

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER'S WRITTEN FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENTS' WRITING IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS

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Abstract:

Teacher's feedback to the student's writing is vital for improving both teaching and learning process. It enables the teachers to find out to what extent they have been successful in their teaching and what they need to do to make their teaching more effective. Feedback also influences learning in that it provides an opportunity for learners mainly EFL learners to know what they need to do in order to improve. Unfortunately, the teachers' responses to the student' writing is sometimes neglected. In other words, they may pay little attention to the students' views or opinions about forms/ types of teachers' feedback they receive. Thus, the teachers do not know the students' problems in responding to the teachers' feedback and they do not know the students' views of what forms and types of response the students prefer or even the teachers do not know much how to react in order to help the students process feedback successfully.

Keywords:

Teacher's Written Feedback, Student's Writing

Introduction

Many teachers often give feedback on the students' work especially writing work in the form of returned papers covered with red ink, can result in students discouragement and their lack of confidence or they mark and correct the surface errors in students' composition, write brief comments or sometimes no comments at all, only underlines/ circles signs and finally provide a grade as a result their students' writing do not improve much. Many teachers are not aware of this.

Feedback plays an important role in motivating further learning as it informs learners about the result of their learning or their needs for improvement.

Feedback is also essential for improving both teaching and learning. It enables the teachers to find out what extent they have been successful in their teaching and what they need to do to make their teaching more effective. Feedback also influences learning in that it provides an opportunity for learners mainly EFL learners to know what they need to do in order to improve. As stated by Brown considers feedback as one of the keys to successful learning.¹In a similar vein, "Feedback is integral to the learning process and is one of the main benefits

¹H. Douglas Brown, *Principles of language Learning and Teaching*, 3rd edition (New Jersey: Prentice Hall , Inc, 1994),p.219

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that students get from assessment".²It means that feedback is needed in improving teaching and learning process in order to identify both teachers and students own strengths and weaknesses. In addition, Ur considers feedback as "information that is given to the learner about his/her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving of a learning task performance".³ Besides, feedback as Ur explains includes two major components: "assessment and correction".⁴ The assessment components inform learners of the quality of their performance. Grades and general comments are examples of assessment component of feedback. The correction component provides learners with specific information on particular aspects of performance or behavior. Providing explanations, elicitation of correct response from the learners themselves, or elicitation of correct response from others learners constitute examples of this component of feedback.

Based on those statements above, the writer concludes that EFL students need feedback to help them improve their performance of a learning task, including writing task area. EFL students need feedback to help them

improve their writing because feedback on students' compositions is an essential aspect of any EFL writing course. Here, the teachers must learn to provide and promote constructive feedback, which aims to help students not only understand specific problems with their writing but also develop a critical approach that can be applied in their future writing situations.

Good writing usually needs several drafts and revisions. This requires teachers to have good communication with the students. How the teachers respond to students' writing will affect students' subsequent performances and how the teachers might respond to the students' writing encourages improvements in their writing.

Theoretical Backgrounds to the Teaching of Writing

This part will explore the definition of writing and some approaches to the teaching writing.

A. Definition of Writing

Writing, firstly, is an integral skill of successful second language learning. Writing is combination of process and product.⁵ The process here is the act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented in a manner that is polished and comprehensible to readers while the product is the result of

²Teaching and Learning Development Unit of University of Sussex, *Effective Feedback*. (<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/tldu/ideas/assessment/effb>), accessed on March 5th, 2014

³Penny Ur, *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.242

⁴Ibid.

⁵Linse T.C, *Practical English Language Teaching: Young Learners*(New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005), p.98

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learner. Secondly, according to Hamp-Lyons states that writing is a personal act in which writers take ideas or prompts and transform them into "self-initiated" topics.⁶ In other word, writing is a process of gathering ideas to transform them into a message with a definite meaning.

