdo el de Fort Lauderdale. Entonces ella dio razones. En el párrafo cerca del final ella muestra muy bien pericias en su observación de la liga. El primer párrafo es bueno pero leyera mejor si la primera frase fue a poner después de la tercer frase (También yo digo...) Me confundí en la frase cinco del primer párrafo. Tal vez</i>	Jasmine is writing about the link: Venezuelatuya.com [An1]. She needs to have her name and number of lines in the draft [An3]. I like her paper. [R1] It includes some history and some description of places [AN2] and she adds her opinions too. [AN2] In addition, it includes her reaction to the page, design and content [AN2]. I liked the way she described Chico River and how I remember Fort Lauderdale. [R2] Then she gave reasons. [AN2] In the paragraph near the end she shows good skills in her observation of the link. [AN1] The first paragraph is good [R1] but would read better if the first phrase was out after the third phrase (I also say...) [AD1] I was confused on phrase
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<p><i>ella aclarar. También el mismo párrafo la frase siete, necesita aclaración.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Hay alguna rectificación en ortografía, gramática y conjugaciones que ella necesita corregir a tener un papel éxito. Por ejemplo: ortografía- impresiono, simular, etc. Gramática y conjugaciones- miró a miré, etc. También, recuerde sus referencias.</i></p>	<p>five of the first paragraph. [P1] Maybe she will clarify. [0] Also in the same paragraph phrase seven needs clarification [P1].</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">There is some rectification in spelling [AD1], grammar [AD1] and conjugations [AD1] that she needs to correct to have a successful paper [AD3]. For example: spelling-impres, simulate, etc. Grammar and conjugations- he/she looked to I looked, etc. [P2]. Also, remember your references. [AD1]</p>
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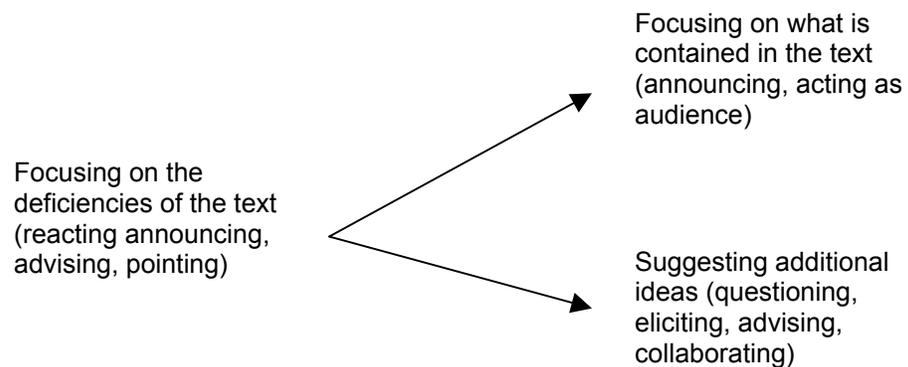
In the semi-structured interview for Task A Roxanne was asked how she provided feedback and she responded, “I have to, you know, understand what she’s writing about or he.” (p. 1) Then, she added, “I guess you interpret what your peer is trying to tell you.” (p. 3)

The “interpretative” approach was the second most used among the participants. These students seemed to be concerned with verifying their comprehension of their peers’ ideas, written in the foreign language. The implied function of peer response from their perspective seemed to be interpreting the

meanings in the text of their partners. The students “laid the ground” first, as a comprehension check, before giving their suggestions.

The “evaluative” approach. The third approach was used in three commentaries. The users of this approach began the feedback commentary by focusing first on the deficiencies of their peers’ texts. The purpose of this approach was to point to what the text was lacking. For example Julie, who used this approach for Task A, wrote in the first paragraph of her feedback: “*El ensayo de Jenny es un poco corto y solo tiene el primer párrafo que es la introducción.*” (Jenny’s essay is a little short and it only has the first paragraph, which is the introduction.) The language functions used for this purpose were reacting, announcing, advising, and pointing. After focusing on the deficiencies of the text in the first part of the feedback commentary, the participants that used this approach (a) focused on what was contained in the text, and (b) suggested additional ideas. Figure 4 shows the initial purpose and the subsequent purposes of this approach, with the choices of language functions.

Figure 4. “Evaluative” Approach to Providing Feedback



One contextual variable was associated with the “evaluative” approach: the participants’ assumption of the role of peer response. The “evaluative” approach was used on the evaluative essay by Alice, Andy and Julie, who decided to first indicate the deficiencies in the text, and then suggest ideas for their peers to write. Andy, a student who rated his writing proficiency as *novice high*, adopted an evaluative approach to providing feedback to Monica, who rated her writing proficiency as *intermediate mid*. Monica wrote a 182-word first draft for her evaluative essay. In her paper, she evaluated a Web page from Venezuela. Her three paragraphs showed that she intended to evaluate the content and design of the site, from the perspective of a learner of Spanish. Andy

started his feedback comments by stating all the deficiencies he perceived in Monica's draft. He commented about the length, the title, the introduction, the content, and the thesis statement. Andy used reacting, advising, announcing and pointing functions to indicate what the text was lacking. The following is the first paragraph of his 216-word feedback, which evidences his "evaluative" approach to providing feedback.

En primer vistazo, noté que probablemente no tienes bastante longitud. Sin embargo, estoy seguro que agregaras más adelante. La próxima cosa es que el título es muy general. Tal vez debes usar un título más único o específico. Aunque la introducción es buena, pienso que puede ser un poco mejor. Pienso que está entendido cómo la información en el Internet está de varia calidad. No es necesario explicar por qué necesitas evaluar un sitio Web. Personalmente, comenzaría a discutir tu sitio Web más temprano en la

At first sight I noticed you probably do not have enough length [R1]. However, I am sure you will add later [Ad2]. The next thing is that the title is very general [P1] You should use a title that is more unique or specific [Ad1]. Although the introduction is good [R2], I think it can be better [R2]. I think that it is understood how the information in the Internet is varied in quality [An2]. It is not necessary to explain why you need to evaluate a Web site [Ad1]. Personally, I would start to discuss the Web site earlier in the introduction

introducción. Consecuentemente, tu tesis podría ser mas específico. Por ejemplo, podría referir a calidades positivo o negativo sobre el sitio Web en general. [Ad1]. Consequently, your thesis could be more specific [Ad1]. For example, it could refer to the positive and negative qualities about the Web site in general [Ad1].

During the semi-structured interview for Task A, Andy expressed his perception of what he had to do when providing feedback. The following is an excerpt of the interview that evidenced his views.

I'm not the instructor so I don't want to say something negative. But just the nature of evaluating someone's paper, you can say this is good and that is good, but that is not adding to the paper at all. The good things are already there and don't need to be improved upon, so to help someone improve upon their paper you have to make negative comments. (p. 15)

Andy's opinions during the interview reflected his assumption of the role of peer response as an activity to evaluate the writing of others. He was capable of providing feedback to his peers according to the role he attributed to peer response, even when he had rated his writing proficiency as *novice high*. However, he was also concerned about being overly negative, as he mentioned later during the interview for Task A.

I just said well, take this; take this from what it's worth. I'm a student. This is what I see. It may or may not be valid. That's how I dealt with that

situation, but in any case, I was worried about being overly negative about the paper. (p. 17)

Please note that the “evaluative” approach was used by three participants to provide feedback on Task A, and all three had received incomplete drafts. Thus, they used this approach to focus on what the text was lacking. None of the students had written a 500-word essay in Spanish before taking the class, and some had problems to complete the first draft by the due date for feedback. The participants that received incomplete drafts faced the problem of having to write their 200-word feedback commentary on a very short piece of writing. This problem was approached differently by the participants. Monica, for example, received a 93-word first draft from Andy on Task A, and 216-word first draft from Jenny on Task B. She however adopted a “supportive” approach for both of her partners. Paradoxically, those that used the “evaluative” approach deployed a wider variety of language functions. Alice, Andy and Julie used reacting, advising, and announcing language functions in the initial part of their commentaries.

Qualitative analysis also showed that the participants did not have a fixed approach to providing feedback. Table 6 shows the participants’ approaches on each of the tasks.

Table 6
Participants' Approaches to Providing Feedback for Tasks A and B

Participants	Approaches	
	Task A	Task B
Alice	Evaluative	Interpretative
Andy	Evaluative	Interpretative
Becky	Supportive	Supportive
Harry	Supportive	Interpretative
Jasmine	Supportive	Interpretative
Jenny	Supportive	Supportive
Joseph	Interpretative	Interpretative
Julie	Evaluative	-
Margaret	Supportive	Supportive
Monica	Supportive	Supportive
Rena	Interpretative	Supportive
Roxanne	Interpretative	Supportive

The participants changed their approach to providing feedback depending on aspects such as the length of the draft received. The case of Alice is illustrative because she provided feedback using a different approach to the

same partner for Tasks A and B. Alice who rated her writing proficiency as *intermediate low*, provided feedback to Joseph who rated his writing proficiency as *intermediate high*.

Alice's commentary showed an "evaluative" approach when providing feedback to Joseph on Task A. Joseph gave Alice a first draft that contained only a paragraph with some of the ideas he wanted to write about for his Web page evaluation. The following is the first paragraph of Alice's feedback to Joseph, which shows how Alice initiated her feedback on an incomplete draft.

<i>Aunque que tú has escrito</i>	Although you have written a
<i>poco, aparece que tú tuviste sus</i>	little [R1], it seems that you have your
<i>reflexiones organizado en tres</i>	reflections organized in three
<i>párrafos, sobre un para cada aspecto.</i>	paragraphs, one for each aspect
<i>Aunque que tu ensayo tiene unos</i>	[An1]. Although your essay has good
<i>aspectos buenos, tu ensayo necesita</i>	things [R1], your essay needs a lot of
<i>mucha trabaja</i>	work [R1].

In the semi-structured interview for Task A, Alice mentioned her problems to complete the 200-word feedback commentary for Joseph. With no essay to write feedback on, she had to assess the work in general. In the interview for Task A Alice explained how she provided feedback to Joseph on his unfinished draft: "He had maybe a hundred words and to write a two hundred word response to it was kind of, like you couldn't even tell where his ideas were going

exactly.” (p. 2) The length of the draft received was, in the case of Alice, a contextual element that influenced her approach to providing feedback.

For Task B, Joseph wrote his persuasive essay on the Inca Indians of Peru. The argument of his paper was that to understand the culture of Latin America, studying the Inca civilization was indispensable, given the impact that this civilization had had on the Spanish-speaking countries. His purpose was to persuade that the Inca civilization needed to be the overarching theme of the lesson on Peru. His first draft contained 534 words. The essay described in detail some of the beliefs of the Incas. Alice provided feedback to Joseph using an “interpretative” approach. This time, she used announcing and reacting functions for her initial purpose, and then she used reacting, advising, and announcing language functions to give positive comments. The following are the first two paragraphs of her feedback for Task B. This segment of her commentary shows how she recounted Joseph’s main ideas and then she complimented his work.

<i>En general tu ensayo es sobre los Incas. Discutes su sistema de cuentas, red de caminos, y las piedras.</i>	In general your essay is about the Incas [An1]. You discuss their counting system, road network, and the stones [An1].
<i>Yo pienso que tu tengas un ensayo bueno, pero necesita trabaja.</i>	I think that you have a good essay [R1], but you need work [R1].
<i>Hay muchas cosas buenas sobre tu ensayo. Yo pienso que tu</i>	There are many good things

<i>usabas vocabulario bueno. También</i>	about your essay [R1]. I think you used
<i>tiene mucha información buena sobre</i>	good vocabulary [R2]. Also, you have a
<i>los Incas. Además, yo creo que</i>	lot of information about the Incas [R2].
<i>preguntabas muchas preguntas en tu</i>	In addition, I think you asked a lot of
<i>introducción. Tu ensayo es muy</i>	questions in your introduction [R2].
<i>interesado.</i>	Your essay is very interesting [R1].

In the semi-structured interview for Task B, Alice mentioned her interest in making sure that her feedback did not hurt her peer’s feelings: “I think it is important that you don’t feel that you’re going to offend them. That they understand that you are writing to help them.” (p. 15)

Focus of Attention

With the purpose of understanding not only the language functions in the participants’ feedback, but also the aspects of writing that were more of their concern, I examined their focus of attention quantitatively and qualitatively.

Quantitative Analysis

Table 7 shows the revealed categories for focus of attention, their description, and examples of the comments coded for each category.

Table 7

Categories for Focus of Attention, Descriptions and Examples

Focus of Attention	Description	Examples
Content	Focus on clarity of ideas and meaning, relevance of ideas, title, length, opposing viewpoints, evidence, or examples.	<i>Yo creo que tu idea principal es que los Incas civilización es un importante parte de la cultura en Peru</i> (Jasmine, Task B). I think that your main idea is that the Inca civilization is an important part in the history of Peru.
Organization	Focus on parts of the composition (introduction, conclusion), connection of ideas, transition words, paragraphs, or overall structure.	<i>Considera moverlo al final, antes de la conclusión, o una idea mejor, inclúyelo en la tesis</i> (Jenny, Task B). Consider moving it [a paragraph] to the end, before the conclusions, or even better, include it in the thesis.

Note: Table continued on next page.

Table 7 (Continued)

Categories for Focus of Attention, Descriptions and Examples

Rhetoric	Focus on the appeals used to make a point.	Tu usas las técnicas razón, ética y emoción a convencer tus lectores de que estas correcto (<i>Roxanne, Task B</i>). You use the techniques of reason, ethics and emotion to convince your readers that you are correct.
Grammar	Focus on subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, verb forms, articles, number, or word order.	Por ejemplo: gramática y conjugaciones –miró a miré, etc. (<i>Roxanne, Task A</i>). For example: grammar and conjugation –he/she looked to I looked, etc.
Vocabulary	Focus on the accuracy of word choice.	<i>También, la palabra “empire”, es “el Imperio” en Español</i> (<i>Rena, Task B</i>). Also, the word “empire” is “el imperio” in Spanish.

Note: Table continued on next page.

Table 7 (Continued)

Categories for Focus of Attention, Descriptions and Examples

Mechanics	Focus on punctuation, spelling, underlining.	<i>Vi palabras como “página” que escribiste sin acento</i> (Becky, Task B). I saw words like “page” that you wrote without an accent.
Not specified	Focus of attention not explicit.	<i>Sobre todo, estas en la trayectoria correcta</i> (Andy, Task A). Overall, you are on the right track.

The categories for focus of attention identified in the idea units of the participants’ comments were then quantified. Appendices 23 and 24 show the focus of attention of each participant for Tasks A and B, respectively. Table 8 shows that the focus of attention of the participants was most frequent on content (60%). The second most frequent focus of attention was organization (10%). Other comments focused on rhetoric (7%), vocabulary (6%), mechanics (4%), and grammar (3%). There were idea units that did not focus on something specific of the writing (10%).

Table 8

Type and Frequency of Focus of Attention in Peer Response Comments

Focus of Attention	Frequency of Occurrence	
	n	%
Content	281	60
Organization	46	10
Rhetoric	30	7
Vocabulary	29	6
Mechanics	18	4
Grammar	14	3
Not Specified	49	10
Total	457	100

To examine any possible differences in focus of attention in relation to the type of text that the students were critiquing, the categories for focus of attention were examined for each writing task, independently. Results are depicted in Table 9. As shown in the table, although content was the most frequent focus of attention in the comments on both the evaluative (68%) and the persuasive essays (51%), the rest of the categories manifested differently in each task. The comments on the evaluative essay focused also on organization (10%), vocabulary (6%), mechanics (4%), grammar (3%), and rhetoric (2%), whereas

the comments on the persuasive essay focused on rhetoric (12%), organization (11%), vocabulary (6%), mechanics (4%), and grammar (3%).

Please note how the focus on rhetoric was greater on the persuasive essay (12%) than on the evaluative essay (2%). The focus on the rhetorical aspects of writing indicated the influence of the task on the attention of the students. Also, comments that did not demonstrate a specific focus of attention were more frequent in feedback on the persuasive essay (13%), than in feedback on the evaluative essay (7%), probably because in the evaluative essay the students were attending visually to the object of their writing (the Web Page).

Table 9
 Type and Frequency of Focus of Attention in Peer Response Comments
 on Evaluative and Persuasive Texts

Focus of Attention	Task A (Evaluative Text)		Task B (Persuasive Text)	
	n	%	n	%
Content	169	68	112	51
Organization	23	10	23	11
Vocabulary	15	6	14	6
Mechanics	10	4	8	4
Grammar	7	3	7	3
Rhetoric	5	2	25	12
Not Specified	21	7	28	13
Total	250	100	217	100

To examine the language functions used while focusing on different writing aspects, the frequencies of categories of language functions by focus of attention were obtained (see Appendix 25). The idea units that were coded for content were also coded for reacting (90), announcing (71), advising (50), eliciting (20), pointing (21), acting as audience (23), collaborating (5), and questioning (1).

Please note that when the participants focused on content they deployed the widest variety of language functions.

The idea units that focused on organization (46) consisted in advising (23), reacting (13), announcing (7), pointing (3) and collaborating (1). Eliciting and acting as audience are language functions that did not occur in comments that focused on organization.

Comments that focused on the rhetoric (47) were made through advising (12), reacting (9), announcing (3), acting as audience (3), and questioning (2). Eliciting, pointing and collaborating are categories that did not occur when students focused on rhetoric.

The comments that focused on vocabulary, mechanics and grammar obtained lower frequencies. Idea units coded for vocabulary (29) were also coded for collaborating (10), pointing (7), reacting (5), advising (4), eliciting (1), acting as audience (1), and questioning (1). When the focus was on mechanics (18), students advised (8), reacted (3), announced (3), collaborated (3) and pointed (2). Eliciting, acting as audience and questioning were not found when attention focused on mechanics. Lastly, when focus of attention was on grammar (10), the participants reacted (4), advised (3), announced (2) and pointed (1).

Qualitative Analysis

The major sources of data for the qualitative analysis on focus of attention were the semi-structured interview transcripts for Tasks A and B. Secondary sources were the participants' feedback comments. During the interviews, the students were asked what they focused on when providing feedback. Appendix

26 shows a summary of the participants' responses during the interviews to the question: What do you focus on when you provide feedback? All students mentioned more than one focus of attention in their responses. Please note that the inductive analysis of the interview transcripts yielded the same categories as the analysis based on the feedback commentaries.

Most of the participants mentioned that they focused on content on Task A, and the feedback comments they provided showed that they actually did. Margaret, for example, was asked what she focused on when providing feedback and she responded, "You make sure it makes sense and it's not confusing, that everything's clear." (p. 3) Margaret provided feedback to Becky for Task A. Becky wrote her evaluative essay on a portal for tourists from Venezuela. She began her essay with: *Has visitado un país de Sur América? Piensas que necesitas tomar las vacaciones?* (Have you visited a country in South America? Do you think you need a vacation?). Then she continued to describe and evaluate the Web site in her 616-word first draft. Margaret described what was contained on Becky's draft. The following excerpt is the second paragraph of her feedback, which illustrates how Margaret focused on content.

<i>Tus párrafos del medio de tu reporte, en mi opinión, son muy buenos. Das tu propia opinión sobre el diseño de la pagina, dices que no hay dificultad para usar este sitio, y</i>	Your paragraphs in the middle of your report, in my opinion, are very good [NS]. You give your own opinion on the design of the page [C], you say that there are no difficulties in using the
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también hablas sobre como uno puede usar el sitio para planear un viaje. No solo dices que uno lo puede ser aquí, pero también explicas lo que uno tiene que ser. site [C], and you also talk about how one can use the site to plan a trip [C]. You not only say that one can be here [C], but you also explain what one has to do [C].

Focus on content was sometimes observed in the commentaries of those participants that received short drafts. These students provided feedback to their peers that offered ideas on what to write. Julie, for example, focused on content when providing feedback to Jenny, who did not finish her draft.

Jenny was overwhelmed by the amount of information on the Web page that she decided to evaluate. By the date she had to submit her first draft, she had only written a 162-word paragraph describing the appearance of the Web page. Julie provided feedback by focusing on content in the first paragraph of her commentary. She “walked through” the ideas Jenny had written. Then, in the second paragraph, Julie focused on content to suggest additional ideas. The following is the second paragraph of Julie’s commentary.

<i>Yo tengo una sujeción para usted [sic]. Puedes decir si tienes algun modo de escribir para el sitio si tienes alguna pregunta. Tu tambien necesitas de un titulo y no se olvide del enderezo de la pagina porque es muy</i>	I have a suggestion for you [NS]. You can say if you have way of writing to the site if you have any question [C]. You also need a title [C] and do not forget the design of the page because it is very important [C].
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<p><i>importante. Puedes decir si las informaciones de la pagina son bien organizadas y si es fácil de navegar. Por qué no hables un poco sobre los animados y porque no te le gustan? Son feos? En el fin del ensayo puedes decir sé tu gusto de la pagina y sé no te gusto mudaría alguna cosa?</i></p>	<p>You can say if the information on the page is well organized [C] and if it is easy to navigate [C]. Why don't you talk a little about the animations [C] and why you do not like them [C]? Are they ugly [C]? At the end of the essay you can say what you liked of the page [C] and if you did not, would you change something [C]?</p>
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Other participants focused on organization because they wanted to get ideas on how to organize their own papers. Jenny, for example, said in the interview:

Before I read it [Julie's paper] I didn't know what I was going to write about. My first draft was just a list of details about the Web page but I didn't really know, I thought, where am I going to go with this? I don't know how to organize this, there's so much information. And then I read Julie's paper and she had like organized it into four main sections of the Web page, and it was actually a different Web page. I was like oh, I can do that. And so the, that helped me lot in improving my organization. And even in past papers, like I was so troubled with organization, and so, me and Roxanne, paired up before and she gave me a lot of good information too about organization. (p. 2)

Jenny, however, not only organized her paper the way Julie did, but she was also able to advise Julie on how to improve the organization of her essay. Jenny examined Julie’s draft, paragraph by paragraph, giving suggestions for each part. The following is the second paragraph of her commentary, which illustrates how she points to specific parts of Julie’s text and advises, focusing on organization.

