Lessons Learned from Twelve Korean Teachers of College-level EFL Writing

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Kim, Mi-Kyung. 2003. **Lessons Learned from Twelve Korean Teachers of College-level EFL Writing**. *Korean Journal of English Language and Linguistics* 3-2, 181-210. The purpose of the study was to investigate how Korean EFL writing instructors give feedback to their students' writing and what influences their feedback. A total of 12 Korean EFL instructors in Korean universities teaching freshman English and intermediate EFL writing courses provided their feedback given on students' writing samples and participated in interviews. Interviews were analyzed qualitatively with a constant comparative approach and some data from writing samples and questionnaires produced descriptive statistics. The first lesson from the results of the study was that grammar was still the most frequent concern in giving feedback on students' writing. Contrary to the participants' report, comments on content and organization were not produced very often. The second lesson came from the interview data. Some aspects of teacher feedback seemed mostly influenced by their beliefs on L2 writing and experience in teaching L2 writing. The final and major lesson was that teachers chose how they would give comments on students' writing depending on whether they found their feedback helpful in students learning to write. EFL writing teachers can produce effective feedback by clearly communicating their beliefs about L2 writing and criteria in their feedback to students in their EFL writing classrooms.

Key Words: teacher feedback, EFL writing, college-level English

1. Introduction

Issues of teacher feedback have been investigated both in the field of first language writing and in writing in the ESL or EFL context. Typically, teacher feedback in the EFL writing classroom

deals with a more narrow scope of errors, compared to the feedback typically given in American L1 composition classes (Kassen, 1991). Is it related to the actual students competence in writing the L2 or to the teachers perception of the students language abilities? According to social cognitive theorists, people choose to engage in tasks in which they anticipate success, and avoid tasks demanding performance beyond their abilities (Pajares, 1997). Therefore, how teachers perceive their writing abilities seemed likely to influence the kinds of feedback they would give their students. This perception of their own efficacy in writing might also determine on which aspects of writing they provide feedback as well as the amount of effort they put into their task of writing instruction.

For the last two decades, many researchers have focused their studies on the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing performance among students. However, I could find no research that explained or even queried how non-native EFL writing instructors in college-level programs actually perceive their writing abilities in English, or how their writing self-efficacy influences their interaction with their students. The present study attempted to deal with EFL writing instructors' beliefs on writing and on giving feedback on students' EFL writing.

The goal of this research is to examine the non-native Korean writing instructors perception on his or her own ability to teach EFL writing, to investigate how this self- efficacy influence their interaction with EFL students in Korea, and to draw educational implications from the research findings. The general research questions were as follow:

1. What is Korean EFL teachers' attitude toward their own writing in English and teaching EFL writing?

2. How do Korean EFL instructors' perception on writing instruction affect different kinds of feedback and the different

ways of providing feedback that they give to students in an EFL program in Korea?

2. Literature Review

In this section, I will discuss how feedback has been considered in writing instruction. First, I will examine the role of teachers in EFL classrooms where feedback takes place. Then, I will discuss how the role of feedback has been defined depending on the perceived role of EFL teachers. Teachers' response to students' writing can vary according to how they perceive their roles as L2 writing teachers. De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) identified nine categories of conceptualized roles of ESL teachers such as considering the teacher as "cooperative leader," "knowledge provider," and "challenger." The teachers who perceive themselves as cooperative leaders guide and help students learn by encouraging them. The role that teachers keep in mind for themselves in the second language classroom should influence how teachers' feedback may vary in form, in the techniques, and in focus on different errors.

Depending on the approach teachers take in their writing instruction, the role of feedback has been defined in different ways. In a product-oriented approach to writing instruction, feedback has usually been provided to students' final pieces of writing as a form of evaluation or error correction. However, in a process-oriented approach, the role of teachers' feedback to students' writing seems to be defined as a continuous response to students' writing throughout the writing process. According to Freedman et al. (1987), feedback includes "all reaction to writing, formal or informal, written or oral, from teacher or peer, to a draft or final version." For L2 writers, the process of EFL writing is similar to that of L1 writers (Peregoy & Boyle, 1992). Thus, EFL writing teachers should aim at helping students find topics

and develop their ideas during the earlier stages of writing.