From another view of writing, Hoffmann defined writing is "putting meaning into print",⁷ and free online Thesaurus dictionary defined writing as "the activity of putting something in written form".⁸ Writing, then, is defined using free online Wikipedia as "the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols".⁹ Thus, the writer concludes that writing is not only the use of a set of signs/ symbols but also the process of gathering ideas but also putting them in meaningful written form.

B. Approaches to the Teaching Writing

There are three main approaches will be discussed, namely, controlled-composition, current- rhetoric and process approaches are the most

prominent and more or less influential to the writing teaching.

1. Controlled-Composition Approach

Controlled- composition focuses the students' attention on specific features of the written language.¹⁰ This approach emphasized speech and writing served to achieve mastery of grammatical and syntactic forms. Hence, teachers developed and used techniques to enable students to achieve this mastery. This approach is sequential: students are first given sentence exercises, then paragraphs to copy or manipulate grammatically by changing questions to statements, present to past, or plural to singular. They might also change words to clauses or combine sentences. With these controlled compositions, it is relatively easy too for students write and yet avoids errors, which makes error correction easy. Students are allowed to try some free composition after they have reached an intermediate level of proficiency. As such, this approach stress on grammar, syntax, and mechanics. It emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency or originality. For the teachers, controlled composition is easier to mark and much less time-consuming, so more can be assigned.¹¹

⁶J.Michael O & Lorraine V.P, *Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners: Practical Approaches for Teachers*(London: Longman, 1996), p. 136

⁷A. Hoffmann, *Getting Students to like Writing*. (<http://ezinearticles.com>), accessed on March 18th, 2009

⁸Thesaurus Online Dictionary, *Definition of Writing*. (<http://www.define.com/writing>), accessed on March 18th, 2009

⁹Wikipedia, *The Free Encyclopedia*. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing>), accessed on March 18th, 2009

¹⁰ Ann Raimés, "Teaching Techniques in English as a Second Language", in *Techniques in Teaching Writing*, ed. Russell N.C and William E.R (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983) p. 97

¹¹ Ibid. 96

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2. *Current-Traditional Rhetoric Approach*

The mid-sixties brought increasing awareness of the students' needs with regard to producing extended written discourse. This awareness led to the suggestions that controlled- composition was not enough, that there was more to writing than building grammatical correct sentences, that what was needed was a bridge between controlled and free writing. This gap was filled by current- traditional rhetoric, an approach combining the basic principles of Young's current-traditional paradigm (1978) with Kaplan's theory of contrastive rhetoric (1967).

The most fundamental feature of Young's paradigm is its emphasis on the form of the composed product while Kaplan defined "rhetoric" as the method of organizing syntactic units into larger patterns, and he thought it was necessary to provide the student with a form within which he may operate.

The primary concern of this approach was the logical construction and arrangement of discourse forms. The primary interest was the paragraph with its components such as a topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence and transitions. The other important focus was essay development with larger structural elements, namely, introduction, body and conclusion.

This approach focuses on writing instructions on form. Learning how to write would involve reading and analyzing a model and applying the structural knowledge to a parallel piece of writing.

3. *The Process Approach*

This approach concerns the process of how ideas are developed and formulated in writing.¹² Central of this approach is the view that writing is a process which contains a number of stages or activities the writers have to go through in order to produce a good piece or writing. Yet, this process is not a straightforward. It is a complex, recursive, and creative process whereby the writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning.¹³ Guidance through and intervention in the process were seen preferable to control – that is, the early and perhaps premature imposition of organizational patterns or syntactic or lexical constraints. Content, ideas, and the need to communicate would determine form.