<i>No pienso que el segundo párrafo pertenece allí. Tu tesis me lleva a creer que vas a hablar sobre “Tomar un tour.” Considera moverlo al final, antes de la conclusión, o una idea mejor, inclúyelo en la tesis.</i>	I do not think the second paragraph belongs there [O]. Your thesis makes me think that you are going to talk about “Taking a tour”. Consider moving it to the end, before the conclusion [O], or a better idea, include it in the thesis [O].
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For Task B several students said that they focused on the persuasive appeals used by their partners. Jasmine, one of the participants who focused on rhetoric for this task, talked about how she provided feedback on the persuasive essay, “When I was reading her paper I wasn’t just saying oh, it’s good information. I was trying to make sure that her paper was trying to persuade me.” (p. 8) Jasmine provided feedback to Jodi, a student that missed a few classes and did not submit her work regularly. For this task, Jodi wrote a description of the Machu Pichu ruins in Peru and sent it to Jasmine for feedback. Jasmine wrote a 202-word feedback commentary to Jodi. The final part of the first paragraph showed Jasmine’s focus on rhetoric.

Tu introducción necesita ser más persuasivo con tu opinión sobre por qué los Incas es importante en Perú. Your introduction needs to be more persuasive with your opinion on why the Incas are important in Peru [R].

As the excerpt of Jasmine's feedback shows, focus of attention differed depending on the essay type the participants were reading. Andy talked about how his focus of attention was different on his feedback commentaries for the evaluative and the persuasive essays. In the following excerpt of the semi-structured interview for Task B, he described the difference in focus of attention.

In the other one [evaluative essay] you took their word for it, whereas here [persuasive essay] you have to understand why is this person trying to convince me of this and how are they doing it. How are they supporting themselves. The persuasiveness was supposed to be involved in this one. You had to make sure that it was a persuasive style. (p. 5)

Andy provided feedback to Harry. In his interview for Task B Harry mentioned how they were both focused on the appeals of their writings: "When my peer responded to me and when I responded to him, we were looking particularly for those things. He said to me that he was not persuaded, so I knew that I had to make my persuasion stronger." (p. 1) Andy's focus on rhetoric was evidenced on the third paragraph of his four-paragraph feedback commentary to Harry.

Hay un problema importante There is an important problem

<i>con respecto a la asignación. El</i>	with respect to the assignment [NS].
<i>pretexto de la asignación fue el uso de</i>	The purpose of the assignment was
<i>la persuasión. Aunque tu diga que los</i>	the use of persuasion [R]. Even though
<i>temas son interesantes, no</i>	you say that the themes are interesting
<i>convenceme de que hay una razón</i>	[C], you do not convince me that there
<i>definida para que estudiamos estos</i>	is a defined reason why we should
<i>asuntos.</i>	study those aspects [R].

End of Section Summary

The participants in this case study provided feedback mostly through reacting, advising, and announcing language functions. These language functions were combined in different ways by the participants depending on their approach to providing feedback. Students that used a “supportive” approach initiated their feedback by giving positive comments on the text, using reactive and announcing functions. Students with an “interpretative” approach began their feedback by focusing on what was contained in the text, using announcing and acting as audience language functions. Students with an “evaluative” approach started their feedback by focusing on the deficiencies of the text, using reacting, advising, announcing, and pointing language functions. The participants selected their approach depending on aspects such as the their relationship with the peer response partner or the length of the draft received.

The participants focused mainly on content and organization when they provided feedback to their peers. Students focused on content to offer ideas on what to write. They focused on organization to get ideas on how to organize their

own texts. Students focused more on content and organization when providing feedback on the evaluative essays, and they focused more on content and rhetoric when commenting on the persuasive essays.

Using Feedback

Question 2. How do participants use computer-mediated comments given by peers about their writing? The data to respond to this research question were obtained from (a) the participants' first and second drafts, (b) their feedback comments, (c) and the transcripts of the semi-structured and the discourse-based sections of the interviews for Tasks A and B. To determine the participants' use of feedback, I first examined the types of textual revisions they made on their papers. Then, I examined the participants' rationale for their revisions. Lastly, I identified the revisions that were suggested to examine the impact of peer response on revision.

Results indicated that most of the revisions made by the participants on the evaluative and the persuasive essays consisted of additions of detail or statement, and polishing of language below the clause level. Data also showed that the students used peer feedback as a source of content and as a scaffold to develop their knowledge of the Spanish language. The feedback that resulted in more revisions contained primarily advising language functions. The impact of peer response was influential on the length, restricted on the language used and weak on the communicative purpose of the essays. The participants mentioned they had difficulties with peer response, although they also found it useful to read

both their peers' essays and their peers' feedback. In the following sections, I present the results obtained on each of these issues.

Types of Textual Revisions

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis were employed. For the quantitative analysis, I calculated frequencies and percentages of the different kinds of textual changes made by the participants on their drafts. For the qualitative analysis, I looked for patterns in the responses to the discourse-based interview in which the participants gave their rationale for their revisions.

Quantitative Analysis

The participants made a total of 48 textual revisions from draft 1 to draft 2 for Task A (evaluative essay), and 44 textual revisions from draft 1 to draft 2 for Task B (persuasive essay). The range of revisions per student was from 0 to 8 for Task A and, from 0 to 7 for Task B. The information on the types and frequencies of textual revisions made by each participant on Tasks A and B is depicted in Appendices 27 and 28. Please note that there were two students, one on each task, who did not make any revision on their essays.

Table 10 presents the revisions made by the participants on Tasks A and B. Of the 92 revisions made, 71% comprised additions of detail or statement, 20% consisted of polishing the language below the clause level, 3% were deletions of detail or statement, 3% included the reshuffling of clauses, and 3% were modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons. Modifications that relate to the rhetorical machining of discourse and changes

that relate to the writers' claims were revision types not found in the participants' drafts.

Table 10
Type and Frequency of Textual Revisions

Textual Revisions	n	%
Addition of detail or statement	65	71
Deletion of detail or statement	3	3
Reshuffling of clauses	3	3
Modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons	3	3
Changes that relate to the writer's claims that reflect awareness of anticipated feedback	0	0
Modifications that relate to rhetorical machining of discourse	0	0
Polishing the language below the clause level	18	20
Total	92	100

The types and frequencies of textual revisions were also analyzed by task, to find if the participants revised differently on an evaluative and on a persuasive essay (see Table 11). Results show that the students revised in a similar fashion

on both types of text. In both cases the most frequent revision was addition of detail or statement.

Table 11
Type and Frequency of Textual Revisions by Task

Textual Revisions	Task A (Evaluative Text)		Task B (Persuasive Text)	
	n	%	n	%
Addition of detail or statement	31	65	34	77
Polishing the language below the clause level	12	25	6	14
Reshuffling of clauses	2	4	1	2
Modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons	2	4	1	2
Deletion of detail or statement	1	2	2	5
Modifications that relate to rhetorical machining of discourse	0	0	0	0
Changes that relate to the writer's claims that reflect awareness of anticipated feedback	0	0	0	0
Total	48	100	44	100

Rationale for Revisions

The primary source to investigate the participants' rationale for their revisions was the discourse-based interviews. The semi-structured interviews, the feedback comments, and the drafts were secondary sources of information.

Qualitative Analysis

During the discourse-based interviews for Tasks A and B, several students mentioned their problems to complete the number of words required (400-500), and how they used the ideas provided by their peers or obtained from reading their peers' drafts to lengthen their texts. Joseph, for example, said, "I added to meet the word requirement cause I was running short and I was lacking a lot of detail." (p. 4) Monica affirmed "I added about two hundred and fifty words after I read through his paper and read his response. I was having so much trouble making it longer and after I read his, it gave me so many ideas." (p. 9) Jasmine considered: "It's easier to just add stuff on to it because I tend to be a lot shorter than I could be in English." (p. 4) Jenny also expressed, "Usually I don't have enough words." (p. 3) For Task B, which involved a persuasive essay, Harry said, "He said to me that he was not persuaded, so I knew that I had to make my persuasion stronger. In the first paragraph, instead of having one persuasive sentence, I added a second one. And, in the last paragraph, I added another persuasive sentence." (p. 1) Maria also added persuasive sentences: "I just went back and I added at the beginning of certain sentences. Since I read hers and I kind of got an idea cause I think at first it wasn't too persuasive." (p. 4) Monica

said, “She wrote what she thought my thesis was, and it wasn’t the point that I was trying to get across, so that was one thing that I added.” (p. 6)

Students looked for ideas to add to their essays when they read their peers’ feedback. They felt disappointed when the comments did not offer ideas to add to the essays. Such was the situation of Alice who, in the discourse-based interview for Task B, said, “I knew that I needed to add more. I think if maybe he said what types of things to add, then it [peer feedback] would have been more helpful.” (p. 4) Some students lost interest in reading their classmates’ feedback when they reached the number of words required. For example, when Roxanne was asked in the semi-structured interview for Task A if she had used her peer’s feedback she replied: “I didn’t. And part of the reason was that my paper had the length already, and if I had added more, it would just have been too long.” (p. 2)

Students seemed to know the expectations of their peers when providing feedback. When I asked Alice in the semi-structured interview for Task A how she provided feedback, she responded, “Things they can add, or ways that it [the essay] could be improved. Either something they wrote that didn’t make complete sense to me, or something I thought if they added it, would clarify the subject better.” (p. 3)

The analysis of the participants’ perceptions, their feedback and their writing indicated that they used peer response as a kind of content resource for their writing, and also as a scaffold to help the linguistic development. To illustrate how the participants added detail to their texts as a result of an indication or suggestion of a peer, I describe the feedback received by Jasmine,

and the changes she made on her second draft. Jasmine had the lowest self-rated proficiency in the group, novice mid. She had read on the Internet a story about a Peruvian girl and her grandmother. She expressed in the semi-structured interview for Task B that she wanted to write about something she knew well about and she therefore wrote about the similarities between the girl's grandmother and Jasmine's own great-grandmother. The following excerpt illustrates the feedback comments she received from Becky, a student who rated her writing proficiency as *intermediate high*.

<i>Pienso que puedes añadirlo un párrafo sobre la chica que hallaste en línea. Puedes decir que la vida que tu bisabuela dice es el mismo que la vida que la chica dice [sic].</i>	I think you can add a paragraph about the girl that you found on line [Ad1]. You can say that the life that your great-grandmother talks about, is the same than the one the girl talks about [C].
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Jasmine attended to Becky's advice and collaboration, and she added the following paragraph to her essay.

<i>La chica y sus abuelos no les gusta el mundo de hoy porque dicen que el mundo fue alterado por los españoles, cuando los españoles invadieron Perú y Sudamérica. Esta manera de pensar es muy común en</i>	The girl and her grandparents do not like the world of today because they say that the world was altered by the Spaniards, when the Spaniards invaded Peru and South America. This way of thinking is also common among
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<p><i>ancianos de América también, pero por razones diferentes. La mas vieja generación americana esta hablando siempre del pasado. No gustan de lo que ha dado vuelta el mundo.</i></p>	<p>the elderly in America, but for different reasons. The oldest American generation is always talking about the past. They don't like how things have changed in the world.</p>
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The participants used their peers' feedback not only to add content, but also to polish the language of their essays below the clause level. Attention to surface level issues in peer response is controversial due to the fact that many students provide feedback on grammar or spelling, at the expense of attention to content or rhetoric. In this case study, however, it was observed that the participants focused mostly on content, and grammar or spelling correction allowed them to learn from each other and help their linguistic development.

Becky, for example, suggested a word change to Margaret on her Web page evaluation essay. Both Becky and Margaret rated their writing proficiency level as *intermediate high*. The following was Becky's feedback:

<p><i>Tengo unas cuantas sugerencias: en vez de "ase clic" creo que será mejor si dices "hace o hagas clic." Ten cuidado con los acentos.</i></p>	<p>I have a few suggestions: instead of "ase clic" I think it would be better if you say "hace clic o hagas clic" [Ad1].</p>
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Margaret not only accepted the advice and changed the spelling of the word indicated by Becky, she also realized she could use a more appropriate verb, as her first and second drafts show.

First Draft

<i>Las fotos son claritas y si uno</i>	The pictures are clear and if you
<i>ase clic sobre ellas, se hacen más</i>	clic on them, they get bigger.
<i>grande.</i>	

Second Draft

<i>Las fotos son claritas y si uno</i>	The pictures are clear and if you
<i>hace clic sobre ellas, se agrandan.</i>	clic on them, they enlarge.

In the discourse-based interview, Margaret explained her rationale for the changes she made on her text.

Cause I said, if you click over the picture, it'll be bigger, and then she said maybe it'd be better if you use hace or hagas clic. To me it looked better, it seemed better to say hace with the "h", instead of ase o haga. And then I realized I could also say, se agrandan instead of se hacen mas grande.

Impact of Peer Response on Revision

I examined the effectiveness of peer response with regard to revision. The sources of data were: (a) the participants' first and second drafts, (b) their feedback commentaries, and (c) the semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed in quantitative and qualitative terms.

Quantitative Analysis

Table 12 shows that of the 92 revisions made by the participants on their drafts for Tasks A and B, 45% were suggested, whereas 55% were not suggested by a peer. More than one half of the revisions made in the essays was produced by the students working on their own.

Table 12

Frequency of Suggested and Not Suggested Revisions in Peer Response

Revisions	n	%
Not suggested in peer response	51	55
Suggested in peer response	41	45
Total	92	100

Table 13 depicts the frequencies of revisions suggested and not suggested on the evaluative and the persuasive essays. The frequencies of revisions suggested were similar in both types of text. For Task A, 46% of the textual changes were suggested in peer response and 54% were the participants' self-revisions. For Task B, 43% of the revisions made were suggested by a peer, while 57% of the revisions were made by the participants on their own.

Table 13
 Percentages of Revisions Suggested and Not Suggested
 in Peer Response Comments by Task

Revisions	Task A (Evaluative Text)		Task B (Persuasive Text)	
	n	%	n	%
Not suggested in peer response	26	54	25	57
Suggested in peer response	22	46	19	43
Total	48	100	44	100

The 41 textual changes that were suggested in peer response were examined in terms of types of textual revision. Data on the participants' drafts showed that 78% of these revisions were additions of detail, 15% consisted of polishing the language below the clause level, 5% were modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons, and 2% consisted of reshuffling of clauses. Deletion of detail or statement and changes that relate to the writer's claims were categories not observed on the participants' revisions (see table 14). These results indicated that the impact of peer response was more influential on the length of essays since the highest percentage consisted of additions of text. The results also showed a limited impact on the essays'

language below the clause level, and a weak impact on their communicative purpose.

Table 14
Type and Frequency of Suggested Textual Revisions

Suggested Textual Revisions	n	%
Addition of detail or statement	32	78
Polishing the language below the clause level	6	15
Modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons	2	5
Reshuffling of clauses	1	2
Deletion of detail or statement	0	0
Modifications that relate to rhetorical machining of discourse	0	0
Changes that relate to the writer's claims that reflect awareness of anticipated feedback	0	0
Total	41	100

The data on suggested revisions were analyzed for each writing task independently to find if there was any difference in results in terms of the types of the revisions made (see Table 15). It was found that, although with very low frequency, reshuffling of clauses (5%), and modifications that relate to the

writer's purpose and expression of reasons (9%), were revision types that were made by participants on the evaluative essay only.

Table 15
Types and Percentages of Textual Revisions
Suggested in Peer Response by Task

Suggested Textual Revisions	Task A (Evaluative Essay)		Task B (Persuasive Essay)	
	n	%	n	%
Addition of detail or statement	16	73	16	84
Polishing the language below the clause level	3	13	3	16
Modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons	2	9	0	0
Reshuffling of clauses	1	5	0	0
Deletion of detail or statement	0	0	0	0
Modifications that relate to rhetorical machining of discourse	0	0	0	0
Total	22	100	19	100

To examine the types of feedback that led to the revisions, I analyzed the feedback comments in terms of language functions. Appendix 29 presents the revisions suggested (addition of detail or statement, reshuffling of clauses, modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons, and

polishing the language below the clause level), and the language functions that the participants used to suggest them. Please note that the number of language functions that generated each suggested revision ranged from one to four. In other words, the participants used one, two, three or up to four language functions to suggest a revision that was, in effect, adopted.

Results indicated that for both Tasks, the 32 revisions that consisted of additions of detail or statement were suggested by 33 advising, 9 announcing, 9 reacting, 5 pointing, 4 eliciting, 2 collaborating, 2 questioning, and 1 acting as audience functions. Please note that additions of detail or statement were the revisions suggested through the widest variety of language functions, compared to other types of revision. The six revisions that consisted in polishing the language below the clause level were suggested by three advising, two announcing, two pointing, and two collaborating idea units. The two modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons were suggested through two announcing, one reacting and one advising comments. Lastly, the two reshuffling of clauses were suggested by one reacting, one eliciting, one advising, and one pointing functions.

Appendices 30 and 31 provide a summary of the participants' revisions, the revisions that were suggested and not suggested in peer response, and the language functions in the feedback that resulted in the revisions suggested for Tasks A and B.

Qualitative Analysis

To examine possible explanations on how the participants used peer feedback, during the semi-structured interviews they were asked their reactions to peer response. Their responses referred to either the difficulties they encountered, or their perceptions of the usefulness of peer response. The following sections will describe the results on these two aspects.

Difficulties with peer response. Appendix 32 presents the difficulties mentioned by the participants during the interview. The difficulties were: (a) the participants perceived that their peers could give them suggestions that were wrong, (b) the suggestions given were sometimes not specific enough, (c) some participants praised rather than give suggestions or critique.

Andy, Monica and Alice provided insightful descriptions of the difficulties they encountered when they were trying to use their peers' feedback to revise their essays. The first difficulty perceived was that peers could give suggestions that could be wrong. Andy, for example, felt uncertain of his and his peers' capabilities to provide feedback. Thus, he was doubtful of using his peers' suggestions to revise. In the following excerpt of the interview, Andy expressed his uncertainties about the impact that his peers' comments could have on his essay.

If somebody is evaluating me, if they're also students, I don't have a very good idea of whether implementing their suggestion is going to have a positive or negative impact. I'm a student and I've always been scared myself of making a bad suggestion to somebody else. (p. 1)

A second difficulty perceived by the participants when trying to use their peers' suggestions was that many times the feedback comments offered compliments rather than suggestions or critique. Monica, for example, noticed that during the peer response preparation, her peers praised her writing and she did not find it useful. On Task A, however, her peer gave suggestions that she could use. In the interview Monica expressed, "In the beginning they would just write this is good, this is good, this is good, so it's hard when people would read my paper and not know what to write. It didn't seem helpful. But now people are giving helpful comments." (p. 2)

I examined the feedback that Monica received from Andy on Task A. Almost 50% of Andy's comments contained advising language functions. Monica was able to use Andy's suggestions. Monica herself, however, used a considerable amount of reactive idea units in her comments to praise Andy's draft. Monica's idea units for Task A contained approximately 38% of reacting, 38% of announcing, 4% of advising, 4% of pointing, 4% of eliciting and 2% of collaborating language functions. The first two of her four-paragraph commentary contained almost all her reactive functions used to praise Andy's draft. The following segment corresponds to Monica's first two paragraphs of her commentary.

<i>Leí su ensayo sobre Venezuela</i>	I read your essay on Venezuela
<i>Tuya. Me gusta su introducción. Creo</i>	Tuya [A1]. I like your introduction [R2].
<i>que tu idea principal es bien escrito.</i>	I think your main idea is well written

También creo que tu primera párrafo y el ensayo entero son muy fácil leer. ¿Podrías cambiar él “top” en el segundo párrafo? A mí, interrumpa el flujo del ensayo. Quizá podrías utilizar “en el primer parte.”

[R2]. I also think that your first paragraph [R2] and your whole essay is easy to read [R1]. Could you change “top” on the second paragraph [AD1]? It interrupts the flow of the essay [R1]. Maybe you could use “in the first part”

Me gusta la manera en que explicas qué aprendías. Estoy teniendo problemas que encuentra bastante información por mi ensayo, tan la manera en que escribes es muy provechoso a mí. Tu ensayo es muy interesante y tiene mucho información sobre el sitio. Me gusta la manera en que ofreces muchos ejemplos. Es bueno que sostienes su información con ejemplos.

[C] I like the way in which you explained what you learned [R2]. I am having problems to find enough information for my essay [0], the way you write is very useful for me [R1]. Your essay is very interesting [R1] and it has a lot of information about the site [An1]. I like the way in which you offer examples [R2]. It is good that you support your information with examples [R2].

Andy, however, did not perceive praising as a difficulty. He showed a positive attitude to the feedback received from Monica. In the semi-structured interview for Task A he expressed his feelings toward Monica’s feedback, and it seemed that her praising comments made Andy more receptive to Monica’s advising and collaboration.

She had a lot of positive comments, which I was happy to see, that makes me see I'm going in the right direction. She also noticed that there were words that I had put in quotation marks. It's where I put the word in English, but I forgot to go back and change it. So because she specifically mentioned, I was able to look at it the second time and go back and fix it. She also provided a specific example for me to use, or a specific way to phrase it. And she said I gave some ideas that I had helped her, revise her paper as well. Just about the way I wrote, and examples, the way I used examples.

A third difficulty in peer response was perceived by Alice. She noted that some of the comments she received were not specific enough to know what to change on her essay. She talked about this problem during her interview for Task A: "I think that some other people were afraid to make bad comments about papers. And if they didn't say that anything was wrong with it, then you didn't know what to improve on." (p. 4) During the interview for Task B, Alice explained that the feedback she received from Joseph, his partner for both tasks, was too general. Thus, she was not able to use his comments to make changes on her draft. In the following excerpt of the interview, Alice describes the feedback she received.