Feedback can be seen as a kind of personalized attention from the teacher to the student (Hyland & Hyland, 2001). Students learn from their mistakes when they receive feedback that encourages them to work on their drafts again. Thus, L2 studies on teacher feedback have focused on what kinds of feedback is more effective in helping students improve their writing in their second language classroom although there has been little agreement reached among researchers and teachers (Fathman & Whalley, 1990). Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) presented general feedback types of written teacher responses:

1. Asking for further information
2. Giving directions, suggestions, or request for revision.
3. Giving the student new information that will help him or her revise.
4. Giving positive feedback about what the student has done well. (p.131)

The feedback can be given in the form of questions, statements, and imperatives and exclamations. Using various hedges such as "please," "maybe," "could," and "might" in the comments can soften the tone of teachers' responses. Ferris (1997) also suggested that the feedback should vary depending on the nature of the student writing and the strengths and weaknesses of the individual student.

3. Research Design

3.1. Settings and Participants

Four universities were chosen that met my interests. In some cases, composition is a part of the first-year EFL course. A growing number of universities have begun hiring native-speaking EFL instructors for their freshman English programs. These universities offered EFL writing courses, or at

least required composition as assignments, in Freshman English courses. More importantly, they hired non-native speakers of English as instructors in these EFL writing courses. The EFL class usually meets three times a week; the writing activities and assignments vary greatly ranging from one-paragraph free-writing to multi-draft academic writing. The class size varies from 20 up to 80 students depending on each school. Students are assigned two to four writing assignments on topics related to their readings in the class throughout the semester.

Participants included twelve full-time or part-time Korean EFL writing instructors. The participants consisted of eleven women in their late twenties to late forties, who had varying levels of teaching experience from 1 to 11 years. One additional male teacher in his late twenties had near-native fluency in English. Most participants had earned at least their masters degrees in TESL or TEFL from American universities. Without exception, their first language was Korean. However, their undergraduate majors varied slightly. I failed to find any participant with a masters degree in TEFL earned at a Korean university. When I began my research, I defined the participants a non-native EFL teachers because they had started learning English as a foreign language in their secondary schools, and they had earned their bachelors degrees from Korean universities. However, as the data collection proceeded, I found that four instructors had experience in living in English-speaking countries for at least more than a year in their early childhood or adolescence even though they had graduated from colleges in Korea.

3.2. Instruments

Several instruments for collecting data were incorporated in the study: a formal semi-structured interview with each instructor, a questionnaire on the instructor's writing self-efficacy, and students' writing samples voluntarily submitted to me.

3.2.1. Interviews

A formal semi-structured interview was conducted in Korean with each teacher in the latter half of or after the spring semester in 2001. Follow-up interviews were arranged when necessary either by face-to-face conversation or by emails. Most interviews lasted from forty minutes to an hour, and were audio taped. Interviews were conducted in the teachers office or in a private room reserved for the interview. During the interviews, information was requested that focused mainly on the teachers' previous experience in foreign language (English) writing and on their experience of teaching English writing. It was also important to inquire into their teaching goals in their EFL writing class, and their method of giving feedback to their students. I attempted to cover the following basic questions in each interview.

1) Tell me about your high school/college writing experience in Korean and in English. What kinds of writing did you do? Have you taken any writing course? What types of feedback did you get from your teachers? Can you remember any specific comments from your teachers?

2) How do you define a good EFL writing teacher? What is your goal as a university EFL instructor? What do you comment on in your students writing? Why or why not? Are there any guidelines from your supervisor/department on suggested kinds of feedback?

3.2.2. Questionnaires

In-depth questionnaires were provided in English to all twelve participants before the interviews. Requested information included the instructors age, years of teaching experience, years of education or residence in the U. S., beliefs concerning and experience in EFL writing skills and tasks. The questionnaire is

provided in Appendix A. Questionnaires were used to find a general representation of the beliefs of the participants.

3.2.3. Writing Samples

Compositions written by students of university EFL courses as classroom assignments were collected from the teacher participants. These samples had been evaluated and corrected by the participating, Korean EFL writing teachers throughout the semester. These feedback samples were also appropriate for obtaining qualitative and quantitative information about feedback behavior (Merriam, 1998). By looking at the corrected student writing samples in this study, I was able to understand better the patterns of teacher feedback on students' writing.

4. Results

This section includes two main sections: (1) descriptive analysis of writing sample data, and (2) qualitative analysis of interview data.