Recently, the teaching of writing has moved away from a concentration on written product to an emphasis on the process of writing. In this approach, students are trained to

¹²Lucila F. Ambon and Mark Angelo S.P, *The Process Approach to Writing*. (<http://www.slideshare.net/maspalomares81/the-process-approach-to-writing>), accessed on April 21st, 2014

¹³ V.Zamel, " Responding to Student Writing". *TESOL Quarterly*, 19 (January, 1985) p. 79- 101

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generate ideas for writing, think of the purpose and audience, writes multiple drafts in order to present written products that communicate their own ideas. Teachers who use this approach give students time to try ideas and feedback on the content of what they write in their drafts. As such, writing becomes a process of discovery for the students as they discover new ideas and new language forms to express them. Furthermore, learning to write is seen as a developmental process that helps students to write as professional authors do, choosing their own topics and genres, and writing from their own experiences or observations. A writing process approach requires that teachers give students greater responsibility for, and ownership of, their own learning. Students make decisions about genre and choice of topics, and collaborate as they write.

Therefore, it seems a comprehensive theory integrating a focus on product into the process approach is the most satisfactory alternative to the previously described, dogmatic theories in the sense that it can guarantee the quality of both form and content. This leads to a very significant implication for the writing instructors that besides encouraging the students to write multiple drafts to achieve meaningful communication, they should also focus on the problem solving aspects

of identifying and practicing discourse conventions of the writing piece to make it a truly fine piece of writing in terms of both content and form.

C. The Nature of the Writing Process

As we know writing is a complex process that allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete. Writing encourages thinking and learning for it motivates communication and makes thought available for reflection. When thought is written down, ideas can be examined, reconsidered, added to, rearranged, and changed.

Writing is most likely to encourage thinking and learning when students view writing as a process. By recognizing that writing is a recursive process, and that every writer uses the process in a different way, students experience less pressure to "get it right the first time" and are more willing to experiment, explore, revise, and edit. Yet, novice writers need to practice "writing" or exercises that involve copying or reproduction of learned material in order to learn the conventions of spelling, punctuation, grammatical agreement, and the like. Furthermore, students need to write in the language through engaging in a variety of grammar practice activities of controlled nature. Finally, they need to begin to write within a framework "flexibility measures" that include: transformation exercises, sentence combining,

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expansion, embellishments, idea frames, and similar activities.

All these activities need feedback or in other word, the tasks, activities or exercises of the students include undergoing the process of writing and giving comments and feedback on their drafts. The main roles of the teacher are to guide students throughout the writing process and to give feedback to the students' writing.

D. Stages in the Writing Process

There are different points of view on the number of stages comprising the writing process. In the view of Hedge, the process contains a lot of stages which can be illustrated in the following figure:¹⁴

Being motivated to write → getting ideas together → planning and outlining → making notes → making a first draft → revising, replanning, redrafting → editing and getting ready for publication.

Similarly, there are five steps in the writing process:¹⁵

1. **Pre-writing:** This is the planning phase of the writing process, when students brainstorm, research, gather and outline ideas, often using diagrams for mapping out their

thoughts. Audience and purpose should be considered at this point, and for the older students, a working thesis statement needs to be started.

2. **Drafting:** Students create their initial composition by writing down all their ideas in an organized way to convey a particular idea or present an argument. Audience and purpose need to be finalized.
3. **Revising:** Students review, modify, and reorganize their work by rearranging, adding, or deleting content, and by making the tone, style, and content appropriate for the intended audience. The goal of this phase of the writing process is to improve the draft.
4. **Editing:** At this point in the writing process, writers proofread and correct errors in grammar and mechanics, and edit to improve style and clarity. Having another writer's feedback in this stage is helpful.
5. **Publishing:** In this last step of the writing process, the final writing is shared with the group. Sharing can be accomplished in a variety of ways, and with the help of computers, it can even be printed or published online.

Each stage involves certain kinds of task that the writers have to fulfill in order to construct a good piece of work.