The peer responses that I got weren't generally that specific, they'd just say you need to reorganize, and it wouldn't say even what paragraph to look at. They would say that your grammar needed help, but it wasn't specific enough to identify which part of your grammar. And a lot of the

comments that I got about adding content were things that I felt that I didn't want to say.

Alice's perceptions were confirmed when examining the idea units in her peer's feedback. Approximately 60% of the idea units in the feedback she received from Joseph for Task A were announcing, 20% were reacting and only 20% were advising language functions. Joseph seemed to "walk through" the essay and praise Alice's writing. His advising comments at the end of the commentary had no specific focus of attention. The following is Joseph's entire feedback commentary, including the codes for language functions and focus of attention. Please note his use of third person singular to refer to Alice.²

<i>El ensayo de Alice fue escrito</i>	Alice's essay was well written
<i>bien. Ella habla de todas las cosas que</i>	[R1/NS]. She talks about all the things
<i>le gusta ella sobre la pagina. Ella</i>	that she likes about the page [An1/C].
<i>escriba sobre como organizado el sitio</i>	She talks about how the site is
<i>fue. De ella, los fotografías le interesa</i>	organized [An1/C]. She is very
<i>mucho. Habla de los ligas en los</i>	interested in the pictures [An1/C]. She
<i>fotografías al otro partes del sitio.</i>	talks about the links on the pictures to
<i>También menciona la caja de buscar</i>	other parts of the site [An1/C]. She
<i>en este sitio. Es una bien herramienta</i>	also mentions the search box on this
<i>tener en un sitio. Otro aspecto de su</i>	site [An1/C]. This is a good tool to have
<i>ensayo es la multimedia. Ella le gusta</i>	on the site [Aud/C]. Another aspect of
<i>la multimedia- las fotos, el himno de</i>	her essay is the multimedia [An1/C].

<p><i>Venezuela, y el mapa interactivo. Ella menciona que como tan fácil es para leer información de las ligas. Las fotos proporcionen un visto de navegación. Sobre todo, me gusta leer su ensayo. Da ideas perfectas que te gusta del sitio. Si puedo recomendar algo mas para escribir del sitio, recomendaré que escriba de los cosas que no te gusta, o no te interesa. También, hay errores gramáticas que necesitan atención. O, dé tu opinión del contenido del sitio.</i></p>	<p>She likes the multimedia, the pictures, the national anthem of Venezuela and the interactive map [An1/C]. She mentions how easy it is to read the information in the links [An1/C]. The pictures give a view of the navigation [An1/C]. Overall, I like to read her essay [R1/NS]. It gives perfect ideas of what you like of the site [R1/C]. If I can recommend something else to write on the site, I will recommend her to write about the things she does not like, or she is not interested in [Ad1/C]. There are also grammar errors that need attention [Ad2/NS]. Or about your opinion on the site [Ad1/C].</p>
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The three main difficulties encountered by the participants may in part explain the frequency of self-revisions. When students found in the feedback ideas they could incorporate to their texts to lengthen them, they did. When they did not get the kind of feedback they could use or they did not trust peer assessment, they self-revised. The participants also revealed other ways in which they used peer response, which I will describe in the following section.

Perceptions of the usefulness of peer response. To examine if the participants perceived that they could use peer response for revision, and if they perceived other uses for peer response, during the semi-structured interview for Task A they were asked “Do you consider peer response useful? In which ways?”

Appendix 33 shows a summary of the responses given by the participants in relation to the uses fullness they perceived in peer response. Some students attributed more importance to reading their peer’s papers, whereas others considered that the benefits were in the feedback received. The participants that perceived that it was more useful to read their peers’ drafts mentioned that they (a) acquired ideas on how to organize their own papers, (b) incorporated the perspective of others on the issues they were writing about, (c) had the possibility to clarify their ideas, (d) improved their skills in reading comprehension, and (e) acquired vocabulary to use in their writing. Those who perceived that it was more useful to read the feedback they received from their peers, mentioned that they (a) gained opportunities to see the perspectives of others on the issues they wrote about, (b) clarified their ideas, (c) wrote for authentic readers, (d) wrote with a purpose, (e) conformed their style to the requirements, (f) gained confidence in critiquing, and (g) added ideas to their essays. Only one student mentioned that peer response helped him in making changes on his writing. These results seem to indicate that the participants did not perceive revision as the ultimate purpose in peer response. Peer response, however, helped them in satisfying other needs.

Of the responses given, some focused on how peers response helped in learning Spanish. Some students mentioned, for example, how peer response was useful to them because they learned vocabulary and phrases. Jenny, for example, said, "From reading the other person's paper I learned a lot of terms." (p. 6) Alice reported that he learned sentence structure: "You see how they're forming sentences, in ways that you wouldn't have formed them". Jasmine explained how she appropriated the language produced by her peers.

I've learned more vocabulary, definitely transitional words. I remember at the beginning I used to have a hard time with *por ejemplo*, that's a good word to give examples. I think I probably wanted to write something like that but I never knew how. Then, when I saw and I understood what it meant on someone else's paper I started using it more. And I just try to pick up stuff. Especially when they tell me how they feel, because you can use the same tense, the same way and it'll apply.

Other responses focused on how peer response helped in learning about writing. Andy, for example, explained how peer response helped him to understand writing as a process. At first Andy was skeptical of the usefulness of peer response in his Spanish class. He was particularly concerned about the time he needed to spend to write feedback. He was also uncertain about the effects that his comments would have on his peers' essays. Furthermore, he felt that his knowledge of the Spanish language was not enough to criticize the papers written by his classmates.

Andy had rated his own writing proficiency as *novice high*, the second lowest in the class. He was a political science senior student who felt uncomfortable with peer response. When the peer response preparation ended, Andy expressed in his learning journal his concerns. The following is his entire entry.

While I think peer response is somewhat helpful, I do not think that it is the most effective way to evaluate a paper. First, as students, it takes longer for us to react to the paper than a Spanish speaker would. It might take a student 20 or 30 minutes to comment on something that should take 5 minutes at the most. After some time, we can come up with comments to help improve the other person's paper.... but it takes a while and I do not think that the activity benefits the reader very much. I, for one, am very uncomfortable judging someone else's paper because I am neither an expert on the language used nor the topic that I am reading.

Basically...while it certainly does not have a negative effect on the papers I don't think that the positive results warrant the time that we invest in peer response activities. It seems like we spend as much time writing one paper as we do writing one peer response that may or may not change a few sentences in the paper.

Andy's draft for Task A was a 93-word paragraph for Task A, although for the first draft of Task B he achieved 661 words. At first, Andy wrote very slowly. He looked up in the dictionary every word before writing it and by the time he got the translations, he had forgotten what he wanted to say. Looking at his blank

screen was Andy's worst frustration. Andy saw that others were not so worried about having correct sentences; they just typed. By the end of Task B, he had used peer response to see writing as a process, and to leave correction to the end. In the semi-structured interview for Task B Andy explained how he had used peer response to understand writing as a process. Please note how he used code switching as a strategy to keep the flow of his thoughts while writing.

In the beginning, I was translating every other word I was writing. I would go sentence by sentence, looking up in the dictionary. That would slow me down because I would finish the paragraph and say, where was I going to go after this? I had been interrupted so much that my thoughts weren't flowing. I looked at the others and they had a lot of things written on the screen and that frustrated me. Just seeing that their screen was full, that they had text enough to fill the screen, whereas I had lots of blank space. I just got into the process of dumping my thoughts on to the paper. With the write and revise towards the end process, I was able to understand ok, well this is not going to be the final draft so just get out something and go back and fix it later. There would be words that I just left in English until I had a chance to go back and look at them. (p. 16)

End of Section Summary

The participants used peer response to add content to and polish the language of their texts. More than half of those revisions were made on their own, although they used their peers' suggestions more when these suggestions consisted in advising language functions. Among the difficulties that they

perceived when trying to use their peers' feedback to revise were (a) the idea that the suggestions could be wrong, (b) the vagueness of some suggestions, and (c) the fact that peers many times praised rather than suggest or critique. The participants found more uses than difficulties in peer response. The uses they perceived had to do with their learning of the Spanish language and their learning about writing. Most students did not mention revision, however, as a possible use for peer response.

Perceived Factors that Influence Peer Response

Question 3. What factors influence the ways in which the students participate in computer-mediated peer response? The primary data sources to respond to this question were the learning journals and the semi-structured interview transcripts. The feedback commentaries, drafts and my observation notes were secondary sources of information.

Data on the factor of perceived language proficiency were provided by Jasmine and Margaret. Data on the factor of the writing task was obtained from Alice, Jenny and Andy. In addition, data came from the responses to the following interview questions:

1. Were you in the situation that you wanted to provide feedback to a classmate and you could not do it because of your level of Spanish? Could you describe the situation? (If applicable) What did you do to solve your problem?

2. Do you think the task influenced the way you responded to your peer? Do you think the task influenced the way you revised?

The information provided by the participants was twofold. First, Jasmine reported that her language proficiency did not allow her to provide the kind of feedback she received from her more proficient peers. Then, Margaret said that she provided differential feedback to her peers, depending on the proficiency that she perceived in them. All students manifested that they had difficulties to write

their essays and the commentaries to their peers. These students, however, affirmed that these difficulties did not impede their communication with their peers because they implemented strategies to overcome their language problems. The participants reported six different strategies; only one was provided in the peer response preparation.

Second, the writing tasks had two characteristics that influenced the ways in which students participated in peer response. One was related to the use of the Internet as a source for their writings, and the other one was the number of words required for the tasks. These characteristics influenced the time invested and the length of the drafts submitted for peer feedback. Finally, the type of texts in the tasks influenced the way in which some students responded and revised. In the following sections, I present the findings in relation to the factors that influenced peer response.

Perceived Proficiency in Spanish Language

Language proficiency was perceived by Jasmine as factor that influenced the way she responded to their peers. In addition, most participants said they had difficulties in writing feedback for their peers. They, however, always succeeded in communicating their feedback because they used more than one strategy to overcome language difficulties. For Margaret, the language proficiency she perceived in the others impacted the way she responded to them. I will discuss each of these cases separately.

Influence of Own Perceived Language Proficiency

Jasmine perceived that her proficiency in Spanish did not allow her to give the kind of feedback she received from her peers. Jasmine, who rated her writing proficiency as novice mid, wrote on her learning journal: “The peer response activity was helpful for me, but not for my partner. I felt I could not give him any real help because his Spanish is on a higher level than mine.” Jasmine referred to Joseph. In the semi-structured interview for Task A, Jasmine explained her peer response experiences with Joseph, a student who rated his writing proficiency as *intermediate high*, and with Roxanne, who rated her writing proficiency as *Intermediate low*.

I couldn't give Joseph any information to help him on his paper but complimenting. It would be harder for me to find mistakes in his writing than him for me. He was giving me almost an overload. He told me, first this, second this, he pointed out a lot of stuff cause it's visible to him and I went back and I changed a lot of it. But, the give and take thing, I couldn't give him as much. I told him, I'm sorry I don't think I can. With me and Roxanne, we were more on the same level so we could help each other the same amount, I felt. It worked out nice. (p. 2)

I examined the feedback that Jasmine provided to Joseph and to Roxanne. First, she provided feedback to Joseph on a biography he wrote activities about a Costa Rican political leader during the peer response

preparation activities³. Then she provided feedback to Roxanne on her Web page evaluation for Task A. The following are the entire feedback commentaries written by Jasmine to both of her peers. Her responses were translated and coded for language functions and focus of attention. Please note that An1 stands for “announcing text sections” and An4 stands for “announcing a rule”, E stands for “drawing out “ of the writer to encourage participation, and Q1 stands for questioning elements of the text.

1. Feedback to Joseph. The first paragraph talks about Oscar Sanchez as a great celebrity in Costa Rica and the whole world also [An1/C]. I think that your main idea is very good [R2/C]. The second paragraph talks about Sanchez’ education [An1/C].

What else do you know about his education [E/C]? I like the part where you say that Sanchez had conflicts with Central America, especially with Nicaragua and the Sandinista liberation front [R2/C]. It occurs to me that Sanchez wanted peace for all Central America and the world [AUD/C]. I

think Sanchez was in favor of democracy in Costa Rica and in other countries [AUD/C]. Why don’t you add where Sanchez is now [E/C]?

I see that your draft was good [R1/NS] and I hope to help you more [0/0].

You use quotations, words and phrases that connect all the text [An4/C].

You have many questions [AN2/C]. In addition, from beginning to end you have a terrific draft of the life of Oscar Sanchez [R1/C].

2. Feedback to Roxanne. What did I like more about your paper [0/0]? The introduction paragraph is very detailed [R2/C]. I liked the part where you give the colors of the link [R2/C] and I think that you describe well the colors on the page [R2/C].

Your writing made me feel a very similar opinion on the link, we think similar [AUD/C]. My favorite part in your paper is your paragraph about the similarities and differences between the links of Jamaica and Venezuela [R2/C].

In relation to the page on Venezuela.com, I think that you need a little more in what the page offers [Ad2/C]. What places do you like and don't you like [E/C]? Also, is this page useful for all people or just people with a lot of money [E/C]? In addition, do you mean that you used the page or that it is too much for you to use [Q1/C]?

Oh yes, I read that your conclusion is that you would like to visit Venezuela, [An1/C], me too. As for me, I want to go, but there is not enough money. What a shame! [0/0].

Jasmine's feedback comments show that she focused exclusively on the content on both of her peers' essays. The data also reveal that she produced slightly more idea units on her feedback to Joseph, although she deployed more variety of language functions on her feedback to Roxanne. Her feedback to Joseph consisted of 12 idea units including reacting (4), announcing (4), eliciting (2), and acting as audience (2) functions. Her feedback to Roxanne, on the other

hand, contained 10 idea units with reacting (4), eliciting (2), acting as audience (1), advising (1), announcing and questioning functions. In addition, Jasmine's approach was "interpretative" to Joseph, and "supportive" to Roxanne. The data on Jasmine's case seems to suggest that her perceptions on her writing proficiency and her perceptions of the language proficiency of her peers did influence the way she provided feedback. She could interpret Joseph's text, and elicit his ideas twice. With Roxanne, she displayed a wider variety of language functions including those that promote more textual changes: advising, eliciting and questioning.

Perceived language proficiency was also a factor that affected the way students wrote their commentaries. Most students reported that they had difficulties to write feedback for their peers because they did not know enough vocabulary in Spanish. They solved their language difficulties in peer response by implementing a number of strategies.

Strategies to compensate language difficulties. To complement our understanding of how the language proficiency that participants perceived in themselves influenced the way they provided peer feedback, I analyzed all responses to the question: "Were you in the situation that you wanted to provide feedback to a classmate and you could not do it because of your level of Spanish?" All students except for Becky and Margaret said that when providing feedback they had encountered difficulties caused by their perceived foreign language proficiency. These students also reported that they always found a way

to express their ideas in Spanish. The students were asked to explain how they did this, and they reported on the strategies they used to write their feedback when they did not know the necessary words in Spanish. Appendix 34 gives a summary of the strategies mentioned by the participants in the semi-structured interviews for Task A. All students mentioned more than one strategy.

Seven students reported that they used the dictionary; six asked for help from their peers; five used paraphrasing; three asked the instructor; three used the learning tools provided in the peer response preparation (handouts with phrases to provide feedback in Spanish and transitional words in Spanish); and three used code-switching temporarily until they found a way to express their ideas completely in Spanish. The following sections include the participants' descriptions of their use of paraphrasing, code-switching and the course learning tools. These descriptions were considered relevant because they disclose learning procedures that students do not commonly verbalize.

1. Paraphrasing. Participants at different perceived proficiency levels used paraphrasing to solve their language difficulties. Roxanne, for example, rated her writing proficiency as *intermediate low*. In the following excerpt of the semi-structured interview for Task A, she explained the strategy she used when she had problems to express her ideas in Spanish.

Yeah that can be a little frustrating, you know. You try to look up the word in the dictionary and it doesn't always give you quite the right word that

you want or that you are looking for. Then I try to change the wording and use a different wording that will maybe convey what I wanted to say. (p. 4)

Monica, who rated her writing proficiency level as *intermediate mid*, also said that she tried thinking her ideas in a different way, and she looked for help from her peers.

If there was something that I couldn't think of how to word it, I would just do it a different way. Just kind of change around what I was thinking. So, I'd always figure a way around it if I couldn't come up with the right words, or look up different words to see different ways of saying things.

Sometimes I asked people next to me, how would you say this. That was helpful. (p. 5)

Andy, who rated his writing proficiency as a *novice high*, considered that his proficiency in Spanish was not a barrier to participate in peer response activities. In the following excerpt, he reports how he was able to cope with his language difficulties.

In most cases, there are different ways to phrase something. Sometimes you could say it in one clean sentence, if you know exactly how to say it in the right way to use the language. But there's always a way to get around it. You can explain it in more simple terms over two or three sentences and they'll get the point across. I'll find the way. (p. 9)

2. Code-switching. The variety of strategies used by the participants helped them in eventually communicating the feedback to their classmates in

Spanish. Harry, who rated his writing proficiency as *intermediate low*, code-switched to continue his flow of his thoughts and then went back to re-write his comments in Spanish.

I could figure it all out. I could look it up. What I do is that I write it in a mixture of Spanish and English and then I go back. And if I have more time, there's more Spanish. But there are gaps that I just put in English and then I come back. Because I want to keep my thoughts going, and not get bugged out in the details. So that's what I do. (p. 5)

3. Using the course learning tools. Julie, Becky and Roxanne said they used the learning tools provided during the peer response preparation. Roxanne, for example, mentioned that she used the handout with phrases in Spanish to get started.

You gave us a list of phrases that we could use to lead into something and often that sort of stimulates you thinking, and helps you. Even though it doesn't give you the words, it sort of gets you into the sentence, so that you can complete it. (p. 4)

Julie used the same learning tool: "Those sheets that you gave us. Usually I'll start off a sentence with something like that and just kind of develop my ideas from it." Julie's feedback showed that she actually used some of the phrases provided in one of the handouts (see handout on Appendix H). Please note that Julie adapted some of the phrases to her needs. In the handout, the phrases were provided as examples to pose questions to the writer. In her case, she did

not have enough text in her peer's draft to pose questions about it. Therefore, she used the phrases to suggest ideas to write. The following excerpt of Julies' feedback illustrates the phrases from the learning tools she used to overcome her language difficulties.

Yo tengo alguna sujeción para usted [sic]. <i>Puedes decir</i> si tienes algún modo de escribir para el sitio si tienes alguna pregunta. <i>Tu también necesita de</i> un título y no se olvide do él enderezó de la pagina porque es muy importante [sic]. <i>Puedes decir</i> si las informaciones de la pagina son bien organizadas y se es fácil de navegar. <i>¿Por qué no hables un poco sobre</i> los animados y porque no te le gustan?	I have some suggestion for you. You can say if there is a way of writing to the site if you have some question. You also need a title and don't forget the design of the page because it is important. You can say if the information on the page is well organized and if it is easy to navigate. Why don't you talk a little about the animations and why you do not like them?
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To summarize, one participant in this case study perceived that her language proficiency was a factor that influenced the way she provided feedback to her peers. Analysis of her commentary corroborated these perceptions. All participants encountered difficulties because of their language proficiency. These difficulties, however, did not impede their communication in Spanish because

they used a variety of strategies such as paraphrasing, code switching, asking for help, and using the learning tools provided in the peer response preparation.

Influence of Language Proficiency Perceived on Others

In the semi-structured interview for Task B, Margaret informed that she gave differential feedback depending on the level of language proficiency she perceived in her partners. Margaret, who rated her writing proficiency as *intermediate high*, explained in the following interview excerpt how language proficiency was a factor that influenced her feedback.

If they don't know Spanish very well, I think you focus more on the grammar than you would on how to arrange the phrases or maybe they weren't too sure how certain things go together. But if they know the Spanish pretty well, you expect a little more, you expect them to make a few grammatical errors, but more it's going to be based on how they presented the content, if they had an opinion on it or if they made their opinion clear. I think you're a little more lenient on someone who doesn't know. You understand what they're saying, but the errors are more on their verbs, their tenses, they get a little messed up. So you just want to help them out and give them a few things like, maybe I would have done this, or I would have done that. But if it's somebody who knows it a little better then, it's kind of a little harder to critique it cause their mistakes are not as obvious. So it just depends on the reader. (p. 22)

I examined Margaret's feedback comments to verify her perceptions. For Task A, she provided feedback to Becky. Both Margaret and Becky perceived their writing proficiency as *intermediate high*. Margaret wrote a three-paragraph commentary to Becky. In the first paragraph, she mentioned what she liked about the text and suggested things to be fixed. In the second paragraph, Margaret interpreted the ideas in the text and on the third she focused on what she liked about Becky's draft. To illustrate how she provided feedback to Becky, I reproduce the first paragraph of her 206-word commentary

<p><i>Me gusto mucho tu primer párrafo. Creo que fue diferente y en forma muy buena. Digo esto porque tus preguntas al principio agarran la atención de uno. Solo hay algunas cosas que yo hubiera cambiado en tu segundo párrafo. Por ejemplo, creo que será mejor empezar tu primer oración con "A" in ves de "Cuando." Otra palabra que yo hubiera cambiado es "Entonces", la palabra "También" será mejor en éste caso. De allí, creo que nada mas necesita ser cambiado.</i></p>	<p>I liked your first paragraph very much [R1/NS]. I think it was different in a very good way [R1/NS]. I say this because your questions at the beginning captured my attention [Aud/C]. There are only a few things that I would have changed in your second paragraph [Ad2/NS]. For example, I think that it will be better to start your first sentence with "To" instead of "When" [C/V]. Another word that I would have changed is "Then" [P/V], the word "Also" will be better in this case [C/V]. From there, I think</p>
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nothing else needs to be changed

[R1/NS].