4.1. Descriptive Analysis of the Writing Samples

Twelve teachers were teaching freshman English courses and six of them were also teaching intermediate writing courses for undergraduate or graduate students. Statistical analysis of the questionnaire responses and of certain aspects of the participants' feedback on students' writings was implemented in the study.

4.1.1. Feedback Categories

Six categories applied to the comments that were given: grammar, content, vocabulary, expression, organization, and mechanics. The grammar category included errors in tense, mood, voice, verb agreement, verb morphology, articles, prepositions, modal verb usage, and syntax. In the area of

vocabulary, incorrect word choice was the main feedback. Mechanical errors included capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Errors related to the basic format of writing such as indentation, spacing, and the location of title were also grouped as mechanics. Response to content included the instructors's reaction to the writer's meaning, that is, agreeing or disagreeing, inquiring about the truthfulness or accuracy of the content, and suggesting elaboration of the writer's ideas. The category of expression consisted of appropriateness for written English, redundancy, and non-English usage. Organization referred to remarks about effective titles, topic sentences, paragraphing, introduction, development, transition signal, and conclusion.

The feedback on these college-level EFL students' writing represented many features depending on individual and situational factors. Participants' written feedback indicated that grammatical and mechanical problems ranked first in terms of frequency in both intermediate writing and freshman English classes. However, the participants teaching higher-level EFL writing classes commented more on content and organization, while those teaching in Freshman English courses produced few comments in these categories.

Thirdly, in this society a good appearance will get you somewhere. ∧$_A$ Good-looking man and wom$_e$$_a$n are preferred (in^{at}) every-levels. The Aattractiveness means competitiveness in the capitalistic world where even human beings are measured by the economic standards. What does economic standards have to do with being attractive?

Even if they did, it was mostly on giving transition signals and on the absence of a concluding paragraph.

..bBut I must choose one thing firmly, it is mind-warming

and a <u>trailing note</u> move. (add a thesis statement)

Responses to grammatical errors alone accounted for 56.4 % of all the comments made by these participants. The interesting results was that content feel to last as category for comments. The participants made only five comments on content overall, which is only 0.1% of all the feedback. Organization ranked second from the last in the frequency of comment types. This may be related to the fact that these participants rarely produced end-note comments on students' writing. Students' rather simple writing may have affected the teachers to focus more on surface level errors. Mechanical errors accounted for 20.5% of the total feedback. Non-English expression and vocabulary ranked as the second and third category. Most feedback on vocabulary or non-English expression was given on appropriate verb choice. On the other hand, the individual participants feedback on students writing showed that each instructor produced feedback that varied in tone and technique depending on the teachers experience, beliefs, and perceived confidence in different areas of writing.

In the intermediate writing courses, two participants, Prof. Baek and Prof. Oh, produced exclusively lengthy end-note comments in English and did not write comment in the students' text. Both of them preferred sending their feedback through emails. They believed that students were more likely to read what was written in email, especially when these messages came from their teacher. Prof. Baek usually started with an encouraging remark and gave suggestions on the content and organization of the students' paper. She took the role of reader more so than evaluator in her comments.

You really did a good job. The points are clear and ideas are very well organized. One question I have about the

content of your writing is whether one's life belongs only to oneself. When you emphasized very much about the value of life, I thought it's a little contradicting.

Her end comments were quite personalized, often written in the form of a letter addressed to each student. Then, she selected a paragraph for giving text-specific marginal comments. She wrote her comments in parenthesis in her emails with an explanation of the correction.

There are scorching (doesn't seem to be a right word to use here. May be you could say "There have been heated discussion...) pros and cons about 'Doctors-assisted suicide'. The reason that there are constant pros and cons, Doctor-assisted suicide does not go well. (I do not understand this sentence. What does it mean? Are you saying "The fact that there are these constant debates over this issue reflects the fact that there are many problems in doctor-assisted suicide.)

Prof. Chang produced end comments on her students' writing as well. She taught Literary analysis, an intermediate writing course. Her students produced 582 to 1300 words in their first draft. She used a direct, sometimes negative tone in her comments and it was not easy to find compliments in her comments.

This is an adequate treatment of the subject but your failure to establish clear logical connections between and among your ideas leads to a certain incoherence.

She usually circled an error and used a code, such WF for wrong form, SV for subject-verb agreement, and CS for comma

splice, in order to indicate the type of error the student had made. She asked student to fix their mistakes in their revised draft according to the code. In her marginal comments, she also dealt with organizing sentences in a paragraph to express an argument by underlining or bracketing these sentences.