In addition, three other stages externally imposed on students by the teachers, namely, responding, evaluating and post-writing. So, the

¹⁴Tricia Hedge, "Writing: Resource Books for Teachers", in *Composing*, ed. Alan Maley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) p. 51

¹⁵Time 4 writing, *The Writing Process: the Steps to Writing Success*. (<http://www.time4writing.com/writing-resources/writing-process/>), accessed on April 21st, 2014

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writer takes conclusion that the writing process is the process of writing comprises five stages: prewriting, planning, drafting, revising, and editing and three others initiated by the teachers including responding, evaluating and post-writing.

1) Pre- Writing

Pre-writing, the first stage in the writing process, begins long before the writer puts thoughts into writing. The experiences, observations, and interactions that students have prior to entering the classroom have an impact upon what they will write and how they will write it. Within the classroom, pre-writing prompts and activities can be integrated into the writing process as scaffolds by teachers to help students generate ideas for their writing and to practice the thinking skills inherent in the activity.

In other words, pre- writing is any activity in the classroom that encourages the students to write. It means that everything you do before you begin to draft the paper. It stimulates thoughts for getting started. It moves the students away from having to face a blank page and transit them smoothly onto another page. It may include understanding the purpose of writing, discovering the topic, thinking about the audience, gathering information or inventing possible content. To initiate thinking and generate possible writing topics, it is important for students to explore

ideas for writing topics using a variety of pre- writing strategies, such as the following:

- Brainstorming
- Constructing thought webs and graphic organizers
- Interviewing a person knowledgeable about the topic
- Engaging in peer or teacher-student discussions and conferences
- Reading about and researching the topic
- Free writing or timed free writing about the topic
- Viewing media such as pictures, movies, and television
- Listing and categorizing information
- Reflecting upon personal experience
- Examining writing models
- Responding to literature
- Role playing and other drama techniques
- Asking the 5 Ws--who, what, where, when and why.

Those activities give students a place to start and make them become aware of places from which to get ideas in the future. Students who have a place to start with will be more motivated to continue developing their ideas and they will feel more confident to move to the second stage, which is called the planning stage.

2) Planning

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In the planning stage, the students organize the ideas they have generated. After students have generated some ideas, they must decide what they will say about their chosen topic. Students develop an initial plan for the product they will compose. As they do so, they must consider the purpose, audience, point of view, and format because these elements have implications for both the planning and the drafting of the written product. The most efficient way to do this is to make an outline.

An outline is a plan in which the writers write down the main points and sub-points in the order in which they plan to write about them. An outline can be either simple or detailed. However, even when quite elaborate outlines are prepared, good writers change their ideas as they write and reshape their plans.

As mentioned above, the writers must consider the purpose, audience, point of view, and format to develop an initial plan for the product they will compose.

a) *To consider purpose*, students write to express ideas, feelings, emotions, and opinions, and they must ask themselves, "What is my purpose for writing this piece?". Some purposes for students' writings are to express personal feelings or viewpoints, to imagine "What if....?", to narrate, to entertain and/ or amuse, to describe, to inform or explain, to

persuade or convince, to request, to inquire or question, to explore and experiment with ideas and formats, and to clarify thinking as well.

b) *To consider audience*, students must consider who they are writing for and students must ask themselves, "Who is my intended audience?". Some possible audiences are:

1. familiar, known audiences: self, friends, peers, family, teachers
2. extended, known audiences: community, student body, local media
3. extended, unknown audiences: wider range of media and other publications

c) *To consider point of view*, students must determine from which point of view their ideas or information will be expressed, so they need to ask themselves, "Who is telling this story/describing the events?" Some points of view for students' consideration are:

1. Physical point of view: where is the narrator in relation to the action?
2. Objective and subjective point of view: what emotional involvement does the narrator have in relation to the situation?
3. Personal point of view: who is the narrator of the story? (The narrator may take a first

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person, third person, or an all-knowing omniscient point of view.)