Margaret's feedback to Becky consisted of 20 idea units with reacting (7), announcing (7), advising (3), collaborating (2), and acting as audience (1) functions (see Tables 4 and 5). Her focus of attention was on content (10) and vocabulary (3), although she also had ideas with unspecified focus (7).

For Task B, Margaret provided feedback to Jodi, a student who rated her own writing proficiency *intermediate low*. Jodi's draft was not finished by the time she had to exchange drafts with Margaret; it was 105 words long. The first paragraph of Margaret's commentary illustrates how she provided feedback to Jodi.

<i>Me gusto mucho como empesaste de hablar sobre tu tema.</i>	I liked very much how you started to talk about your topic [R1/C].
<i>Sera interesante y tus ideas ahora son claras. Alli solo encuentre algo que yo hubiera cambiado en tus oraciones. Yo hubiera conectado la oracaion que empieza con, "Hay muchas.." con la oracion anterior. Me parece que sera mejor asi. Es muy cierto lo que dijiste en tu quinta oración.</i>	It will be interesting [R2/C] and your ideas now are clear [R2/C]. I only found something that I would have changed in your sentences [Ad2/NS]. I would have connected the sentence that starts with "There are many" with the previous sentence [Ad1/O]. It seems to me that it will be better that way [R1/NS]. It is very true what you

said in your fifth sentence [R1/NS].

Margaret's response to Jodi contained 13 idea units with reacting (6), announcing (4), acting as audience (2), and advising (1) functions. Her focus was on content (10) and organization (1); one of her idea units had no specific focus. Margaret wrote a three-paragraph commentary in which she told what she liked, gave suggestions to fix things and focused on the deficiencies of the text. Margaret's comments to both of her peers seem very similar. However, data revealed that Margaret produced more idea units in her comments to Becky than in her comments to Jodi. Her focus was mostly on content and her approach was "supportive", in both cases. Margaret collaborated with Beck, and advised to Jodi. The fact that Jodi had a short text seemed to have impeded Margaret to provide more helpful feedback. I member checked by asking Margaret to describe the differences she perceived on the way Becky and Jodi wrote. Margaret said that Becky's writing was "clearer, or maybe more experienced." About Jodi she said, "It's hard to tell with such a short draft. She writes well, but it's just too short."

Language proficiency perceived on others is not the only factor that influenced how students responded. In the case of Margaret, the length of Jodi's draft seemed to be more influential on how she responded. Peer response in a foreign language is a challenging task and language proficiency is certainly a factor that influences how students provide feedback and how much they can understand of the feedback received from peers. However, other factors such as

motivation, personal relationships, or perceived role of peer response also come into play in the dynamics of peer response.

The Writing Task

Data indicated that two aspects of the task influenced the way some students participated in peer response. The first aspect was the use of the Internet as a source of information for writing. The second aspect was the number of words required on the essays (400-500 words). These characteristics of the writing tasks were factors that influenced the amount of time invested and the length of the drafts submitted for peer feedback. When the participants reported their difficulties in the learning journal or in the semi-structured interviews, they mentioned both the task characteristics and the effects of these characteristics on their writing. Appendix 35 presents the participants' perceived difficulties to perform the writing tasks.

The Internet as a Source of Information

Two students, Alice and Jenny, felt overwhelmed by the amount of information on the Internet. Jenny, who expressed in the semi-structured interview for Task A: "I'm like overwhelmed with stuff to write about." Jenny perceived that using the Internet as a source influenced the amount of time she invested in the writing task. She could not find information on the topic she wanted to write about on her persuasive essay (markets in Peru) and she invested most of the time looking for the information on the Internet. Therefore, she could not finish her draft on time for feedback. In this excerpt of the interview,

Jenny described how much time it took her to search the Internet to write her essay.

It took a long time finding information. Like all day, like eight hours on one day, like on Saturday, I sat in front of the computer for eight hours, like six hours trying to find information and the other two trying to write the paper.

(p. 2)

Jenny's time spent searching the Internet influenced the length of her first drafts. Jenny's first drafts contained 162 words for Task A and 216 words for Task B (see Table 16).

Table 16

Participants' Number of Words in the First and Second Drafts for Tasks A and B

Participant	Task A (evaluative essay)		Task B (persuasive essay)	
	Draft 1	Draft 2	Draft 1	Draft 2
Alice	170	386	255	499
Andy	93	661	519	527
Becky	616	625	723	790
Harry	403	451	412	476
Jasmine	462	502	349	599
Jenny	162	571	216	534
Joseph	121	548	534	534
Julie	630	641	571	604
Margaret	493	522	594	694
Monica	177	453	376	552
Rena	669	702	520	545
Roxanne	477	517	547	549

Jenny's second drafts, however, were both over the word limit: 571 for Task A and 534 for Task B. Jenny wrote in her learning journal for Task A how she increased the number of words for her second draft for that task.

Julie wrote some very helpful comments. She asked me questions of what she wanted to know more about, and that helped me come up with the 500 words I needed. I even went beyond that which surprised me because I thought I would only just squeak by. (p. 4)

For Task B Jenny worked with Monica, whom she considered very helpful, as she said during the semi-structured interview for that task:

Monica was pretty helpful because, well she knew I was having a hard time so she tried to say well, I focused on this, like these three things, and what you have is good but I think you needed to mention more about that. (p. 11)

The Number of Words Required for the Tasks

Alice referred to the problem of the number of words required for the essays. In her journal entry for Task A she wrote: "It was especially difficult to write 500 hundred words worth of information about the overall view of the Web site." In the semi-structured interview for Task A she also mentioned, "I often have trouble writing the assigned amount of words." As Table 35 shows, Alice wrote 270 and 255 words for her first drafts on Tasks A and B, respectively.

Monica had problems with writing the required number of words for Tasks A and B. In her learning journal, she wrote how she increased the number of words for her second draft.

It was very difficult to stretch a web site evaluation to 500 words. My peer evaluation was very helpful for me in this assignment. His suggestions

helped me finish my paper and make it better. I also used his paper as an example for finishing my paper. “

As Table 16 indicates, five participants wrote a first drafts with less than 180 words for Task A (approximately 40%). At the end of Task A, I member checked with the participants as a group on their previous experience with writing. Three participants, Rena, Becky and Roxanne, said they had written short essays of around 300 words in Spanish. Harry, Margaret, and Julie had written paragraphs. Alice, Andy, Jasmine, Jenny, Joseph, and Monica reported that they had only written short answers to textbook or exam questions in Spanish. For Task B, the number of short drafts was reduced to four drafts (30%) and the number of words increased. Three students had short first drafts on both tasks, two students had the problem only on Task A, and one student had the problem only on Task B.

The two factors related to the writing task, the use of the Internet as a source of information and the number of words required for the essays, resulted in some students writing incomplete drafts. This, however, did not always result in students writing short feedback commentaries. As Appendix 36 shows, four students who received short drafts managed to write feedback of more than 200-words (Alice and Andy for Task A, and Jenny and Monica for Task B). Four students who received short drafts wrote short feedback also (Joseph and Monica for Task A, and Joseph and Roxanne for Task B).

The Impact of Text Type on Peer Response and Revision

Participants were asked if they thought that the task influenced the way they responded. All participants, except for Monica and Roxanne, perceived that the text type in the task determined their focus of attention when responding. They mentioned that when they read their peer's persuasive essays, they focused on finding if the text was convincing or not. Jasmine said,

When I was reading her paper I wasn't just saying oh, this is good information. I was trying to make sure that her paper was trying to persuade me and I gave her ideas for, well-put more of why you think this is important instead of just stating it. I tried to remind her that it was a persuasive paper. I was focusing on that when I did my peer response paper. You weren't just critiquing it on general basis in your opinion but it had to be a persuasive opinion, so, it was different.

The participants perceived that providing feedback on the persuasive essay required more of their involvement. Margaret, for example, emphasized that when she was reading her peer's persuasive essay, she had to think rather than just read.

To see if it did persuade me, if her topic actually made me think, oh this is really important. Cause the other one you were just reading, just reading, reading, and reading. This one you were thinking, ok maybe this topic is really, really worthwhile. (p. 2)

The persuasive task drove the participants to engage in reading and responding as communicative activities. It also moved them to discover the rhetorical strategies used by their peers. Andy pointed to this issue when in the semi-structured interview for Task B, he contrasted how he responded on the evaluative and the persuasive essays: “In the evaluation you took their word for it, whereas in the persuasive, you had to understand, why is this person trying to convince me of this, and how are they doing it? How are they supporting themselves?”

Students also perceived that the text type in the task influenced the way they revised. Jasmine described how revising for the persuasive essay was different from revising for the evaluative essay.

When I went back and revised, I wanted to make sure that what I was saying was persuading people. I had to make sure that I wasn't just stating facts as in the evaluation, that I was stressing them for one reason or the other, to make it persuasive. I think I used “important” a lot, and “the importance of.” (p. 2)

The Factor of Practice

Monica and Roxanne were not certain that the task made their response and revision different. They considered that they read their peers essays differently and they wrote their drafts and responses differently on Task B because of the effects of practice. Monica attributed the difference in response to her built-up vocabulary.

I don't think it was the task. I think that I had looked up so many things that I learned a lot. Suddenly I didn't have to look up words. I became more comfortable also. When I was reading my partner's persuasive essay I would start thinking and it would trigger more words and questions. I mean, how many times have I done it? It just builds up; I have built up a better vocabulary throughout the semester. (p. 1)

Roxanne's perception coincided with Monica's. When I asked Roxanne if she thought that the task influenced the way she responded or revised she said it didn't. Then she added,

I think because I've done it a few other times, it made it a little easier. Just from past experiences, you take from each and you feel a little more comfortable and you sort of know the kinds of things to look for a little bit (p. 2).

End of Section Summary

From the participants' perspective, two factors influenced the way they participated in peer response and approached revision, (a) their perceived language proficiency, and (b) the characteristics of the writing tasks.

In relation to perceived language proficiency, one student perceived that her proficiency in Spanish did not allow her to provide the kind of feedback she received from her more proficient peers. Her perception was congruent with the data found in her feedback commentaries and her drafts. She wrote more idea units and was "interpretative" in the feedback to the partner she perceived as

more proficient. However, she displayed a wider variety of idea units and was “supportive” in the feedback to the peer that she perceived at her level. Another student reported that she gave differential feedback depending on the language proficiency perceived in her peers. However another factor, the length of the draft she received, could have influenced the way she provided feedback.

The differences in perceived language proficiency did not represent a barrier for the participants’ expression of ideas. The 12 participants in the case reported 5 strategies that they used to overcome language difficulties, among which were paraphrasing, code switching, and the use of the learning tools provided in the peer response preparation.

In relation to the writing task, the use of the Internet as a source of information and the number of words required for the tasks influenced the time some participants spent on the tasks and the length of their drafts. This, in turn, influenced the length of the feedback commentaries of some students. Most of the students perceived that the type of text in the task influenced how they responded and revised. Responding to the persuasive essay seemed to be more engaging for the participants than responding to the evaluative essay..

Perceptions on the Use of Computers for Peer Response

Question 4. How do the participants perceive the use of computers for peer response? Data to respond to this question came primarily from the semi-structured interviews, in which the participants were asked about their reactions to the use of computers in the development of the tasks. The learning journals and my observation notes were secondary sources of data.

The participants perceived two benefits and one drawback in the way computers were used for peer response in this case study. The first benefit came from the word processing tools, which were immediate providers of feedback on spelling and grammar. This allowed the participants to test their hypothesis on language form when writing their essays, and facilitated their attention on content when providing feedback. The second benefit came from the possibility of alternating different texts on screen, which facilitated the incorporation of reading while writing, the essence of written peer response. These two benefits suggest a fit between computer technology and peer response. A drawback, however, was that the participants missed the presence of oral expression in peer response. Appendix 37 summarizes the participants' perceptions on the use of computers for peer response.

Computers as Providers of Feedback

Margaret, Alice and Roxanne referred to their use of the word processing tools for grammar and spelling check. They perceived the computer as a provider of immediate feedback, and their views on their own roles in peer response seemed to have changed in the process of the writing tasks.

Margaret reported that these tools helped her in learning to accentuate words in Spanish. During the semi-structured interview for Task A, she explained the hypothesis testing and memorization processes she was involved in when using these tools.

I have a problem with the accents and the computer kind of helps you and then after that I start to pick up where they're supposed to be. I am sometimes a little iffy on where they go. There are words that, after you see them so many times, you see where the errors are. You keep seeing the same word over and over, and you learn where the mistake is. You start to memorize and remember where the accent goes, and you remember that for next time. (p. 4)

At the end of Task B, Margaret talked again about her perception of the use of computers in the class. This time she referred to the computer as a peer response partner.

It's kind of like having a partner, a peer response partner, but not really, because it just, just at the basics, not like overall. Another person would give you a different input than the computer can, but it's still helpful. (p. 7)

Alice was another participant that perceived she could use the computer to test her hypothesis on language form. In the semi-structured interview for Task A, she explained how she used the word processing tools to learn how to spell words correctly in Spanish.

A lot of words that you just hear or that you pick up, and then it would tell you that you weren't hearing right and that you spelled wrong. Then I could go back and look them up so that I had the right word. (p. 6)

By the end of Task B, Alice attributed a function to the computer that allowed her to focus on content when providing feedback to her peers. Alice seemed to perceive the computer as a tool to fix grammar, while she perceived herself as an interpreter of meanings. In the following excerpt of the interview, she described her perceptions of her role and the computer's role in peer response.

I think that the computer is there to fix your grammar, and that way when you're revising other people, you're looking more at content. When I read somebody's paper, I know that the computer is going to find agreement, all our nouns matching our articles. I don't worry about looking for it. I look more at what they're saying, at what they want to say. (p. 11)

Roxanne's perceptions on the use of computers in peer response also changed from Task A to Task B. During the peer response preparation, I observed that she was very impressed by the possibility of having instant feedback on grammar and spelling. In her learning journal for Task A, she

referred to the efficiency of the word processing tools: “The spell check and grammar check on the computer are a very efficient way to learn those important things because the feedback is immediate.”

By the end of Task B, Roxanne had realized that the word processing tools would do the grammar check and that she could focus on content when providing feedback to her peers.

I think that on the previous paper I looked more on the grammar, the words, and maybe the sentences. Then I started realizing that it wasn't really my job. So with his [Benjamin's draft], I didn't do that as much. I zeroed in more on did it hang together. I think I made the comment that his last paragraph sort of seemed out context with the rest. (p. 2)

The cases of Margaret, Alice and Roxanne illustrate the processes through which these participants changed their perception on the use of the computer for peer response. At first, they were using it to test their hypothesis on language form. As they became more familiar with the language and more confident that the computer would act as a peer response partner for grammar and spelling, they began to change their focus from grammar correction to response on content. This might have been another factor that influenced the participants' prevalent focus on content.

Computers as Facilitators of Textual Dialogue

Although the responses of some students referred to the use of the computer while they were composing their essays, these responses have a

significant bearing on peer response. Composing while reading peer feedback and composing while reading an Internet source, both involve writing one text from another text. Practice in each of these forms of composing should lead to a dialogic view of language, which is compatible with process writing and the second language acquisition principles on which the course syllabus is based.

Jenny, Monica and Becky used the computer to read while writing, by having different texts on screen at the same time. For example, they could compare the information on different sites, while composing their essays. They could also read their peers' feedback while revising their own drafts. Lastly, they could read their finished products and compare them with the written products of others in the on-line portfolio. In all these activities, reading became part of the composing process and students constructed meaning from one text for another text.

Jenny reported that she had never used the computer in the way she was using it for the class. She described how she opened documents of different kinds to work with them on the computer. She seemed to value the fact of not having to handle papers when reading and composing at the same time. In the semi-structured interview for Task A, she described how she alternated texts on her computer screen when composing her drafts and her peer feedback.

I wouldn't think about having a whole bunch of different windows open at the same time. And having the Word open and then having four or five Internet sites open, clicking on each one and referencing. I never did that

before. I like doing everything on the computer it's all on one space, you don't need a hard copy or anything. (p. 2)

I observed that students enjoyed working with different texts on screen to read and write when they were in the computer lab. They also saw that they could work faster and easier. Monica, who did not like working with computers, talked about the convenience of working with different texts on the computer screen. In the following excerpt of the interview for Task A, she describes how she made her texts go back and forth, as in textual dialogue.

It's nice having the computer where you can pull up, have the Web site, and then have the Word document and just go back and forth. That's what I usually do. I have a bunch of different things. I'd have the Blackboard up, and all the different boxes. I can just go back and forth quickly. That's a lot easier. (p. 3)

Becky talked about her experiences with the online portfolio. In the portfolio she read her own and her classmates' texts. She liked being exposed to the variety of points of view. She also valued the opportunity to see how others wrote and what their level of Spanish was. Becky saw the advantage of having the chance to appropriate the language used by her peers. She also seemed to perceive, in the online portfolio, the communicative purpose of writing. In the following excerpt of the semi-structured interview for Task A. Becky described her perceptions on the electronic portfolio as a place for dialogue among peers.

I really like seeing our papers there. I really think that's cool. You get to see what other people think, their ideas, how they write. A lot of times I like to see how people write to see if we're all kind of on the same level. You always learn new words, when you read other people, other people's writing. It's always been private; the teacher never lets you read them. You turn them in and then you never see them again until you get your own grade back. (p. 6)

The Need for Oral Peer Response

One drawback was perceived by some students on way computer technology was used for peer response in this case study: it was not accompanied by oral peer response. The participants perceived the need of oral language first, because they could not discuss their peers' texts as thoroughly only by writing about them. Second, they perceived that their speaking skills were being hampered. Third, reading each other's papers made them feel the need to talk to each other.

Joseph, who rated his writing proficiency as intermediate high, was one of the students who pointed out the need for oral language in peer response. He perceived that oral language was easier than written language to discuss his peers' papers. In his learning journal for Task A Joseph wrote: "I think it may be easier to sit together with someone and TALK [sic] about the changes to be made, either physically or on the phone." Joseph thought that written language was convenient because it helped him to organize and remember the ideas he

wanted to discuss with his partner. However, he did not feel that written language could communicate all that he wanted to say. Neither did he think that written language gave the same opportunities than oral language to help his students improve their texts. In the semi-structured interview for Task A Joseph mentioned the importance of talking to improve the essays.

I think I'd like to spend more time interacting, talking, instead, like we use the computer lab. The sentences we receive, that you literally discuss with your partners what we wanted to do. I didn't like that [using exclusively writing] too much. Because I just wanted to talk out and I don't think you can convey all your ideas on writing. Everything that comes to mind you say in person, so I think we could get every possible thing that you get wrong on the paper, to be able to fix it. But in writing you just got what you're writing on and hopefully you got everything down on the paper for the person to change. I think it's good to write it, to get all your ideas down, but I think you should accompany it with talking about it in Spanish.

(p. 3)

Roxanne was another student that referred to the insufficient use of oral language. She perceived that all the time that was being dedicated to computer-mediated peer response was improving her reading and writing abilities. Meanwhile, her speaking and listening skills were weakening. In the learning journal for Task A, Roxanne wrote:

I still have a weakness in pronunciation and oral communication. I honestly feel my reading in Spanish has improved greatly, but my oral communication and understanding the spoken word is still poor. When will I have a breakthrough?

Jasmine and Monica felt the need to hear a human voice, and they even contacted their peers out of class. Jasmine called Roxanne, as she mentioned it in her learning journal for Task B:

I got her phone number through email and called her to make sure she got my paper through e-mail. We didn't talk about our papers over the phone or anything, but it was nice to put a voice with the name and face.

Monica called Jenny. The need to talk about their papers made them call each other out of class. That communication could have been in Spanish, if it had been in the classroom. In the following excerpt of the semi-structured interview for Task B with Monica, she described what she and her partner talked about on the phone. Their talk seemed peer response talk.

We have gotten together a few times and she had my phone number, and I had her phone number .We were talking back and forth outside the class which I hadn't done with any of my other partners before. She called me and said, I'm having trouble finding this, where can I find this, so I'd help her in that way. Then, I would call her and say what are you doing about this part of the paper. (p. 3)

End of Section Summary

The word processing tools were considered beneficial by the participants because they solved immediate language problems and they gave opportunities for language learning. Initially the students focused on language form, stimulated by the feedback provided by the tools. Later, the students felt more confident to focus on the content of texts because they relied on the tools to revise the surface aspects of their peers' and their own texts. This might have impacted the focus of peer response on content. The students valued the possibility of reading while writing by using different texts on screen. Finally, they considered that oral peer response should accompany computer-mediated peer response.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This section provides a summary of the findings, a discussion of the most relevant issues, recommendations for future research and implications for instruction.

Summary of Findings

This case study examined peer response and revision in a technology enhanced, intermediate college Spanish class. Four research questions were addressed. The first question examined how participants provide computer-mediated feedback to their peers on their writings. This question comprised three aspects in the participants' feedback: the language functions the students used, their approach to providing feedback, and the focus of attention of their feedback comments. Results indicated that the participants used primarily reacting, advising and announcing language functions in their feedback. Most participants used a combination of these and other functions to assume a "supportive" approach to encourage their peers to write. Others used an "interpretative" approach to verify the comprehension of their peers' ideas written in Spanish. Still others utilized an "evaluative" approach to point to aspects that their peers' essays were lacking. These approaches were influenced by aspects such as the students' interpersonal relationships, their feedback preferences, their learning

needs, their assumptions of the function of peer response, and the length of the drafts they received. Even the students who rated their writing proficiency as novice were able to participate in peer response, and they deployed a variety of language functions to approach feedback in ways that are generally reserved to the teacher in the language classroom (e.g. advise and elicit).