Her emphasis^{WF} their optimistic way of thinking but if you think more deeply you can find that point.

On the other hand, Prof. Shin used both Korean and English in her feedback. She divided her comments into four categories: Grammar, Mechanics, Style, and Content. She summarized the overall feedback in each category and gave a letter grade because the samples I was analyzing were final drafts. As she indicated in her interview response, comments on mechanical and grammatical errors overlapped across the students' papers because students tended to make similar errors. Her comments are translated into English in the example below.

Content (37): Very nice organization, but slightly weak conclusion.
Grammar (22): Article and intransitive verb usage (See the comments above)
Style/Vocabulary (22): Avoid generalizing or judging statement.
Mechanics (9): Spelling check.

She reported that she focused on sentence structures with a clear idea when she gave comments. She believed that she could help students express their ideas in English because she shared the native language. She crossed or circled out and wrote in the corrections below the text. Occasionally, she underlined certain verbs to indicate errors in subject-verb agreement. She tended

to provide the explanation of her suggestions or corrections.

Generally, the other instructors teaching freshman English courses shared the tendency for commenting on surface-level errors. Prof. Han believed that freshmen needed the feedback on grammar and sentence structure rather than on content or organization. She did not give any feedback on content or on organization. That was one of the reasons she assigned her students to write personal essays. The number of words her students produced varied tremendously from 160 to 809 words, with many of them around 300 to 400 words. She crossed out, or underlined and inserted the correction above the text. She put question marks when she did not understand what the student had tried to say in the sentence.

A person who ^{is} rel$\underline{y}^{ied}$ $\underline{on}$ ^{as} $\wedge\!\!\vee$ much head of athe family is sister of family. So, sister, feel much jealousy to boyfriend. Because ideas that <u>was robbed of sister entered.</u>₂

Without any end commends, she gave the students grades on the first page of the paper. She did not require revision of the text.

Prof. Kwon also gave students a grade without end-note comments. She taught more than 150 students in the semester. She mentioned that Korean students' most serious problem in writing is "think in English." However, her feedback did not reflect her view. She provided comments mostly on sentence-level errors. She underlined and wrote comments below the text, circled, slashed out, and used codes, such as N for noun form and T for tense, to indicate the category of the errors. She often inserted the correction with check marks. Her feedback on grammar and mechanics was 87.3% of the total feedback on students' papers.

My husband will have $\wedge$_{more} open-<u>hearted</u>? ^{minded} thought than me. It has problems. For example, children's education, food - a salty taste, returning home time, <u>the other sex</u> <u>friend</u>_{friends of the opposite sex,} and even $\wedge$_{art} basic life style.

Prof. Kang was highly suspicious of the effect of teacher feedback. She believed that feedback did not have any beneficial effect on students' writing and that instead it impeded its development. She remembered the feedback that she had received as a student as unpleasant and useless. Thus, her feedback consisted of circles indicating mistakes, one-word summary of the paper, and a grade. She did not return the papers to students. She mentioned that she used to exert herself to give more feedback but that in her seventh year of teaching EFL courses, the amount of feedback had been decreasing. Another reason may have come from the fact that freshman English courses were intended to improve overall English proficiency. Teaching writing was the most demanding and time-consuming task for EFL instructors. Thus, teachers tended to reduce the amount of work from teaching writing.

Prof. Cho preferred clear and simple ideas expressed in students' writing. When she looked at students' writing, she searched for a main idea and how it was supported in the paragraph. At the beginning of the semester, she lectured on the basic structure of a paragraph and the concept of topic sentence, unity, and coherence. Then she gave students a quiz.

1. Write a good topic sentence for the following paragraph in the space provided. Remember to include both a topic and a controlling idea.
2. find a irrelevant sentence(s) in the following paragraph and cross them out.

Prof. Cho also considered giving feedback as placing heavy demands on EFL instructors. However, she said she also had learned a great deal since her days as a student herself. She also believed writing could be developed faster than other skills if students received help from teachers or books. Nevertheless, it was difficult to find comments that were encouraging or gave an optimistic view in her feedback samples.