- d) *To consider format*, students will use audience and purpose to determine format and genre. They will have the opportunity to write in a variety of narrative, descriptive, expository, and poetic formats. Their writings may include formats and genres such as: advertisement, advice column, autobiography/biography, comic strip, letter of complaint/request/inquiry, diary/journal, readers theater/role play/monologue, book review, report, fable/fairy tale, greeting card, game rules, directions, interview, news story, poem/song, anecdote/personal experience story, sports column, short story, etc.

3) Drafting

At the drafting stage, the writers are focused on the fluency of writing and are not preoccupied with grammatical accuracy or the neatness of the draft but a conscious visualization of audience is vital here since it can influence the choice of organization and language to be used.

In the other word, at this point in the process, the emphasis is on content and

meaning rather than on mechanics and conventions. This is the time for writers to get down their ideas and thoughts, composing rough drafts based upon pre-writing and planning activities and considerations. As they compose, writers begin to determine what to include and exclude, and make initial decisions about how these ideas will be organized. During the drafting stage of the writing process, meaning begins to evolve. Some ways to make these ideas will be well organized:

- 1) To produce a first, rough draft, students record their ideas rapidly in order to capture the essence of what they have to say. They do not have to make any attempt to revise or edit at this point. They focus on talking to the reader and begin to develop a personal style as their voices emerge.
- 2) To write subsequent drafts, students often accomplish their work by crossing out, adding, and rearranging ideas directly on the page. The students' redrafting does not necessarily require an entire rewrite at this time.

4) Responding

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Responding to students' writing has a central role to play in the successful implementation of process writing. It is a kind of oral or written intervention by teachers or peers or other possible readers after the writers have finished drafting and are to proceed to revising. This activity is intended to provide the students useful information to improve the content of their writing. As a result, to reflect upon their own writing, students can conference with self, peers and the teacher. Through conferencing, students can get constructive feedback and support that may help them to shape their writings. A set of questions or a checklist can be used to assist writers and conference partners as they strive to help the writer make meaning clear.

However, in doing such a kind of job, the teachers may encounter a lot of problems. Some problems are logistical: the class size is too large and there not enough time. Other problems may reflect the teaching climate or culture of some Asian countries, Indonesia included, in which a lot of red marks on students' paper are associated with working hard, but just carry a lot of face value since it produces little or no effects on students' rewriting.

5) Revising

When the students revise, they review their texts on the basis of the feedback given in the responding stage. They reexamine what was written to see how effectively they have communicated their meanings to the reader. Revising is not merely checking for language errors. It is done to improve the global content and the organization of ideas so that the writer's intent is made clearer to the reader. For revising the draft for content and clarity of meaning, students will reorganize and sequence relevant ideas, and add or delete details as they strive to make their meaning clear. Revisions can take place to words, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole piece (e.g., the writer may decide that the ideas would have more impact as poetry instead of prose).

6) Editing

At this stage, the students are engaged in tidying up their texts as they prepare the final draft for evaluation by the teachers. This activity is very important in that no matter how interesting or original the students' ideas are, an excess of linguistic errors may distract and frustrate the reader, which may result in negative evaluation on their overall writing abilities. In addition, editing within process of

making communication as clear and unambiguous as possible to the reader. In short, although revising and editing concentrate on different aspects of the students' writing, they share a common purpose of improving the overall quality of the students' texts. Learning how to revise and edit is thus central to the process of learning how to write in a foreign language.

7) Evaluating

In evaluating the students' writing, the teachers normally assign scores, which may be analytically (based on specific aspects of writing ability) or holistically (based on a global interpretation of the effectiveness of that writing). In order to be effective, the criteria for evaluation need to be made known to the students in advance. Students, once they have become a skillful independent editor, may be encouraged to evaluate their own and other's texts. In this way, they are made to be more responsible for their writing.

8) Post- Writing

Post- writing constitutes any classroom activity that the teacher and the students can do with the finished products. It may be publishing, sharing and using a portfolio.