Results also indicated that participants focused on the content of their peers' drafts and to a lesser extent on the organization, rhetoric, vocabulary, mechanics and grammar. Students focused more on organization when they critiqued the evaluative essays and on rhetoric when they critiqued the persuasive essays. Interestingly when they focused on content, students deployed the widest variety of language functions, whereas when they focused on grammar when critiquing peers' writings they deployed the narrowest variety of language functions. This was probably because as language learners they felt more confident to deal with and expand their comments on issues of content than on aspects of grammar. In addition, students focused on content because they sometimes provided ideas to their peers on what to write. They focused on organization because they were interested in getting ideas on how to organize their own essays.

The second research question examined how participants use computer-mediated feedback given by peers about their writing. This question comprised two aspects of the students' use of feedback: the impact of the feedback received on the revisions made, and the reasons that students gave for their

revisions. Results indicated that less than half of the participants used peer response to revise. When they did use their partners' feedback to revise, they added detail to their essays. They seemed to use peer feedback as a kind of content resource for writing. Other students used peer feedback to polish the language of their essays. These students seemed to use peer response to learn Spanish; their more knowledgeable peers' commentaries served as a scaffold for their language development. Two students used peer response to change the communicative purpose of their writing in three of the revisions they made. Feedback that led to revision contained primarily advising language functions. However, more than one half of the revisions produced were made by the participants on their own, because they doubted the correctness of their peers' comments or because they received compliments rather than suggestions, or feedback with unspecific focus of attention.

Although most students did not use peer response to produce deep revisions, they did use it to learn different aspects of writing in Spanish. Through peer response they learned, for example, how to write more comprehensible drafts in Spanish, how to incorporate peers' ideas to lengthen their texts, how to improve the organization of their essays, how to use new vocabulary and how others perceived the issues they wrote about.

The third research question examined the factors that influence the ways in which participants write computer-mediated feedback. Students reported that their perceived language proficiency was one of the factors that influenced how

they responded to their peers. They could praise the peers that they perceived as more proficient, or interpret their texts by writing what was contained in them, but they could not give them advice, collaborate, question or elicit ideas from them. When they worked with peers that they perceived at their level, they could advise, elicit and question more. Their language proficiency also caused difficulties when writing their commentaries. Students, for example, did not have enough vocabulary to critique their peers' writings in Spanish. Participants, however, used a variety of strategies to compensate for their language difficulties. They used the dictionary and the help of their peers and the instructor. Most interestingly, they said they used paraphrasing, the learning tools provided during the preparation stage and code switching to write their feedback commentaries in Spanish. Through the use of these strategies, most of the participants were able to write feedback longer than 200 words, which was the class requirement.

The writing task was the second factor that the participants perceived as influential in the way they responded to their partners. Using the Internet as a source of information and writing two 500-word essays in Spanish were challenging requirements for some students. They invested a considerable amount of time reading and writing to end up with an incomplete draft. This, in turn, caused difficulties to some of the students who had to respond to those drafts because rather than critiquing them, they had to think about ideas to suggest to their peers to write. In spite of the difficulties related to the writing

tasks, the great majority of the students ended up with essays that were longer than 500 words because of the help and support they received from each other. Through the feedback commentaries some students could get an idea of how their writing in Spanish was being interpreted, while others could get more ideas to write. This was particularly significant because only three of the students had written 300-word essays before they participated in the case study.

The text type in the writing tasks was the third factor that, according to the participants' views, influenced the ways in which the participants responded to their peers. Specifically, the type of text influenced their focus of attention. The persuasive essay required the students to be more engaged while reading and to focus on the extent to which the text was convincing. This drew their attention to the rhetorical strategies used by the writers.

The fourth research question examined how the participants' perceived the use of computers for peer response. The participants perceived that the language tools of the word processing computer program relieved their concern on grammar correction because they knew that these tools would provide their peers with more reliable advice on spelling and grammar issues than the advice that they, as language learners themselves, could give. This allowed them to focus on content when producing the feedback commentaries for their peers. The students also appreciated the facility with which they could alternate texts on the computer screen to read while writing. They could read their peers' essays while composing feedback, or they could read their peers' feedback while revising their

essays. Students, however, perceived that computer-mediated peer response lacked oral peer response. According to their views, writing could not convey all that they wanted to communicate to their peers about their texts. In addition, they felt that their reading and writing abilities were improving while their speaking and listening abilities were being hampered. Students suggested that computer-mediated peer response need to be accompanied by face-to-face peer response. These results indicate that computer-mediated peer response needs to incorporate oral peer response to satisfy the students' needs and to foster an integrated language development.

Care should be taken, however, when interpreting these results because of the nature of the case study approach adopted. Yet, this study provides some potentially useful information concerning peer response and revision in computer-mediated environments and in Spanish language, which merits discussion.

Discussion

As other studies have shown, the processes involved in peer response are complex (Paulus, 1999; Villamil & Guerrero, 1996; Zhu, 1995) and learners approach the task of responding in different ways (Lockhart & Ng, 1996; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992). Students in this case study did not participate in peer response in a fixed fashion. Findings revealed that participants adopted different views and approaches to peer response, depending on a multiplicity of factors. All approaches, however, seemed to offer benefits to the

students. For example, the “supportive” approach motivated the writers to continue writing in the foreign language, to feel good about their writing, and to carry the activity through to completion. At the same time, this approach helped the readers to learn and practice the language of support, necessary to promote an appropriate environment in a writing classroom. The “interpretative” approach helped the writers in verifying if their texts conveyed to the reader what they intended to communicate in Spanish. The readers practiced finding the main points on a text, analyzing the organization of texts, and synthesizing information in Spanish. The “evaluative” approach helped the writers to identify parts of the text that were problematic to the reader. It also helped the readers to deploy the widest variety of language functions.

As in other L2 studies that examine the nature of the language used in peer response (Lee, 1997; Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mendonça & Johnson, 1994; Stanley, 1992; Tang & Tithecott, 1999), findings of this study indicated that students of different perceived proficiency levels were able to use language for different functional purposes out of their need to mean. Authors contend that this is a necessary condition to acquire a language (Christie, 1989; Halliday, 1978), and some pedagogical strategies are not always successful in providing it to students. This study showed that with preparation, peer response is an appropriate infrastructure for students to learn and practice reacting, advising, eliciting, questioning, and collaborating in a foreign language.

The study contains multiple illustrations of how students collaborated to complete the writing tasks and to develop their abilities to write in Spanish. Language learning theory that emphasizes the role of collaborative dialogue in language learning (Swain, 2000; Vygotsky, 1999) students can develop their writing abilities by scaffolding or helping each other. Participants in this study not only used their peers' feedback to complete their drafts and verify that their ideas were going through, but they also their peers' drafts to get ideas on how to organize their essays and to appropriate Spanish vocabulary.

Peer response is influenced by the specific context in which it takes place. This study revealed a considerable focus of attention on content in the feedback commentaries of the participants. This differs from the findings of other peer response studies in L1 and L2 that indicate that students concentrate more on surface revisions that do not affect meaning (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Leki, 1990; Paulus, 1999; Spivey & King, 1989; Tsui & Ng, 2000, Villamil & Guerrero, 1998). The present study was carried out in a content-based course. The goal of content-based instruction is to help students focus on meaning, and the target language is used as a vehicle through which subject matter content is taught and learned, rather than as the immediate object of study (Brinton, et al., 1989). Met (1991) proposes that "...'content' in content-based programs represents material that is cognitively engaging and demanding for the learner, and is material that extends beyond the target language or the target culture" (p. 150). In this study peer response was used in the context of a content course rather than a

language course, which may have impacted the students' focus of attention when responding. This finding points to the importance of curriculum/syllabus design issues to understand how peer response works. Ultimately, results of peer response depend on the type of course in which it is used.

The participants' voices were an integral part of this case study. Leki (2001) has pointed out the need for studies that give account, in the students' own voices, of what happens to students in L2 writing classes. The students' voices, for example, gave account of the rationale for their revisions. The quantitative analysis of the textual revisions alone did not show that some students did not revise because the feedback they received could not be directly used to improve their essays. This analysis did not show either that the students who revised mostly added to their second drafts because of the difficulties they encountered in trying to complete the number of words required. These findings point to the importance of combining text analysis with discourse-based and open-ended interviews to have a clearer picture of the students' decision-making strategies while revising.

The findings concerning the variety of strategies that participants used to overcome their language difficulties indicated their abilities to devise ways and means to promote their learning. Most of the strategies used were not provided in the peer response preparation, which shows their potential as language learners. The participants' use of strategies evidenced the characteristics of good language learners summarized by Ellis (1994): they were concerned with form,

they were concerned with communication, they had an active approach to the task, they were aware of the learning process, and they were able to use strategies flexibly. The strategy of code switching was particularly interesting. Students spontaneously used this strategy to compensate their language difficulties and to promote their own writing fluency. This finding suggests that written L2 peer response is a bilingual event in which students use their L1 to regulate their mental processes while writing their commentaries. The role of L1 in L2 peer response should be further explored. Other studies (Anton & DiCamilla, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Woodwall, 2002) have examined this strategy while students are composing, but no study to my knowledge has investigated how code switching occurs in written form when students are responding to their peers' writings. This seems an interesting and useful area to explore in the field of L2 peer response.

Another strategy used by the participants while composing feedback was the handout with expressions in Spanish to respond. This learning tool was provided to be used during the preparation stage of the study. Participants, however, mentioned that they sometimes used it when they had difficulties to start their feedback. This learning tool was another "voice", although not the only one, which the students heard in the social context of peer response to help their language fluency. Some researchers object to the use of explicit guidelines in peer response because students may use them mechanically instead of using their own language to comment (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In the context of

Spanish as a foreign language, however, students need to be taught appropriate language to participate fully in the process. Other studies have shown that facilitative language in L2 peer response result in greater social and academic benefits (Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992; Nelson & Murphy, Tang & Tithecott, 1999).

Results of this study suggest that with preparation, L2 students do not need to have an advanced level of writing proficiency in the target language to participate in computer-mediated peer response activities. Other studies (Berg, 1999; Hacker, 1994; McGroarty & Zhu, 1997; Stanley, 1992; Lane & Potter, 1998; Zhu, 1995) have highlighted the importance of providing students with training for peer response. These studies have used different training methods that focus on making effective responses. Preparation in this study, however, involved not only providing the students with the rationale of this kind of activity and modeling different types of comments, but also supplying them with language resources to prompt them, and teaching them the use of computer technology to compose their feedback. Computer mediated peer response in a foreign language is much more complex because it demands from teachers at least four kinds of knowledge. Teachers must have (a) knowledge of the processes involved in L2 writing development, (b) knowledge of peer response as a pedagogical technique, (c) knowledge of the applications of computer technology for the development of writing, and (c) knowledge of the pragmatics

of peer response in Spanish. These kinds of knowledge are necessary to enable students to participate fully in computer-mediated peer response in Spanish.

Computer-mediated peer response is a new area of research and there is much more to learn if we are to provide learning experiences that are maximally supportive of collaborative dialogue in computer-mediated environments for learning to write in a foreign language. The case study approach used in this study captured part of the complexity of the processes involved. In the following paragraphs I share some reflections in relation to computer-mediated feedback.

Sending feedback as e-mail attachments seemed to have some benefits over using other forms of computer-mediated communication. Compared to students that work through synchronous communication, students in this study did not have to be at a computer at the same time to participate in peer response. In addition, they had more time to think and to plan the content and the organization of their commentaries in Spanish. Students wrote their feedback commentaries with the use of a word processor and sent them as e-mail attachments. Compared to students who work through e-mail, the participants of this study employed many of the rhetorical and stylistic characteristics normally used in essays, rather than the “hybrid” type of language generally used in e-mail communication (Faigley, 1992; Ferrara, Brunner & Wittenmore, 1991). This augmented the students’ practice in the formal written language, although it sometimes made them feel overwhelmed by the amount of writing they had to do for the course. This problem can probably be solved with the use of the word

processor tool that inserts short commentaries into the students' writing. Readers would feel less overwhelmed with writing feedback and writers would find it easier to locate the issue that is being critiqued.

Students had positive attitudes toward using the computer for the class. Their level of comfort while working in the computer lab was evident in repeated statements. They enjoyed working independently and having opportunities to ask each other for help when writing their commentaries and their essays. They also valued the possibility of having all the reading and writing resources in a centralized location on-line. However, they were concerned about the perceived lack of communication with their peers. As recounted above, one student said that he could not convey all that he wanted to say about his peers' drafts through written language. Perhaps the absence of oral peer response made written peer response more time consuming and difficult because the students had to work on their own on the ideas they wanted to discuss in their commentaries. This weakness could be addressed by having students interact orally before writing their feedback commentaries, or by having them discuss their written feedback orally.

Students felt that they had improved dramatically their abilities to read and write in Spanish, but they perceived that their speaking and listening abilities were restrained. Beauvois (1998) found that students that used computer-mediated communication to learn a foreign language could bridge from oral to written expression. Perhaps the lack of time and opportunities to procure that

bridging was the most challenging aspect of teaching this computer-mediated peer response focused course.

Each participant wrote approximately 1,400 words for the two tasks under study. This writing activity certainly impacted the students' abilities to read, write and use some of the computerized writing tools available. With recent technological advances, it has become commonplace to conduct discussions, negotiations and collaborations entirely through electronic communication. Electronic texts are places where readers and writers meet linguistically and cognitively, and college students must be prepared to employ them effectively to communicate in their first and in a second language. The difficulties encountered by some of the participants to achieve the number of words in the tasks indicated the need to include process writing and peer response tasks that incorporate technology from the beginning levels of college Spanish. Students can start writing short texts (e.g. summaries, autobiographies and letters) collaboratively and responding to each others' writings orally or using response-sheets. They can gradually move into writing that is more sophisticated, incorporating oral and computer-mediated peer response. These activities could contribute to a more articulated college Spanish curriculum (Jurasek, 1996) that links the basic courses with the advanced Spanish Composition and Spanish Literature courses.

Findings indicated that the word processor language tools contributed to the participants' language learning by providing opportunities for noticing (Ellis, 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1996) and hypothesis testing language form (Ellis, 1994;

Swain, 2000). Other studies in L1 have found that these tools are harmful because they apply the same prescriptive rules to all texts regardless of context or content, and they offer suggestions and corrections that novice writers accept uncritically (Kozma, 1991). The participants of this study, however, had four semesters of Spanish studies or more, and they therefore had enough knowledge of Spanish grammar to sort accurate from inaccurate advice. Students seemed to have improved their attitudes and increased their motivation to write in Spanish when they learned to use the word processing language tools. This was probably because they perceived that their essays would have better quality and that they would have less difficulty with grammar during the writing process.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research can be conducted to investigate whether writing shorter essays would lead the students to provide feedback utilizing other language functions. Some students provided encouragement and support to their peers because they perceived the task as difficult to complete. The way students approach peer response can change depending on the task. Studies can explore the language functions in the feedback of students in less demanding writing tasks. Or, research can examine the language functions in feedback provided at two different points during the process of writing an essay. Research in this area could indicate the approach students take at different stages of the writing process.

One factor that may have influenced the approach to peer response taken by the readers is their past experience in writing courses and with peer feedback. For example, if a student had experiences with peer correction that focused on evaluating the end product, then the student probably would model this approach when giving feedback to others and adopt an “evaluative” approach. This study did not specifically address this area, but future research could shed light on the impact that previous feedback experiences have on the students’ approaches to peer response.

In this study, participants were not instructed on how to revise. The scarce attention of the participants to deeper aspects of revision might be in part explained by the lack of revision preparation. Further research can be conducted in a Spanish Composition course that provides the necessary preparation on both peer response and revision. This research would contribute to a better understanding of the influence of peer response and revision preparation on the types of textual revisions produced. Revision can also be examined with students at other levels of proficiency, in writing tasks with diverse levels of difficulty.

The participants’ use of written code switching when composing their commentaries offers an interesting area of research in the field of written peer response. Further research in this area would certainly enhance our knowledge on the processes involved in L2 written peer response. Studies can examine how code switching operates in feedback for essays of different kinds. Nevertheless, data collection for such study would need to take into consideration that many of

the changes that students produce on their writing cannot be easily traced when they use the computer to write. Participants would need to be instructed to submit their mixed- code feedback before they change their L1 text segments to L2.

Implications for Instruction

In view of the results of the study, computer-mediated peer response should be used in Spanish as foreign language classrooms because the benefits are considerable. Preparation is more complex than in face-to-face, second language contexts. Students need to be prepared in the appropriate language and computer tools to use, in addition to modeling for them the process of peer response. This preparation requires time and effort on the part of students and instructors. Time and effort are, nevertheless, worth spending. To be more effective and accepted by students, computer-mediated peer response must be accompanied by oral peer response.

Results of this study indicated the need for more specific feedback. Focus on content, which is difficult to achieve in many writing and language classrooms, might have been a result of the combination of peer response and content-based instruction. Sometimes, however, participants provided comments that were unspecific or vague. These unspecific comments were generally related to grammar and spelling, aspects in which students did not seem confident enough to provide direct advice or suggestion. Comments such as “you need to check grammar”, or “I noticed that you have some spelling mistakes” are examples of

this situation. Instructors can prepare student writers to respond more specifically and produce comments that are more fruitful for revision. One suggestion derived from these results is that instructors prepare students not only to provide feedback, but also to provide feedback that could lead to revision. Students need to be aware of the possible effects that their feedback may have on their peers' writings. Then students can make better decisions about the more convenient language choices to provide fruitful feedback.

The constrained variety of revisions made by the participants calls for instruction on the difference between revising and editing, and on the different purposes for which writers revise. Students can be guided to explore alternative revision approaches and choices related to audience, purpose, content and task. This instruction should help students not only in writing, but also in developing their abilities to provide fruitful feedback. Revision should also be accounted for in the students' grade. This and other studies have shown that students do not revise if they are not required, missing opportunities to learn in the process.

Instructors should help students share the strategies they naturally use to write L2 feedback. L2 learners that do not automatically use these strategies can be scaffolded if the instructor identifies those students that make interesting strategy choices and asks them to model in small group activities. Composing strategies to help students write their feedback and their essays can be brought to a conscious level for all students while they learn from each other.

To enable students to participate more fully in the process of computer-mediated peer response, instructors need to provide students with facilitative language. Handouts with response expressions, constantly enriched with the students' own feedback phrases, could benefit the participation of students. The instructor needs to discuss from the beginning the uses and limitations of guidelines so that students recognize the inconvenience of using the phrases mechanically.

This study examined how computer-mediated peer response was used and perceived by the members of a class of intermediate college Spanish. Other case studies with the voices of other language learners will reveal other realities about peer response. As Cooper and Self (1990) asserted in relation to the effects of asynchronous conferencing on the classroom, "Teachers and students can learn to listen to multiple voices and learn the importance of different truths." (p. 851)

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Studies on Peer Response

Author/Year/ Language Purpose	# Participants/ Place	Data Sources	Focus	Design / Comments	Claims
Hacker (1994) English effects of training on PR	46 freshman composition US	-oral comments of pre- and post-test	-linguistic function -area of attention -specific function	-quasi-experiment -quantitative -Analysis-Idea unit -single data source	-trained students asked more questions -their questions were more phatic -they dramatically increased the revision suggestions per episode
McGroarty and Zhu (1997) English effects of training on PR	4 instructors 169 freshman composition US	-questionnaire -initial drafts -written feedback on response sheets -oral comments -observations -interviews with instructors	-attitude toward PR -writing quality -number and type of comments -interaction pattern: turn-taking, efforts to negotiate meaning -overall impressions of how students approached PR -teacher perceptions	-quasi-experiment -quantitative/ qualitative -Analysis-episodes: subunits of conferences with unique combination of topic and purpose -multiple data sources	-training improved ability to peer critique and attitudes toward PR -trained students spent more time and were more involved in PR -Teachers favored PR -no significant difference on students' writings
Zhu (1995) English effects of training on PR	169 freshman composition US	-written comments on response sheets -initial drafts -oral comments	-type and evaluations of feedback -holistic scores -interaction patterns, turn-taking, efforts to negotiate meaning and role of the writer	-quasi-experiment -quantitative/ qualitative -multiple data sources	-training led to more and better-quality feedback and livelier discussion -Trained students demonstrated "reader- writer sharing" pattern rather than the "reader-reporting" pattern of interaction.
Stanley (1992) ESL whether more elaborate preparation results in more fruitful conversations and revision	31 university US	-oral comments -final drafts	-type of response, mean number of turns p/speaker/session, length of turn (T-unit) -incidence of writers' responses to readers evaluations -responses that produced more revision	-quasi-experiment -quantitative/qualitative -coding scheme for writer and responder	-coached groups produced more comments, provided specific responses, were more assertive in getting advice and revised more -responses that produced more revisions were pointing, advising, collaborating and questioning.

Note: Table continued on next page.

Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

Lane and Potter (1998) ESL modalities for instruction on peer response that yield better results	53 intermediate level US (Hawaii)	-attitudes survey -oral comments -initial and final drafts	- frequency of stances (feedback style) -type of comment -type of revision -attitude change	-quasi-experiment -quantitative -3 treatments -attention to revision	-students recognize the value of peer feedback -there was variation in types of comments -all groups increased number of significant changes in drafts -demonstration / role play were more effective than lecture / handout and lecture / discussion / handout
Berg (1999) ESL whether trained peer response shapes students revision types and writing quality	46 intensive English program US	-TOEFL scores -initial and final drafts -scores using TWE rating scale	-number of meaning changes (Faigley and Witte, 1981) -quality of writing	-quasi experiment -quantitative -1 treatment -reports the outcomes	-trained peer response generated a greater number of meaning changes -interaction effect between training status and level of proficiency was not statistically significant -trained students improved their writing from first to second draft more than untrained students did, ruling out difference in writing quality before treatment
Freedman (1992) English how goals and contexts relate to student talk in PR identify talk that is more and less productive	2 teachers 2 9 th grade classes	-oral comments -field notes -video and audio tapes of class discussions -teacher materials -student writing -interviews with students and teachers	-frequency of use, functions and organization of peer response groups by teachers -language functions	-longitudinal - U.A.:episodes -includes emic perspective	-frequency of use of response groups and amount of response within them varied -students avoided negative evaluation and helped each other -they discussed content and had difficulties discussing form and mechanics
Gere and Abbott (1985) English compare writing-group language across grade levels	5, 8, 11, 12 grades US	-oral comments	-linguistic function -area of attention -specific Focus	-longitudinal -U.A.: idea unit: segments of discourse that coincide with a person's focus of attention; usually a single clause -single data source	-students focused on content and offering directives about writing -quantity and type of idea units differed with type of writing

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Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

Nystrand (1986)	250 college	-final drafts -oral comments -composing process profiles	-student improvement -language functions	-longitudinal/large scale -attention to revision -multiple data sources	-students in PR groups had gains in writing -students in PR groups viewed revision as reconceptualization rather than as editing -best groups were collaborative and problem solving
English	US				
Context and interactional dynamics of peer response groups					
Nystrand (1997)	250 college	-surveys -interviews -field observations -quality in group time	-student autonomy measure -production of knowledge measure -student profile	-longitudinal/large scale -regression analysis -multiple data sources	-effective teachers use peer response to interrelate reading, writing and talking -the higher the degree of autonomy given to groups, the more they contribute to achievement -assignments to actively construct interpretations promote achievement
English	US				
effects of classroom practices and organization of instruction on student achievement					
Lockhart and Ng (1995)	27 dyads	- oral comments for 2 tasks (free topic)	-identification of readers' stances and characteristics -frequency counts of functions and content	-U.A: idea units -constant comparative method -single data source	-four reader stances were identified: authoritative, interpretative, probing and collaborative -authoritative readers took 70% and 60% of the talk -probing and collaborative stances engage students in fuller understanding of the writing process because the writer is encouraged to articulate the intended meaning of the text
ESL	US				
identify reader stances, language functions and topics discussed					
Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger, 1992	60 university	-written comments (letter to the writer)	-tone, content and organization	-exploratory -constant comparative method of analysis -one PR session -all students responded to same essay	-three stances were discerned: interpretative, prescriptive, collaborative -the largest number of PR (45%) were prescriptive and the smallest number (23%) were interpretative -prescriptive responses identified faults in the text and subordinated meaning to form.
ESL	US				
stances of readers toward writers					

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Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

Nelson & Murphy, 1992	4 university	-oral comments -student journals -student -instructor-student interviews -final drafts -interviews with students	-content analysis using a classroom observation system	-case study -U.A.: thought groups: single independent clause that reflect speaker's object of consciousness -multiple data sources	-students using a second language can stay on peer response tasks -individual group members differ in their satisfaction with the group experience
ESL	US				
examine the task and the social dimension of a peer response group					
Villamil and Guerrero (1996)	54 university	-oral comments	-processes -iterative method of analysis	-qualitative -U.A.: Whole transcripts focusing on "on-task" segments -two PR sessions -single data source	-students engaged in 7 types of social-cognitive activities (e.g. reading, assessing), 5 mediating strategies (e.g. using L1, providing scaffolding) and 4 social behaviors (e.g. affectivity, collaboration) -interactive process were extremely complex
ESL	US (Puerto Rico)				
Type of social-cognitive activities, strategies and social behavior in dyadic PR					
Nystrand and Brandt (1989)	95 freshman composition	-written descriptions of students on how they write at the start and the end of a term -written explanations on what students needed to do to revise a specific draft -oral comments -drafts -surveys	-language functions	-descriptive -multiple data sources -multiple PR sessions	-students who wrote for the instructors treated revision as editing and students who wrote for each other treated revision as reconceptualization -students who wrote for each other had higher quality in writing and more insight into their writing -Extended talk led to more revisions and talk that focused on clarifying and elaborating yielded revisions at level of genre, topic or commentary.
English	US				
Reports results of three studies over several years on the effectiveness of peer conferencing in college freshman writing					
Connor and Asenavage (1994)	26 university	-oral comments -teacher's written comments on initial drafts -revisions on final drafts	-type of revisions (surface/text-based) -types or revisions by source: group/teacher/self	-quantitative -text analysis -writers were given two prompts to choose -One PR session	-students made many revisions but few were the result of direct peer group response -students who made more changes made more text-based changes -students who made fewer changes made more surface changes
ESL	US				
Impact of PR on revisions					

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Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

<p>Tsui & Ng (2000)</p> <p>ESL</p> <p>extent to which teacher and peer comments facilitate revision</p>	<p>27 secondary school</p> <p>Hong Kong</p>	<p>-questionnaire</p> <p>-peer written comments on initial drafts of 2 tasks (essay and letter)</p> <p>-teacher written comments</p> <p>-oral comments</p> <p>-interviews with key participants</p>	<p>-attitudes and usefulness</p> <p>-proportions of teacher and peer comments (written and oral) on initial draft incorporated to final draft</p> <p>-perceptions</p>	<p>-quantitative and qualitative data</p> <p>-in the course of interviews, drafts, written and oral comments and revisions were presented to help students recall why they did or did not make revisions</p> <p>-multiple data sources</p> <p>-two tasks</p>	<p>-significant differences between perception of usefulness of reading teachers' comments and reading peers' comments; reading teachers' comments and PR sessions; and reading teachers' comments and reading peers' writings.</p> <p>-students favored teacher comments and reading peers' compositions more than peers' oral and written comments</p> <p>-teacher comments induced more revision</p> <p>-only those who incorporated low percentages of peers' comments perceived them as not useful</p> <p>-students assigned 4 roles to peer comments: they enhance sense of audience, raise awareness, encourage collaboration, foster ownership</p>
<p>Mangelsdorf (1992)</p> <p>ESL</p> <p>perceptions of students about PR</p>	<p>40 composition</p> <p>US</p>	<p>- students' responses to 4 open questions</p> <p>-teachers' written comments on initial drafts</p>	<p>-type of student comment: positive, mixed, negative</p> <p>-focus of attention by type of comment: content, organization and style, other</p> <p>-frequency of responses by language background</p>	<p>-Analysis-communication unit: a separate expression about a thought or behavior</p>	<p>students perceived PR activities:</p> <p>-are useful to improve content and organization</p> <p>-help them consider different ideas about their topics however they</p> <p>-don't trust their peer's and their own ability to critique</p> <p>-all students with totally negative views came from cultures that stress teacher-centered classrooms</p>
<p>Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1992)</p> <p>French</p> <p>effects of collaborative multistep oral/aural revision</p>	<p>30 first year university</p> <p>US</p>	<p>-scores on final drafts of 2 tasks (descriptions)</p>	<p>Comparison by component areas (content, grammar, organization, vocabulary, mechanics)</p>	<p>-quasi-experiment</p> <p>-no account of the feedback given</p> <p>-single data source</p> <p>-one PR session</p>	<p>-essays produced by students who revised collaboratively received significantly higher component and overall scores than those who received written feedback from the instructor</p>

Note: Table continued on next page.

Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

Paulus (1999)	11 university	-3 drafts -teacher oral comments -teacher written comments -two think-aloud protocols -scores on overall quality of second and third drafts	-types of revisions (Faigley and Witte, 1981) -source of revisions (peer, teacher, self) -reasons for revisions made -improvement of quality	-examined three drafts per student -no verification of the inferences on reasons for revising	--the majority of the students made surface level revisions -changes made as a result of peer and teacher feedback were more often in meaning-level changes -writing multiple drafts resulted in overall essay improvement
ESL	US				
Effect of teacher and peer feedback on student writing					
Billamil and Guerrero (1998)	14 university	-oral comments -first and final drafts of essays (narrative and persuasive) -written comments on response sheets	-trouble sources: problems, errors or deficiencies in the text. -types of revisions: incorporated/not incorporated/further revised/self-revised	-descriptive -iterative method of analysis -attention to text type -2 PR sessions	-74% of revisions made in PR were incorporated -55% of revisions made on final drafts were incorporated -writers made further revisions and self-revisions on the basis of previous peer collaboration -students focused equally on grammar and content when revising the narrative mode and predominantly on grammar in the persuasive mode -grammar was the most revised aspect and organization was the least attended aspect in either mode
EFL	Puerto Rico				
impact of PR on revision of narrative and persuasive essays					
Nelson and Murphy (1993)	4 university	-oral comments -initial and final drafts	-interaction patterns: interactive/non-interactive; cooperative defensive Extent to which writers revised in the light of suggestions (5 point scale)	-descriptive -6 PR sessions	-when writers interacted with their peers in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to use the peers' suggestions in revising -when writers interacted with their peers in a defensive manner or did not interact at all, the writer was less likely to use the peers' comments
ESL	US				
extent to which L2 students incorporate suggestions made by peers in response groups					

Note: Table continued on next page.

Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

Mendonça and Johnson (1994)	12 advanced US	-oral comments -revisions on initial and final drafts of essay (free topic) -interviews	-types of negotiations -percentages of revisions suggested and not suggested by peers -perceptions	-descriptive -analytic induction procedures -multiple data sources -1 PR session	-students asked questions(24%), offered explanations (36%), gave suggestions (11%), restated (28%) and corrected grammar (1%) -reviewers generated most type of negotiations -students used their peers ideas selectively -students found PR useful
Lee (1997)	4 university Hong Kong	-initial and final drafts of writings on two text types: application letter and book/film review -oral comments -interviews	-percentage of revisions generated and not generated from PR -negotiations (coding scheme: Mendonça and Johnson, 1994; Stanley, 1992) -perceptions	-descriptive -two text types -2 PR sessions	-reviewers most frequent kinds of negotiations were suggesting and evaluating -writers most frequent negotiations were explanation and accepting remark -60% of the revisions made by students were suggested by peers -students revised their initial drafts after PR even when not prompted by peers -students had positive views on PR
Tang and Tithecott (1999)	12 university Canada	-instructor and students' journal entries -oral comments -final drafts -students' notes	-type of journal comment and areas of concern -type of sociocognitive activity -language functions -percentage of revisions suggested by peers	-descriptive -attention to emic perspective -1 peer response session	-for the first session perceptions of PR were positive in 50% of the journal entries; by the end of the semester perceptions were positive (44%) and mixed (55.6%). -students saw benefits of PR but found it difficult to understand peers pronunciation and meaning without having a copy -felt inadequate giving feedback and preferred teacher feedback -engaged in reading, evaluating, pointing, writing and discussing task procedures -provided scaffolding -some used feedback in revising -less and more proficient students benefited

Note: Table continued on next page.

Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

Honeycutt (2001)	73 engineering	-survey -transcripts of synchronous and asynchronous comments	-level of computer expertise -preferences -types of nominal phrases	-two group comparison -U.A.: nominal phrase: nouns and their accompanying modifiers -two group comparison -two PR sessions	-through E-mail participants make greater reference to documents, contents, and rhetorical contexts -through chat participants make greater reference to writing and response tasks -E-mail was considered more serious and helpful than chat
English	US				
compare synchronous and asynchronous PR					
Mabrito (1992)	15 college	-oral comments -transcripts of synchronous comments -questionnaire	-linguistic function and specific focus of the response -attitudes toward PR	-multiple-case study -U.A.: discourse units: segment of spoken or written discourse that coincides with the responder's focus of attention	in networked meetings: -participation was more equal -responses were more substantive and text specific -students were more willing to give direction -students gave more positive evaluation than in face-to-face meetings
English	US				
examine the discourse of business writing students in face-to-face and real time computer network					
Palmquist (1993)	29 university	-written comments on initial drafts -beginning, middle and end interviews -course grades	-linguistic function and textual focus -perceptions -writing performance	-descriptive -included analysis of spontaneous or unsolicited responses	-information class focused on form and were less likely to suggest alternative interpretations or suggestions above word or sentence level -argument class engaged in substantive discussions and made significantly more comments
English	US				
Impact of curriculum on network use and quantity and quality of student responses					
Huang (1998)	17 university	-oral comments -transcripts of synchronous comments	-discourse functions	-two group comparison -two face-to-face and two computer mediated sessions per student	-distribution patterns were significantly different in the two contexts of discussion -in the CM context: greater proportion of time to state problems perceived (CM=17.5%, FF= 15.1%) and suggest revisions (CM=27.4%, FF=19.5%) -smaller proportion of speech dedicated to explanations, reasons or reactions (CM=2.3%, FF=10.9%) -greater proportion of speech devoted to praising (CM=7.8%, 2.8%)
EFL	Taiwan				
compare discussions in face-to-face and computer mediated PR sessions					

Note: Table continued on next page.

Appendix 1 (Continued)

Studies on Peer Response

Schultz (1998) French compare face-to-face and computer-based process approach formats	54 first year university US	-final drafts -questionnaire -transcripts of synchronous comments -oral comments	-number and types of changes (content, organization, style, grammar) -attitudes toward PR -qualitative analysis of PR transcripts	-quasi-experiment -1 PR session	-face-to-face interaction produced quantitatively and qualitatively more changes in the content category than computer interaction among the less advanced -face-to-face PR focused on content; CM focused on content and organization, offering suggestions, although they tended more to veer off the topic -evaluations of face-to-face PR were positive -evaluations of CM PR were ambivalent
Hewett (2000) English oral and computer mediated PR group talk and its influence on revision	2 sections university US	-oral comments -transcripts of synchronous and asynchronous comments -initial and final drafts of 3 tasks (argumentative) -student journals -interviews -observations	-linguistic function general area of attention -specific focus -revision patterns	-case study -U.A.: linguistic idea unit: segments of discourse that coincide with a person's focus of attention -emic perspective -multiple data sources	-oral talk focused contextually on abstract, global idea development -computer mediated talk focused on concrete writing tasks and group management. -revision from oral talk included more frequent intertextual (imitative and indirect) and self-generated idea use -revision from computer mediated talk included more frequent use of peer's ideas.
Huang, 1999 EFL extent to which students used ideas provided by their peers during computer mediated prewriting discussions and the quality of the peers' comments	17 university Taiwan	-synchronous comments -interviews -questionnaire	-number of students who reported to use peer's ideas -type of idea -perception of usefulness	-descriptive -PR sessions for classification and argumentation essays	-students did not use peers ideas often; ideas used concerned macrolevel issues. -CM discussions were considered least useful compared with other resources for idea generation.

Note: Table continued on next page.

Appendix 2

Course Outline

SPN 2201 – 001 : Spanish IV, Fall 2002

Instructor: Ruth Roux-Rodríguez / Email: Rouxrodr@tempest.coedu.usf.edu
Office: CPR 441; Phone: 974 – 3798; Fax: 974 – 1718
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30 – 9:30, or by appointment.

Description of the Course and Objectives. This course will help you develop abilities to communicate at an intermediate level in oral and written Spanish. The course is Web-enhanced, which means that classes will be supplemented by the use of the Internet to read Web pages in Spanish, and to communicate with peers and instructor in out-of-class hours. The Web component will use *Blackboard*, available at the “courses” section of <https://my.usf.edu> (click on Spanish IV). The class is largely collaborative; all activities will involve working in pairs or small groups.

Spanish IV is designed to pursue the following objectives:

- Offer the students opportunities to read and discuss about texts in Spanish
- Familiarize the students with strategies to read and write in Spanish
- Provide opportunities for the students to refine their critical thinking
- Help the students develop competence to write and understand texts of different types in Spanish
- Expand the knowledge of students about historical and cultural aspects of Spanish-speaking communities in the US and other countries
- Provide opportunities for the students to utilize computing applications to read electronic texts and communicate their ideas, opinions and feelings in Spanish
- Help the students develop strategies to learn in collaboration

Textbook and Materials. The textbook for the course is *Mundo XXI*, by Samaniego, Alarcón and Rojas (2001). You will also need a floppy disk to save all your class work.

Course Activities.

- Reading, explicating, and discussing texts
- Exploring, focusing, drafting, peer critiquing, and revising activities both in and out of class
- Free writing and journal writing in and out of class
- Brief lectures

Appendix 2 (Continued)

- Individual student-instructor conferences
- Class discussions

Requirements for the Students.

- a) Essays. You will write four 400 to 500 word papers in Spanish during the semester. The assignments will also involve an oral presentation of your topics. Essays must be written using a process of prewriting, drafting, and revising. Revising is an important part of this course and final drafts will not be assessed if not accompanied by a first draft. All papers and drafts are to be submitted through the *digital drop box*. Use the subject heading “Draft # 1 Essay # 2”, for example. Final papers will be graded for both content and mechanics (grammar, punctuation, and spelling). The rubric for grading will be provided and discussed on the third week.
- b) Peer Response. Each time you write an essay you'll also read and respond to one of your classmate's essays in Spanish. A peer response is another important part of the course. It will help you learn to critique other writers' arguments, just as it will help you learn to revise your own arguments. It's important to make careful, thorough, and constructive observations about your classmate's work. You should develop each response with your audience and purpose clearly in mind. Your primary audience is, of course, the author of the paper. This is a person who presumably wants to make his or her paper as good as it can be, but who also needs clear reasons for making the changes you think are necessary. Your purpose is to persuade the author to make revisions and collaborate with him/her in tasks such as re-organizing the essay, supplying more or better evidence for his/her claims, adopting a more appropriate writing style, and revising the sentences for clarity and coherence. Your response should be a 150 to 200-word argument. On the due date for each essay assignment, bring two hard copies of your essay to class. Give one to me and one to your peer respondents. Spend your time in class reading your classmate's essay, making notes to prepare your response, and writing your response on the computer. (Peer response sessions will take place in the lab at CPR-119). Carefully proofread your response. Then copy-paste your response into the body of an *e-mail* message and send it to your partner *no later than two calendar days after the due date of the paper*. Also send your responses to the instructor through the *digital drop box*. Use the subject heading “Peer Response Essay # (whichever is appropriate)”. Peer responses are worth 28% of your course grade. Your grade on each response will be a number between 1 and 7, with 7 being the highest mark.

Appendix 2 (Continued)

- c) Conferences. You will have two opportunities for one-on-one conferences to discuss assignments with the instructor. Conferences will be scheduled on the third week of class.
- d) Learning Journal. You write four journal entries in English about your learning experience during the semester. You may write about how peer response and revision influences your learning of Spanish, the role that the computer plays in your learning, or any other insight or concern about the course you want to express to the teacher. Send your journal entries through the *digital drop box*.

Class Policies.

- a) Attendance and Class Participation. Regular attendance is essential to your success. It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet at each class; failure to sign in will result in the recording of an absence. You have three free absences; use them wisely because each absence after 3 results in a loss of 10 participation points. Two tardies will count as one absence. Active participation is very important for you to learn and practice your Spanish. You must contribute to earn the points. Earn points by regularly engaging in any of the following activities in class: observations, insights, questions, sidetracks, polite arguments with your classmates or me, complaints, tangents, and any other verbal communication that contributes to the discussions.
- b) Late Work. Late work will not be accepted without a documented medical reason. If you must miss class on the day an assignment is due, make sure you send it before class via email to the instructor and, if the case, your assigned peers.
- c) Plagiarism. The intentional presentation of the work of others as if it were one's own, is a serious violation of the canons of scholarship. When in doubt about plagiarism, ask me for help. Plagiarizing will result in an "F" for the course. All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the appropriate university authorities.
- d) Disabilities. If in order to participate in the course you need special services due to a physical or learning disability, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services at: (813) 253-7031, TDD (813) 253-7053, and (813) 253-7336. The Office is located at SVC 208.

Appendix 2 (Continued)

Grades.

Essays	28 %
Peer Response	28 %
Conferences	10 %
Journal Entries	24 %
Participation	10 %
Total Points	100 %

Note: The Digital Drop box is a tool, within *Blackboard*, that instructor and students can use to exchange files. The drop box works by uploading a file from a disk or a computer to a depository. Files can be sent back and forth from the instructor's Drop Box to the Drop Box of other users.

A file added to the Drop Box will not appear to the instructor until it has been sent. Once a file has been sent to the instructor, it cannot be removed from the Drop Box.

Appendix 2 (Continued)

Spanish IV - Daily Schedule – Fall 2002 Semester

Week	Date/ Unit/ Lab	Class Activities	!
1	Aug 27 Introduction	Class Discussion (syllabus)	
	Aug 29 Lab (CPR119)	Introduction to Blackboard /	
2	Sep 3 - Unit 4	Background Questionnaire Lecture / Group Discussion / Pair Writing	
	Sep 5	Reading / Writing	
3	Sep 10	Presentation of Topics / Writing	
	Sep 12	Writing / Group and Class Discussion	
4	Sep 17 - Lab	Peer response / Class Discussion	BRING DRAFT
	Sep 19	Revision / Class Discussion	Essay due:24
5	Sep 24	Essay 1 / Learning Journal 1	
	Sep 26 – Unit 5	Lecture / Group Discussion / Pair Writing	
6	Oct 1	Reading / Writing / Group and Class Discussion	
	Oct 3	Presentation of Topics / Class discussion	
7	Oct 8 - Lab	Writing / Class Discussion	
	Oct 10 - Lab	Peer Response / Class Discussion	BRING DRAFT
8	Oct 15 - Lab	Revision / Class Discussion	Essay due: 16
	Oct 17	Conference 1/ Journal Writing 2	CPR 441
9	Oct 22 - Unit 6	Lecture / Group Discussion / Pair Writing	
	Oct 24	Reading / Writing / Group and Class Discussion	
10	Oct 29	Presentation of Topics / Class Discussion	
	Oct 31 - Lab	Writing / Class Discussion	
11	Nov 5 - Lab	Peer Response / Class Discussion	BRING DRAFT
	Nov 7 - Lab	Revision / Class Discussion	Essay due: 10
12	Nov 12	Conference 2 / Learning Journal 3	CPR 441
	Nov 14 – Unit 7	Lecture / Group Discussion / Pair Writing	
13	Nov 19	Reading / Writing / Group and Class Discussion	
	Nov 21	Presentation of Topics	
14	Nov 26 - Lab	Writing / Class Discussion	
	Nov 28 Thanksgiving		
15	Dec 3 - Lab	Peer response / Revision	BRING DRAFT
	Dec 5	Essay 4 / Learning Journal 4	Essay due: 7

Appendix 3

Writing Task A - Venezuela on the Internet

Purpose:

By performing this writing task, you will practice reading and writing in Spanish; you will improve your critical thinking in relation to the information on the Internet; and you will consolidate your abilities in peer response and revision.