Theoretical Backgrounds to Teachers' Feedback

A. Definition of Feedback

In the context of teaching and learning, feedback can be defined as any form of response by a teacher to a student's performance, attitude or behavior, at least where attitude or behavior impinges upon performance. It is important to realize that feedback not only an outcome of students' performance but also an essential part of the learning process. According to Merriam Webster dictionary, feedback is helpful information or criticism that is given to someone to say what can be done to improve a performance, product, etc.¹⁶ In other definition, feedback is information and advice provided by a teacher, peer, parent or self about aspects of someone's performance.¹⁷

Thus, teacher's feedback can be considered an effective means to communicate to the students' performance about their writing. As the students receive information about the effectiveness of their writing and respond to this information before counting their product as finished, they will discover that good writing involves an interaction between their ideas, the expression of the ideas, and their reader's perceptions and reactions to the expression. In other word, the writer says feedback is any kinds of

¹⁶<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feedback>, accessed on April 25th 2014

¹⁷Dimension of Teaching and Learning, *Feedback* (<http://www.learningplace.com.au/feedback>) accessed on January, 21st 2010

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information that students need on what they do, how to improve and they need to act on this.

Although differing in some ways, the above definitions have offered a fairly full account of what feedback is. In short, it is a kind of information the teachers can say to their students about the draft essays they have produced. This information is much more helpful if it is provided on preliminary and intermediate stage rather than the final one and cooperation between teacher and student is very necessary for the successful implementation of feedback.

B. The Importance of Feedback

There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also translating these ideas into readable text. In many cases, the students would need intervention from the teachers in terms of not only their writing instructions but also their comments on their submitted drafts in order "to identify their own strengths and weaknesses. Thus, feedback, first of all, can be considered a pedagogical tool for the students' writing improvement. Having received feedback from teachers, students are encouraged to adopt appropriate strategies to improve their learning.

In this way, feedback is an important step towards the learner centeredness. Especially, when feedback is combined with instruction in

the writing process, the dialogue between student and teacher is strengthened. Giving and receiving feedback also helps students to develop "reader sensitivity" and their own writing style. In conclusion, feedback is essential to student writing because it creates a context in which the students learn to write better and more easily.

C. Types of Teacher's Feedback

In general, teacher feedback can be transmitted in a variety of ways. They are marginal versus end feedback, negative versus positive feedback, and text-specific feedback versus general feedback.

1. Marginal Feedback Versus End Feedback

Marginal feedback is a kind of feedback that is written in the margin or between sentence lines of the student's paper. It refers to the teacher's immediate intervention in discrete parts of the student's draft. By contrast, summary feedback at the end of the paper is normally an overview of more consideration in an essay.

2. Negative Feedback Versus Positive Feedback

Hyland stated that while students appreciate and remember positive comments, they also expect to receive constructive criticism.¹⁸ As a

¹⁸ K. Hyland, "Second language Writing", in *Responding to Student Writing*, ed. Jack C. Richards (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2003) p.

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good teacher, s/he must know how to keep a balance between these two kinds of feedback. Too many praises, especially at the early stage of the responding process, may actually discourage the students from revising (e.g., "My teacher liked this part, so I shouldn't change it") or may lead the students to resent receiving low marks (e. g., "My teacher said that there are a lot of good things about my essay, so why did I get such a low grade?"). being excessively negative to the student's writing is also a disincentive to the student writers.

Therefore, the wisest course of action is the teachers should strive for a balance, providing some praises for the student's efforts, but not forgetting their crucial instructional role of helping the students to revise, to improve on what they have done badly. In short, positive feedback is always more helpful than negative feedback because it encourages the writer to improve.

3. *Text- Specific Feedback Versus General Feedback*

Text- specific feedback is a kind of comment that directly to the text at hand; whereas, general feedback can be attached to any paper. Responding to a paper only by giving the paper a grade (A,B,C or 70, 80, 90, etc), writing a general comment (very good, needs improvement, careless, etc).