Directions:

Select a Web page on Venezuela from the ones provided on Blackboard and *evaluate* it. Remember to address details about its content, design and authority.

Include an introduction and thesis statement in the first paragraph. Describe as thoroughly as you can all aspects of the Web page. Then write your conclusion.

Give your paper an appropriate title, double-space it, and present it in 14-font.

Remember to use verb tenses appropriately and to check grammar and spelling.

Your text needs to be 400 to 500-words long.

This writing task will take four classes:

1. Class one: Look for the Web Page, read it and take notes.
 2. Class two: Write your paper. Post the first draft of your essay to your partner and to the instructor before the third class.
 3. Class three: Read your partner's essay and write your feedback commentary (200 words).
 4. Class four: Read the comments provided by your partner and revise your essay accordingly. Send your second draft to the instructor before class five.
- Your composition will be placed in your Portfolio to be read by the class and the instructor. The criteria for grading are provided in the "Assessment Rubric".

Appendix 4

Writing Task B - The Best Topic on Peru

Purpose:

By performing this writing task, you will get experience in the use of some Internet search engines in Spanish language; you will practice persuasive writing appeals in Spanish; and you will consolidate your peer response and revision skills.

Directions:

The lesson on Peru contains too many topics. I have decided to select one or two of the most interesting or more important topics, to be the focus of the lesson. I would like to know the preferences of my students in relation to the topics and their reasons for their selection. From your point of view, which topic from the ones in the textbook should be the focus of the lesson? Please write an essay in which you *persuade* us (instructor and the students) of your selected topic.

Remember to use the technical appeals for persuasion. Look for more information on the topic of your selection on the Internet. Demonstrate that you know about the topic and offer convincing arguments in favor of it. Give your paper an appropriate title, double-space it, and present it in 14-font. Remember to use verb tenses appropriately and to check grammar and spelling. Your text needs to be 500-words long.

This writing task will take four classes:

1. Class one: Look for the Web Page, read it and take notes.

Appendix 4 (Continued)

2. Class two: Write your paper. Post the first draft of your essay to your partner and to the instructor *before* the third class.
3. Class three: Read your partner's essay and write your feedback commentary (200 words).
4. Class four: Read the comments provided by your partner and revise your essay accordingly. Send your second draft to the instructor before class five. Your composition will be placed in your Portfolio to be read by the class and the instructor. The criteria for grading are provided in the "Assessment Rubric".

Appendix 5

Social Sciences/Behavioral Adult Informed Consent University of South Florida Information for People Who Take Part in Research Studies

The following information is being presented to help you decide whether or not you want to be a part of a minimal risk research study. Please read carefully. If you do not understand anything, ask the Person in Charge of the Study.

Title of Study: Computer-mediated peer response in the Spanish classroom: A case study.

Principal Investigator: Ruth Roux-Rodriguez

Study Location(s): College of Arts and Sciences

You are being asked to participate because we would like to know how you use computer technology to collaborate and learn to write in Spanish.

General Information about the Research Study

The study will take place during the last nine weeks of the school semester. Two of the four writing tasks of the course will be used to obtain information about how you provide feedback to your classmates, how you use the feedback provided by your peers, and your perceptions on the use of computers for peer response.

Plan of Study

The information for the study will be collected at several points during regular course work. First you will be asked to complete a questionnaire to find out about your experience with Spanish, writing and computers. Then, for each of the two writing tasks you will write a 500-word essay in Spanish, read a classmate's essay, write a 200-word response to a classmate's writing in Spanish, and participate in an individual 50-minute interview conducted by the teacher in her office. Your essays and peer responses will be archived in *Blackboard*. The interviews will be audio-recorded for further analysis. You will also write four entries for a learning journal during the semester. The learning journal is for you to write about your learning experiences during the writing tasks: your insights, problems and concerns.

Payment for Participating

You will not be paid for participating in this study.

Appendix 5 (Continued)

Benefits of Participating

By taking part in this research study, you may increase our overall knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of computer technology for learning a language.

Risks of Being a Part of this Research Study

You might experience minor discomfort when not understanding a word or a sentence in Spanish. You might also feel relative tiredness while working on the computer during the class.

Confidentiality of Your Records

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. Authorized research personnel, employees of the Department of Health and Human Services and the USF Institutional Review Board may inspect the records from this research project.

The results of this study may be published. However, the data obtained from you will be combined with data from other people in the publication. The published results will not include your name or any other information that would in any way personally identify you.

To protect your identity, code names will be used instead of your names when analyzing and publishing the data. Only the researcher, a co-researcher and a coder will have access to the data that you provide. The information will be kept at the College of Arts and Sciences at all times.

Volunteering to Be Part of this Research Study

Your decision to participate in this research study is completely voluntary. You are free to participate in this research study or to withdraw at any time. If you choose not to participate, or if you withdraw, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits that you are entitled to receive. Your class grade will not be affected in any way from your decision to participate or not to participate in the study.

Questions and Contacts

If you have any questions about this research study, contact Ruth Roux-Rodriguez: (813) 974-3798

Appendix 5 (Continued)

If you have questions about your rights as a person who is taking part in a research study, you may contact a member of the Division of Research Compliance of the University of South Florida at 813-974-5638.

Signature of Participant

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Investigator
Or Authorized research investigators
designated by the Principal Investigator

Printed Name of Investigator

Institutional Approval of Study and Informed Consent

This research project/study and informed consent form were reviewed and approved by the University of South Florida Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects. This approval is valid until the date provided below.

The board may be contacted at (813) 974-5638

Approval Consent Form Expiration Date:

Revision Date

Appendix 6

Schedule of Research Activities

Week	Research Activity	
1		Fall 2002
2	Background Questionnaire	
3	Peer Response Training	
4	Peer Response Training	
5	Peer Response Training / Collect Learning Journal 1	
6	Peer Response Training	
7	Collect Draft D1 / Peer Comments 1	
8	Collect Draft D2 / Interview 1	
9	Collect Learning Journal 2 / Debriefing / Member check	
10	Collect Draft P1	
11	Collect Peer Comments 2 / Draft P2	
12	Interview 2 / Learning Journal 3	
13	Debriefing / Member check	
14		
15	Collect Learning Journal 4	
02 / 28 - Debriefing		Spring 2003
04 / 18 - Debriefing		
04 / 25 - Debriefing		
05 / 02 - Debriefing		
05 / 09 - Debriefing		
05 / 16 - Debriefing		

Appendix 7

Background Questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed to obtain information about you and your background knowledge of Spanish, reading and writing in English, and computers. Your responses will help the teacher plan the lessons of the course to better suit your needs. Please respond to each question thoroughly.

SECTION 1: GENERAL

1. Age: _____	2. Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	3. Ethnicity _____	4. Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Freshman <input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore <input type="checkbox"/> Junior <input type="checkbox"/> Senior <input type="checkbox"/> Other	5. Intended Areas of Study _____ _____
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6. Were you born in the U.S.?

Yes.

No. How old were you when you came to live to the US? _____

SECTION 2: SPANISH

7. What language(s) do you speak when you are with your family? _____

8. Have you been in a Spanish-speaking country?

No

Yes. What country or countries? _____

For how long? _____

9. How many semesters you have studied Spanish? _____

(please count all semesters, from elementary school)

Appendix 7 (Continued)

10. Why are you taking Spanish III?

11. In what ways do you think the course will help you? _____

SECTION 3. READING AND WRITING

12 How comfortable do you feel reading in English?

- Extremely comfortable
- Comfortable
- I survive
- I am uncomfortable
- I avoid reading as much as possible

13. How comfortable do you feel writing in English?

- Extremely comfortable
- Comfortable
- I survive
- I am uncomfortable
- I avoid reading as much as possible

14. What English writing courses (if any) have you taken? What did you learn in those courses?

15. Have you ever participated in peer response activities? (Activities in which you read and comment about a peer's writing).

- NO
- Yes. Please describe the peer response activities in which you participated and your views about the experience _____

16. In your opinion, what is good writing?

Appendix 7 (Continued)

SECTION 4. COMPUTERS

17. Do you have a computer at home? Yes No

18. What is your level of expertise with the following computer applications?

	No Experience	Novice	Intermediate	Advanced
Sending e-mail				
Sending attachments				
Searching the Internet				
Using chat programs				
Using word processing programs				
Other				

Contact Information:

Name: _____
E-mail: _____
Phone: _____

Appendix 8

Guidelines for Peer Response (Adapted from Tompkins, 1990, cited in Grabe and Kaplan, 1996)

** Compliments*

I like the part where...
I'd like to know more about...
I think your main idea is...
I liked the way you described...
I like the way you explained...
Your writing made me feel...

** Questions*

What else do you know about...?
Can you tell me more about...?
Could you change....?
Are you saying that...?
Can you add more about...?

** Comments and Suggestions*

You need a closing.
I got confused in the part that ...
Could you leave the part... out because...
Why don't you add..., because...

** Elogios*

Me gusta la parte en donde...
Me gustaría saber más acerca de
Creo que tu idea principal es...
Me gustó la manera en que describiste...
Me gustó la manera en que explicaste...
Tu escrito me hizo sentir...

** Preguntas*

¿Qué más sabes acerca de...?
¿Puedes decirme más acerca de...?
¿Podrías cambiar...?
¿Estás queriendo decir que...?
¿Podrías agregar más acerca de...?

** Comentarios y Sugerencias*

Necesitas un cierre.
Me confundí en la parte que...
¿Podrías dejar la parte... fuera, porque...
¿Por qué no agregas..., porque...

Appendix 9

Summary of the Computer-Mediated Peer Response Preparation Features

1. The goals of the peer response preparation sessions were to (a) provide the students with exposure to other students' writings in Spanish, (b) help students gain confidence and ability in providing feedback in Spanish, (c) provide opportunities for students to identify problems in a text in Spanish, (d) facilitate student role experimentation in pairs, and (e) provide opportunities for students to use word processing tools to write peer feedback.

2. The preparation had a workshop format. Students participated in processes of reading, discussing, writing, peer responding and revising together.

3. The preparation initiated with "ice breaking" activities to give opportunities to the students to know each other, before they engaged in critiquing their work.

4. The students were told about the importance of peer response not only to improve their writing, but also to refine their critical thinking and to better their overall language skills. They were encouraged to be supportive of each other.

5. Peer response was demonstrated by displaying, with the use of an Elmo presentation system, several drafts of texts written by students who took the course the previous semester. I used the models to read aloud, to elicit feedback ideas from the participants, and to emphasize focus on meaning.

Appendix 9 (Continued)

6. The students were provided with a list of sociolinguistically appropriate expressions to compliment, ask questions, and make comments and suggestions in Spanish. They were allowed time to practice the expressions and to ask about the correct use of other expressions they thought they could use.

7. Students were given instruction on the use of the language tools of the *Microsoft Word* program, and the use of the different components of *Blackboard* online learning system.

8. Students read the drafts and the responses written by their peers in a portfolio, created by the instructor with the use of Blackboard. The portfolio was organized by topic, and by participant within each topic.

9. Considering that when students receive teacher and peer feedback they tend to attend teacher feedback only, the students provided feedback to each other on the first draft while the instructor provided feedback on the second draft.

10. Due to time constraints, no instruction was given on revision, and no opportunities were given to the students in class time to clarify their peers' comments or exchange opinions with them before revising their drafts.

11. There were no tests or exams in the preparation workshop or the course as a whole. Students were evaluated on their attendance and submission of work (drafts, peer feedback and journal entries) on time.

Appendix 10

Instructions for Journal Writing

As indicated on the syllabus, you will write four journal entries during the semester, one after finishing each writing task. The objective of the learning journal is to document your effort and your reflections on your learning. To facilitate the expressions of your feelings and ideas, you will write in English. You may write about how peer response and revision influences your learning of writing in Spanish, the role that the computer plays in your learning, or any other insight or concern about the course you want to express. You may also select any of the following topics, to develop each of your journal entries after each of the writing tasks.

Appendix 11

Introduction and Questions of the Semi-structured Interview

I will ask a few questions about the peer response activity in which you gave feedback to a classmate, and you received comments about your writing as well. Please give me all your thoughts on each question.

1. What is your reaction to the peer response activity? Did you like it or not? Why? or Why not?
2. What do you focus on when you write your comments?
3. Did you find your peer's comments helpful? How were they helpful? In which ways were they helpful? (Or Why were they not helpful?)
4. What is your reaction to using the computer for peer response activities? Do you like it or not? Why or why not?
5. Did you find yourself in the situation of wanting to comment something to your peer about his or her writing and not knowing how to express it in Spanish? If so, how did you communicate your thoughts to your peer?

Appendix 12

Introduction Section of Discourse-Based Interviews

During this session, we will first talk about your drafts. Specifically, I would like us to talk about the revisions you made on your second draft. I have bracketed your revisions to save some time. Would you please tell me why you decided to make each one of the revisions? Tell me what you were thinking or why you considered that those changes were needed. Please elaborate as much as possible in your responses. May we start? Why did you make this change?

Appendix 13

Coding Scheme for Language Functions (adapted from Stanley, 1992)

Evaluator Response Code

- P** **Pointing** An evaluator verbally points to particular words or phrases from the text and responds to them.
- P1** Pointing to specific phrases or sentences. "Where you say... what do you mean?"
- P2** Pointing to particular word choices. "Where you say ... sounds like a negative thing. Is that what you mean?"
- P3** Pointing to cohesive gaps. "You say '...' How does this sentence connect to the one before?"
- AD** **Advising** An evaluator outlines changes that they think the writer should make. The advice can be specific or general.
- AD1** A specific advising example is "You need to give an example".
- AD2** General advising takes two forms: (a) a blanket remark: "You need more ideas on this paper". Or (b) a representation of the audience such as "Write ... so you can convince ...".
- C** **Collaborating** Evaluators paraphrase the writer's words or compose their own sentences for the writer. "Say something like ...".
- AN** **Announcing** The evaluator "walks through" the essay. "OK, the first paragraph talks about how...the second paragraph talks about...Next..."
- AN1** Announcing text sections, as above.
- AN2** Announcing thesis statements or topic sentences. "Your thesis statement is..."
- AN3** Announcing missing elements. "There is no conclusion ...".
- AN4** Announcing a rule. "A thesis statement needs to give an opinion.."
- R** **Reacting** Purely evaluative remarks that neither point nor advice. Evaluative remarks can be general or specific.
- R1** Reacting generally. "This is really good".
- R2** Reacting specifically. "Pretty good introduction. It covers your main point and has a thesis".
- E** **Eliciting** An evaluator attempts to "draw out" the writer and encourage his or her participation. "What do you really want to say about...".
- Q** **Questioning** A mild sort of challenge put to the writer.
- Q1** Questioning elements of the text. "What's the topic of your second paragraph?"
- Q2** Questioning the logic of an argument. "If people don't know about..., how can...".
- AUD** Acting as audience. "I didn't know that..."

Appendix 14

Overall Percentages for Categories of Linguistic Functions (N = 12)

#	P1	P2	AD1	AD2	C	AN1	AN2	AN3	AN4	R1	R2	E	Q2	AUD	IU
1	17%	0%	8%	0%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%	12
2	0	9	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	18	46	9	9	0	11
3	0	0	0	0	43	0	0	0	0	43	14	0	0	0	7
4	0	0	18	9	0	0	0	0	0	27	37	0	0	9	11
5	0	0	18	0	64	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	0	0	11
6	0	0	9	0	9	0	0	0	0	18	55	0	0	9	11
7	0	0	8	0	25	0	0	0	0	25	42	0	0	0	12
8	0	0	20	0	10	10	0	20	10	20	10	0	0	0	10
9	0	0	14	14	0	0	0	0	0	43	29	0	0	0	7
10	0	0	11	11	0	0	0	0	0	22	56	0	0	0	9
11	17	0	25	8	0	0	0	0	0	25	8	17	0	0	12
12	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	6	0	18	52	0	0	6	17
X%	3%	1%	11%	4%	14%	1%	2%	2%	1%	24%	32%	2%	1%	2%	130
SD	7	3	7	6	21	3	5	6	3	9	20	5	3	4	
Rank	6	8	4	5	3	8	7	7	8	2	1	7	8	7	

P1-Pointing to specific phrases or sentences
 P2-Pointing to particular word choices
 P3-Pointing to cohesive gaps
 AD1-A specific advising
 AD2-General advising
 AN3-Announcing missing elements
 AN4-Announcing a rule
 R1-Reacting generally
 R2-Reacting specifically
 E-Eliciting
 C-Evaluators paraphrase the writer's words
 AN1-Announcing text sections
 AN2-Announcing thesis statements or topic sentences
 Q1-Questioning elements of the text
 Q2-Questioning the logic of an argument
 AUD-Acting as audience
 IU-Idea Units

Appendix 15

Systemic-Functional Framework for the Analysis of Textual Revisions

(Adapted from Gosden, 1995)

D	Deletion of detail or statements
A	Addition of detail or statements
R	Reshuffling of statements, generally of clauses within the same sentence
RmD	Textual modifications that relate to the rhetorical machining of discourse structure. A primary resource is the manipulation of the interrelated structures of theme-rheme and given-new. This category includes the usage of minimal contextualizing frames such as: <i>in addition, here, furthermore, now, as well as</i> , and lexicalized markers such as <i>the first is...the second is... these are summarized...</i> and markers of contrast such as <i>however, on the other hand, although</i>
C	Changes that relate to the writer's claims. This category includes a range of hedging devices such as: <i>possibly, certainly, it can be said that</i> . This category focuses on any textual modification that relates to the writer's views and opinions: <i>I believe that, In my opinion, I agree with...</i>
RmP	Changes that relate to the writers purpose and the expression of reasons through the use of minimal adjuncts such as <i>therefore and thus</i> , and subordinate clauses such as <i>in order to...because...since</i>
P	Polishing of language below clause level

Appendix 16

Overall Percentages for Categories of Revision Types (N = 12)

#	B	C	Dii	E	PR / R *
1	33%	33%	0%	33%	3
2	0	0	0	100	3
3	0	0	0	0	0
4	100	0	0	0	1
5	33	0	67	0	3
6	0	0	0	0	0
7	40	60	0	0	5
8	0	0	0	100	7
9	100	0	0	0	2
10	0	0	0	100	3
11	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	100	1
X%	25	8	6	36	3
SD	38	19	19	48	0
Rank	2	3	3	1	1

*PR / R Number of suggestions given in peer response that were incorporated considered in revision

- A Deletion of detail or statements
- B Addition of detail or statements
- C Reshuffling of statements, generally of clauses within the sentence
- Di Textual changes that relate to the rhetorical machining of discourse structure
- Dii Changes that relate to the writers' purpose
- E Polishing of language below the clause level.

Appendix 17

Self-selected Pairs for Tasks A and B

Task A		Task B	
Alice (Intermediate low)	Joseph (Intermediate high)	Alice (Intermediate low)	Joseph (Intermediate high)
Andy (Novice high)	Monica (Intermediate low)	Andy (Novice high)	Harry (Intermediate low)
Becky (Intermediate high)	Margaret (Intermediate high)	Becky (Intermediate high)	Jonathan* (Native speaker)
Harry (Intermediate low)	Benjamin (Intermediate high)	Jasmine (Novice mid)	Jodi* (Intermediate high)
Jasmine (Novice mid)	Roxanne (Intermediate low)	Jenny (Intermediate low)	Monica (Intermediate low)
Jenny (Intermediate low)	Julie (Intermediate low)	Margaret (Intermediate high)	Jodi* (Intermediate high)
		Rena (Intermediate mid)	Julie (Intermediate low)
		Roxanne (Intermediate low)	Benjamin* (Intermediate low)

* Their writings were not analyzed for this case study.

Appendix 18

Participants' Language Functions in Feedback for Task A

Participant	Reacting	Advising	Announcing	Pointing	Acting as Audience	Eliciting	Collaborating	Questioning
Alice	11	4	5	0	1	0	1	0
Andy	5	9	5	0	1	0	0	0
Becky	7	3	7	4	2	3	1	1
Harry	10	9	0	1	0	0	1	0
Jasmine	5	1	1	0	1	2	0	1
Jenny	10	4	2	6	1	0	4	1
Joseph	3	3	8	0	1	0	0	0
Julie	2	7	6	0	0	4	0	0
Margaret	7	3	7	0	1	0	2	0
Monica	11	4	11	1	0	1	1	0
Rena	10	4	3	0	1	7	1	0
Roxanne	3	6	4	5	1	0	0	0

Appendix 19

Participants' Language Functions in Feedback for Task B

Participant	Reacting	Advising	Announcing	Pointing	Acting as Audience	Eliciting	Collaborating	Questioning
Alice	10	7	3	0	0	0	0	0
Andy	7	7	9	0	0	0	0	0
Becky	15	2	5	0	0	0	0	1
Harry	6	6	1	3	0	0	2	0
Jasmine	7	6	2	0	1	0	0	0
Jenny	8	6	4	5	5	2	1	0
Joseph	3	2	8	0	0	0	0	0
Julie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret	6	1	4	0	0	0	0	0
Monica	10	7	0	2	2	2	0	0
Rena	7	1	0	4	4	0	3	0
Roxanne	3	3	1	4	4	0	0	0

Appendix 20

Purposes for Providing Feedback in Participants' Commentaries

Purposes	Descriptions	Language Functions	Examples
1. Giving positive comments about the text.	Stating which parts of the text they liked, or mentioning the strengths in the text.	Reacting Announcing	I liked your first paragraph very much (Margaret, TA). I think you used good vocabulary (Alice, TB).
2. Focusing on what is contained in the text.	'Walking through' the essay.	Announcing Acting as Audience	For example, you talk about how the page is easy to access and navigate (Andy, TA).
3. Suggesting additional ideas.	Offering things to expand on, or to develop points made on the text.	Questioning Eliciting Advising Collaborating	You can add more about the best markets in Lima (Monica, TB).
4. Suggestions to fix things.	Pointing to changes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	Pointing Collaborating Advising	In the first paragraph you need to write: "The authors are going to eliminate the section." (Rena, TB).
5. Suggestions to reshuffle text.	Moving statements from one place to another.	Pointing Advising	The last phrase of the first paragraph needs to be included in the conclusion (Becky, TA).
6. Focusing on what they found confusing.	Asking for clarification of meaning.	Pointing Questioning Advising	Your position in the argument is not clear (Becky, TB).
7. Focusing on deficiencies of the text.	Pointing to what the text is lacking.	Reacting Announcing Advising Pointing	You don't have enough length (Andy, TB).

Appendix 21

Participants' Purposes Identified in Commentaries for Task A

<p>Alice (Joseph)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focusing on deficiencies of the text 1. Giving positive comments 1. Focusing on deficiencies <p style="text-align: right;">209</p>	<p>Andy (Monica)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focusing on deficiencies of the text 2. Focusing on what is contained 3. Suggesting additional ideas <p style="text-align: right;">216</p>	<p>Becky (Margaret)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Focusing on deficiencies of the text 3. Suggestions to reshuffle text 4. Suggesting additional ideas 5. Giving positive comments 6. Suggestions to fix things 7. Focusing on what is confusing 8. Giving positive comments <p style="text-align: right;">239</p>	<p>Harry (Benjamin)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Suggestions to reshuffle 3. Suggesting additional ideas 4. Suggestions to fix things 5. Focusing on what is confusing 6. Suggestions to fix things <p style="text-align: right;">252</p>
<p>Jasmine (Roxanne)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Suggesting additional ideas <p style="text-align: right;">199</p>	<p>Jenny (Julie)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Focusing on what they found confusing 3. Suggestions to reshuffle text 4. Focus on what they found confusing 5. Suggestions to reshuffle text 6. Suggestions to fix things <p style="text-align: right;">278</p>	<p>Joseph (Alice)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focusing on what is contained 2. Giving positive comments 3. Suggesting additional ideas 4. Suggestions to fix things <p style="text-align: right;">160</p>	<p>Julie (Jenny)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focusing on deficiencies of the text 2. Focusing on what is contained 3. Suggesting additional ideas <p style="text-align: right;">214</p>
<p>Margaret (Becky)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Suggestions to fix things 3. Giving positive comments 4. Focusing on what is contained 5. Giving positive comments <p style="text-align: right;">206</p>	<p>Monica (Andy)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Suggestions to fix things 3. Giving positive comments 4. Suggestions to fix things 5. Focusing on what is confusing 6. Focusing on deficiencies of the text <p style="text-align: right;">185</p>	<p>Rena (Becky)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focusing on what is contained 2. Giving positive comments 3. Suggestions to fix things 4. Suggesting additional ideas 5. Giving positive comments 6. Suggesting additional ideas 7. Giving positive comments <p style="text-align: right;">318</p>	<p>Roxanne (Jasmine)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focusing on what is contained 2. Focusing on what is contained 3. Focusing on what is confusing 4. Suggestions to fix things <p style="text-align: right;">190</p>

Appendix 22

Participants' Purposes Identified in Commentaries for Task B

<p>Alice (Joseph)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on what is contained 2. Focusing on the deficiencies of the text 3. Giving positive comments 4. Suggestions to reshuffle text 5. Focusing on deficiencies of the text <p style="text-align: right;">181</p>	<p>Andy (Harry)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on what is contained 2. Focusing on deficiencies of the text 3. Suggestions to fix things <p style="text-align: right;">221</p>	<p>Becky (Jonathan)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Focusing on deficiencies of the text 3. Focus on what is confusing 4. Giving positive comments <p style="text-align: right;">233</p>	<p>Harry (Andy)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on what is contained 2. Giving positive comments 3. Suggestions to fix things 4. Focus on deficiencies of the text <p style="text-align: right;">153</p>
<p>Jasmine (Jodi)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on what is contained 2. Focus on deficiencies of the text 3. Suggesting additional ideas 4. Giving positive comments 5. Focus on what is contained 6. Suggesting additional ideas 7. Giving positive comments <p style="text-align: right;">202</p>	<p>Jenny (Monica)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Focus on what is confusing 3. Focus on deficiencies of the text 4. Suggestions to fix things 5. Suggesting additional ideas <p style="text-align: right;">303</p>	<p>Joseph (Alice)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on what is contained 2. Suggesting additional ideas <p style="text-align: right;">148</p>	<p>Margaret (Jodi)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Suggestions to fix things 3. Focusing on deficiencies of the text <p style="text-align: right;">206</p>
<p>Monica (Jenny)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Suggesting additional ideas 3. Suggestions for fixing things 4. Giving positive comments <p style="text-align: right;">227</p>	<p>Rena (Julie)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Focus on what is contained 3. Suggestions to fix things <p style="text-align: right;">245</p>	<p>Roxanne (Benjamin)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giving positive comments 2. Focus on what is contained 3. Focus on deficiencies of the text 4. Suggesting additional ideas <p style="text-align: right;">151</p>	<p>Julie did not write feedback for Task B.</p>

Appendix 23

Participants' Focus of Attention in Feedback for Task A

Participant	Content	Organization	Rhetoric	Vocabulary	Mechanics	Grammar	Not Specific
Alice	19	1	0	0	0	0	2
Andy	17	1	0	0	0	0	2
Becky	22	1	1	1	3	0	0
Harry	6	10	3	1	0	0	1
Jasmine	10	0	0	0	0	0	1
Jenny	11	7	0	7	1	1	1
Joseph	12	0	0	0	0	1	2
Julie	18	1	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret	10	0	0	3	0	0	7
Monica	15	1	0	2	1	0	2
Rena	20	0	0	1	1	1	3
Roxanne	9	1	1	0	3	3	2

Appendix 24

Participants' Focus of Attention in Feedback for Task B

Participant	Content	Organization	Rhetoric	Vocabulary	Mechanics	Grammar	Not Specific
Alice	4	6	0	1	2	0	7
Andy	5	4	5	1	3	3	2
Becky	12	3	3	0	2	0	3
Harry	9	0	5	3	1	0	0
Jasmine	9	0	3	0	0	1	3
Jenny	19	4	1	4	0	1	3
Joseph	11	1	2	0	0	0	0
Julie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret	8	1	2	0	0	0	2
Monica	19	0	1	1	0	0	6
Rena	9	2	2	4	0	1	1
Roxanne	9	2	1	0	0	0	1

Appendix 25

Type and Frequency of Language Functions by Focus of Attention

Text type:	Evaluative	Persuasive	Total
Focus on Content			
Reacting	50	40	90
Advising	32	18	50
Announcing	47	24	71
Eliciting	17	3	20
Pointing	10	11	21
Acting as Audience	10	13	23
Collaborating	2	3	5
Questioning	1	0	1
Focus on Organization			
Reacting	7	6	13
Advising	12	10	23
Announcing	2	5	7
Eliciting	0	0	0
Pointing	2	1	3
Acting as Audience	0	0	0
Collaborating	0	1	1
Questioning	0	0	0
Focus on Rhetoric			
Reacting	2	7	9
Advising	2	10	12
Announcing	0	3	3
Eliciting	0	0	0
Pointing	0	1	0
Acting as Audience	0	3	3
Collaborating	0	0	0
Questioning	1	1	2

Note: Appendix continued on next page.

Appendix 25 (Continued)

Type and Frequency of Language Functions by Focus of Attention

Text type:	Evaluative	Persuasive	Total
Focus on Vocabulary			
Reacting	2	3	5
Advising	2	2	4
Announcing	0	0	0
Eliciting	0	1	1
Pointing	2	5	7
Acting as Audience	0	1	1
Collaborating	8	2	10
Questioning	1	0	1
Focus on Mechanics			
Reacting	1	1	3
Advising	4	4	8
Announcing	1	1	3
Eliciting	0	0	0
Pointing	2	0	2
Acting as Audience	0	0	0
Collaborating	1	2	3
Questioning	0	0	0
Focus on Grammar			
Reacting	2	2	4
Advising	3	3	3
Announcing	0	2	2
Eliciting	0	0	0
Pointing	2	0	1
Acting as Audience	0	0	0
Collaborating	0	0	0
Questioning	0	0	0

Appendix 26

Participants' Perceptions of Their Focus of Attention When Providing Feedback

Focus Perceived	Participants
Content/ meaning	Harry (TA, p. 2); Roxanne (TA, p. 2); Andy (TA, p. 3,10); Margaret (TA, p. 3); Jasmine (TA, p. 2, 9); Alice (TA, p. 3); Rena (TA, p. 2); Monica (TA, p. 2); Becky (TA, p. 3); Julie (TA, p. 4); Margaret (TB, p. 2, 3); Jenny (TB, p. 6)
Structure/ organization of the essay	Jenny (TA, p. 4); Harry (TA, p. 2); Andy (TA, p. 3); Margaret (TA, p. 3) Alice (TA, p. 3); Monica (TA, p. 2); Rena (TA, p. 2); Alice (TB, p. 3)
Rhetoric	Andy (TB, p. 5); Harry (TB, p. 1); Jasmine (TB, p. 2); Margaret (TB, p. 2); Roxanne (TB, p. 3)
Grammar	Jenny (TA, p. 1, 3, 4); Margaret (TA, p. 3); Rena (TA, p. 2)
Spelling	Jenny (TA, p.4); Rena (TA, p. 2)
Style	(Jenny, TA, p. 4); Andy (TA, p. 10),
Vocabulary	Roxanne (TA, p. 2); Margaret (TA, p. 3)

Appendix 27

Type and Frequency of Textual Revisions from Draft 1 to Draft 2 for Task A

Participant	Deletion	Addition	Reshuffling	Rhetorical Machining (Purpose)	Polishing	Total
Alice	0	5	0	0	0	5
Andy	0	3	0	0	0	3
Becky	0	0	0	2	2	4
Harry	0	3	0	0	0	3
Jasmine	0	1	1	0	0	2
Jenny	1	7	0	0	0	8
Joseph	0	4	0	0	0	4
Julie	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret	0	2	1	0	3	6
Monica	0	5	0	0	0	5
Rena	0	0	0	0	7	7
Roxanne	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	1	31	2	2	12	48

Appendix 28

Types of and Frequency of Textual Revisions from Draft 1 to Draft 2 for Task B

Participant	Deletion	Addition	Reshuffling	Rhetorical Machining (Purpose)	Polishing	Total
Alice	0	5	0	0	0	5
Andy	0	2	0	0	0	2
Becky	1	3	0	0	0	4
Harry	0	4	0	0	1	5
Jasmine	0	4	0	0	0	4
Jenny	0	6	0	0	1	7
Joseph	0	0	0	0	0	0
Julie	0	1	0	0	3	4
Margaret	0	3	1	1	0	5
Monica	0	3	0	0	0	3
Rena	0	2	0	0	0	2
Roxanne	1	1	0	0	1	3
Total	2	34	1	1	6	44

Appendix 29

Frequency of Language Functions by Types of Textual Revision

Suggested in and Adopted from Peer Response

	Evaluative Essay	Persuasive Essay	Total
Addition of Detail or Statement			
Language Functions			
Reacting	7	2	9
Eliciting	4	0	4
Advising	15	18	33
Announcing	5	4	9
Pointing	2	3	5
Acting as Audience	1	0	1
Collaborating	1	1	2
Questioning	2	0	2
Reshuffling of clauses			
Reacting	1	0	1
Eliciting	1	0	1
Advising	1	0	1
Announcing	0	0	0
Pointing	1	0	1
Acting as Audience	0	0	0
Collaborating	0	0	0
Questioning	0	0	0
Modifications that relate to the writer's purpose and expression of reasons			
Reacting	1	0	1
Eliciting	0	0	0
Advising	1	0	1
Announcing	2	0	2
Pointing	0	0	0
Acting as Audience	0	0	0
Collaborating	0	0	0
Questioning	0	0	0
Polishing the language below the clause level			
Reacting	0	0	0
Eliciting	0	0	0
Advising	2	1	3
Announcing	0	2	2
Pointing	0	2	2
Acting as Audience	0	0	0
Collaborating	1	1	2
Questioning	0	0	0
Total	48	34	82

Appendix 30

Participants' Types of Revisions, Suggested and Not Suggested in Peer Response, and Language Functions for Task A

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Types of Revisions</i>	<i>PR / NPR</i>	<i>Language Functions</i>
Alice	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	Ad1
Andy	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	Ad1, An1, An1, Ad1
	Addition	PR	Ad1, Ad1, P
Becky	Polishing	PR	Ad1
	Polishing	PR	Ad1
	RMP Purpose	PR	Ad2, An1, An1
	RMP Purpose	PR	R1
Harry	Addition	PR	An1,
	Addition	PR	R2, R1, R2, An1
	Addition	NPR	
Jasmine	Reshuffling	NPR	
	Addition	NPR	
Jenny	Addition	NPR	
	Deletion	NPR	
	Addition	NPR	
Joseph	Addition	PR	Ad1, Ad1
	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	R2, R2, R2
	Addition	PR	An2, Q2, Ad1
	Addition	PR	
Julie	-	-	-
Margaret	Polishing	NPR	
	Reshuffling	PR	R, P3, Ad1, E
	Polishing	PR	C
	Addition	PR	E, E
	Addition	PR	P1, Ad1
Monica	Polishing	NPR	
	Addition	PR	Ad1
	Addition	PR	Aud, Ad2
	Addition	PR	An1, Ad1
	Addition	PR	Ad1, Ad1
Rena	Addition	PR	P, Ad2
	Polishing	NPR	
Roxanne	Polishing	NPR	
	Addition	PR	Ad2, E, E, Q

Note: PR = revision in Peer Response, NPR = revision Not in Peer Response

Appendix 31

Participants' Types of Revisions, Suggested and Not Suggested in Peer Response, and Language Functions for Task B

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Types of Revisions</i>	<i>PR / NPR</i>	<i>Language Functions</i>
Alice	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	Ad1
	Addition	PR	Ad1
	Addition	NPR	
Andy	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	Ad1
Becky	Addition	PR	Ad1
	Addition	NPR	
Harry	Addition	PR	Ad1
	Addition	PR	Ad1
	Addition	PR	Ad1
	Addition	PR	Ad1
Jasmine	Addition	PR	Ad1, Ad1, Ad1, Ad1
	Addition	PR	
	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	Ad2, C
Jenny	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	P2, P2
	Polishing	NPR	
	Addition	NPR	
Joseph	-	-	-
Julie	Polishing	NPR	
	Addition	NPR	
	Polishing	PR	P1, C
Margaret	Polishing	NPR	
	RMP Purpose	NPR	
	Addition	NPR	-
	Reshuffling	NPR	
Monica	Addition	NPR	
	Addition	PR	R2
	Addition	PR	P1, Ad2, An4, An3, An3
Rena	Addition	PR	R2
	Addition	-	-
Roxanne	Addition		
	Polishing	PR	P1
	Deletion	NPR	
	Addition	NPR	

Note: PR = revision in Peer Response, NPR = revision Not in Peer Response

Appendix 32

Difficulties Perceived in Peer Response

Perceived Difficulties	Participants
Peers may provide/ use suggestions that could be wrong.	Andy (TA, p.1); Alice (TA, p. 11); Andy (TB, p. 1)
Some suggestions were not specific/pertinent enough	Alice (TA, p. 3, 14); Alice (TB, p. 3)
Peers praised rather than giving suggestions or critique/ peers were afraid to make negative comments	Alice (TA, p. 5); Monica (TA, p. 2); Alice (TA, p.4); Alice (TB, p. 15)

Appendix 33

Usefulness Perceived in Peer Response

Perceived Uses	Participants
Get an idea of whether what you are saying is not confusing/ understood/ going through	Harry (TA, p. 1); Margaret (TA, p. 2, 3, 13); Jasmine (TA, p. 4); Jenny (TA, p. 5); Andy (TA, p.2); Margaret (TB, p. 7); Jasmine (TB, p. 15)
Acquire ideas on what to write/ elaborate on	Jenny (TA, p. 2, 3); Julie (TA, p. 2, 3); Joseph (TA, p. 1); Monica (TB, p. 1); Jenny (TB, p. 11); Monica (TB, p. 3); Becky (TA, p. 4);
Correct grammar	Alice (TA, p. 3); Joseph (TA, p. 1); Roxanne (TA, p. 1); Margaret (TB, p. 6); Rena (TA, p. 2)
Get peers' perspectives/ points of view/ opinions	Alice (TA, p. 1); Becky (TA, p. 4); Margaret, (TA, p. 1,2); Julie (TA, p. 7); Monica (TA, p. 1,7); Margaret (TB, p. 6)
Acquire ideas on how to organize own paper	Jenny (TA, p. 2, 3); Alice (TA, p. 1, 2, 5); Monica (TB, p. 4)
Pick up vocabulary/ phrases	Jasmine (TA, p. 13, 14); Alice (TB, p. 6); Jasmine, (TA, p. 13, 14); Julie (TA, 1, 2); Jenny (TA, p. 3)
Identify/ put voice on a paper	Roxanne (TA, p.1); Jasmine (TA, p 14)
Improve reading comprehension	Roxanne (TA, p.
Acquire confidence in critiquing	Roxanne (TA, p. 1)
Write with a purpose	Joseph (TA, p. 5, 6)
Perceive writing as a process	Andy, (TA, p.

Appendix 34

Participants' Strategies to Solve Language Difficulties in Peer Response

Strategy	Participants
Dictionary	Alice, p. 10; Jasmine, p. 7; Jenny, p. 12; Joseph, p. 4; Julie, p. 11; Andy, p. 9; Rena, p. 8.
Asking a peer	Andy, p. 9; Jasmine, p. 7; Jenny, p. 12; Joseph, p. 4; Julie, p. 11; Monica, p. 5
Paraphrasing	Alice, p. 10; Andy, p. 9; Harry, p. P. 5; Monica, p. 5; Roxanne, p. 4
Ask the instructor	Jasmine, p. 7; Jenny, p. 12; Julie, p. 11;
Using the tools provided in the peer response preparation (guidelines with phrases in Spanish, and a list of transition words in Spanish).	Julie, p. 11; Becky, p. 11; Roxanne, p. 4;
Code-switching	Harry, p. 5; Jenny, p. 12; Andy, p. 10;

Appendix 35

Participants' Perceived Difficulties to Perform the Writing Tasks

Difficulties	Participants
Amount of words required	Jenny (P), Alice (A) Jenny (A), Joseph (A), Monica (A)
Amount of information in the Internet	Alice (A), Jenny (B), Jasmine (B)
Time invested	Becky (A), Jenny (B), Andy (B)
People did not have draft done	Julie (A), Margaret (A), Alice (A)

Appendix 36

Peer Feedback Word Counts for Tasks A and B

Participants	Number of Words on Peer Feedback	
	Evaluative Essay	Persuasive Essay
Alice	209*	181
Andy	216*	221
Becky	239	233
Harry	251	153
Jasmine	199	202
Jenny	278	227*
Joseph	160*	148*
Julie	214*	-
Margaret	208	206
Monica	186*	227*
Rena	318	245
Roxanne	190	147*

Note: * = response to a short draft

Appendix 37

Perceptions on the Use of Computers for Peer Response

Perception	Participant
Computers as Providers of Feedback	Roxanne (TA, p. 8); Jasmine (TA, p. 5); Rena (TA, p. 4); Julie (TA, p. 9); Margaret (TA, p. 4), Alice (TA, p.6); Margaret (TA, p. 4), Alice (TA, p. 11); Roxanne (TB, p. 2)
Computers as Facilitators of Textual Dialogue	Jenny (TA, p. 2); Andy (TA, p. 8); Jasmine (TA, p. 5), Jenny (TA, p); Monica (TB, p. 1); Becky (TA, p. 6); Jasmine (TA, p. 6);
The Need for Oral Language in Peer Response	Harry (TA, p2), Roxanne (TA, p. 5), Jasmine (TA, p. 7), Andy (TB, p. 9), Joseph (TA, 3)

FOOTNOTES

¹ According to Kinneavy (1971), evaluative and persuasive are modes of discourse that student writers should learn in college because of their relevance to scientific and literary writing. Each of these modes of discourse have peculiar logic, organizational patterns, and stylistic characteristics. The evaluative discourse is governed by the logical principle of achievement of purpose, while the persuasive discourse is related to a logic of obligation or commitment (p. 107).

² Joseph was member checked on his use of third person singular. He responded, "I guess I'm like this is what they have to fix and hopefully that will give me enough to get an A from the professor." My interpretation of his comment is that Joseph's intended audience for the feedback was the instructor rather than his peer.

³ Although data from the peer response preparation activities were not analyzed for the case study, I made an exception in the case of Jasmine because in the semi-structured interview for Task A she evoked her experience in that part of the study to explain her perceptions on language proficiency as an influential factor in peer response.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ruth Roux-Rodríguez received a Bachelor's Degree in Social Psychology from Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana in Mexico and an M.A. in TESOL from the University of London. She has taught English at different levels and coordinated teacher education programs in Mexico. While in the Ph.D. program Ms. Roux-Rodríguez was a graduate assistant in the Florida Center for Instructional Technology and the Secondary Education Department in the College of Education. She was also an instructor of Spanish in the World Language Education Department at the College of Arts and Sciences, and a Counselor of ENLACE, a USF-based program for the Latino community. She complemented her teaching and counseling activities by participating in the International Journal of Early Childhood as Consulting Editor, and as presenter in several conferences of organizations in the fields of applied linguistics and educational technology, such as Syllabus, CALICO, TESOL and IAAL.