Feedback should be informative and detailed enough to

help the student writers return to the task of writing but not so overwhelming that they cannot form a revision plan. As they write, receive response, and revise, students should be able to feel good about what they have not done effectively.¹⁹In short, the teachers must provide clear, specific and informative feedback. Moreover, teachers should provide written, substantive comments when possible.

D. **Forms of Teacher's Written feedback**

Teacher's feedback generally operates within these four basic synthetic forms: question, statement, imperative and exclamation, which present different pragmatic aims such as giving and asking for further information, making requests for revision, giving positive feedback about what the student has done well.

Yang stated that praise, question and advice are ways to develop a critical approach that can be used in their future writing in order to achieve a general guideline for writing constructive comments.²⁰ In the other word, "praise,

¹⁹ J. M. Reid, *Teaching ESL Writing*, (Prentice Hall Regents: Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey,1993)p. 225

²⁰Y. Yang, *Feedback on College EFL Students' Compositions* (<http://www.linguist.org.cn/doc/uc200611/uc20061120.pdf>, Vol.4, No.11, 2006) accessed on June 18th 2008

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question and advice" are a kind of forms of teacher's written feedback.

1) Praise

It is important to praise what is done well and explain why it is good. This motivates the students and reinforces good writing strategies. While words like "Good" and "Well done" do make students feel good, they do not reveal why the writing is good. So it is better for teachers to explain the good elements, e.g., "This is a powerful piece of description writing because it used vivid details, like in paragraph 2..., so that the reader can visualize the scene."

2) Question

Comments in the form of questions can effectively help students revise and develop a critical sense of their writing. Questions can refer to content, organization, or grammar and word choice and are usually written on the margin of students' papers, for marginal comments are suited for feedback on specific parts of the text for example: (a). Can you be more specific about "many skills"? (b). Do you have an example for this? (c).Why...?

3) Advice

Comments should also provide specific advice on future writing. In terminal comments, which are usually for addressing the global concerns affecting the whole essay, teachers may wish to list a few things for students to pay attention to next

time. Teachers can provide selective feedback to encourage better results for example: (a). Come straight to the point in the introductory paragraph, (b). Create transitions between paragraphs.

E. Common Problems with Teacher's Written Feedback

Teachers should be careful in constructing their own feedback and giving responding to the students' writing. Some common problems usually teachers do as follows:

1. *Focusing mainly on grammar*

In Yang study (2006), many Chinese teachers tend to be preoccupied with grammar when evaluating students' writing.²¹By chiefly addressing the grammatical and lexical errors in writing, students are led to thinking that good writing equals correct grammar and may neglect or never understand more global elements of good writing such as clarity and organization of ideas.

2. *Giving Vague Comments*

Some teachers write a few word comments on the margins or a few marking symbols like "awk" or "frag". This may result in vagueness and confusion without explicit explanations.

3. *Overemphasizing the negative points*

Some teachers only point out problems rather than telling the students the good points in their composition. So, in many cases,

²¹ Ibid.

students perceive teachers' written comments as critical and negative and feel frustrated as a result.

F. Conclusion

First of all, making the teachers' commentary essentially is one of the most valuable pedagogical tools for the student's writing improvement. It is an important component of college-level EFL writing instructions in that it helps the students not only improve their writing and the teachers justify their grade but also enhance the rapport between the instructor and the learners. Besides, feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement, but this impact can be either positive or negative. So, we as a teacher should give feedback on an ongoing process. Next, for being effective feedback, as a teacher should avoid problems will arise in responding to the students' writing like written feedback was time-consuming, the students sometimes made the same mistakes again so that the students felt frustration because of cryptic (symbols or circles) or confusing feedback such as questions that are unclear and general. In short, the students need clear and specific feedback, combining marginal and terminal comments, and balancing positive and negative responses in order to improve their writing process.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER'S WRITTEN FEEDBACK ON THE STUDENTS' WRITING IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS

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