Even though EFL instructors are supposed to teach writing in freshman English classes, many of them find it difficult to deal with all four skills in such a short period of time. Most freshman English classes meet three hours a week. Some schools allocate an hour in a lab for developing listening skills. Prof. Lee had 80 students in one other freshman English courses, forcing her to concentrate more on reading and listening skills than on expressive skills. She indicated that she was not able to give feedback on expressive skills. She indicated that she was not able to give feedback on all the papers. Instead, she let each student randomly choose an assignment written by other classmates and required them to give feedback on that assignment. However, she did not give grades on the peer feedback assignment but only made sure if it had been turned in.

The EFL instructor's belief on how much his or her feedback can help students improve their writing seemed to influence the different aspects of giving feedback in the study. Thus, it is worthwhile to explore how the participants perceived the effect of their feedback students' EFL writing in order to understand the relationship between the beliefs about the feedback effect and the EFL teachers' comments given on students' writing.

4.2. Qualitative Analysis of Interview Data

In drawing the analysis of the interview data, no categories had been determined before the data collection began. In

analysing the data, a number of factors seemed closely interwoven together in establishing their perception on EFL writing and influencing the feedback produced. The categories in this section emerged from the interview data. They included: writing experience, perceived limitation as non-native speakers, teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and expectation for students achievement.

Teacher's writing experience

The participants had different writing experience depending on their diverse educational background. Thus, writing experience becomes a broader term that incorporates perceived strengths and weakness in writing, personal beliefs about writing, and personal experiences with feedback.

The participants in the study felt more confident in their writing in English than in Korean. Moreover, several participants remembered their writing instruction as unpleasant experience. A majority of participants reported that they did not enjoy writing. This may have resulted from the fact that all participants said they were terrible in creative writing. Prof. Suh realized for the first time that she did not have much experience in writing during the interview.

"I do not remember receiving any writing instruction in Korean. I have taken an ESL course but it didn't help me at all. While I am talking with you, I am realizing that I have not had much writing experience! But I am teaching it shamelessly! (laugh)"

The teacher participants felt less comfortable in academic writing in Korean because they had not done it at all. Academic writing was not easy for them to acquire even in their native language.

Prof. Bae had no opportunity in writing in English until she

started her master's program in an American college. As a graduate student, she had not written many styles of writing other than summaries of reading materials and essays for answering test questions. She produced feedback in the same way that she had been given as a student.

"I have taken required ESL courses as an international student. One of them was academic writing. I learned how to write in English a little in that class. That's what I·teach right now. How can they be separate. I interview students before moving on to the next step of writing, which is what my teachers did in the classroom."

After she started teaching EFL courses in a Korean university, she did not have opportunities to write in English at all. She felt it necessary to keep updating language input. She indicated she did not correct certain grammatical errors unless she was absolutely confident.

"As time goes by, I tend to forget words. For the last two years, I have only used English when I correct errors on students' writing. The range of vocabulary that I use in the classroom is limited. Using articles is very confusing to me. I rarely want to correct them. Even when I do, I don't know if I am right."

Perceived limitation as non-native speakers

It seemed natural to investigate as an important category how the participants perceived themselves limited in their English proficiency in writing as non-native speakers of the language. The perceived limitation as non-native speakers acted as a filter for the participants to perceive their ability in writing and teaching EFL composition. When a writer became too conscious

of his or her writing as a non-native speaker, their attitude on EFL writing seemed to become negative. For those areas that they believed non-native speakers could not produce certain levels of writing, they simply did not teach them to their students in EFL writing classrooms. Hence, they might avoid those areas in giving feedback.

"To be frank with you, I am worried about teaching English composition next semester because I know I have limited proficiency as a non-native speaker. I cannot often decide whether it is correct or broken English. Then I don't have anything to say when they ask me a question. So we need native speakers of English."

In fact, the participants regarded different areas of learning to write in a second language as difficult or even impossible for EFL learners to learn. Some participant teachers felt less confident in EFL writing because they perceived themselves as lacking native-like intuition. Then they felt it difficult to comment on sentences that seemed grammatically correct, but awkward. They knew something looked inappropriate, but they could not tell students how to change them.

"The most difficult correction is that they are grammatically correct, but they are literally translated from Korean. The student put together these words from the dictionary. I told them to make easier sentences."

Other participants perceived themselves as less confident in academic writing style although they had a higher level of proficiency. Some participants without native-like intuition were confident in academic writing because they knew what to write. Then, the intuition became less important.

Prof. Han believed her English proficiency as better than other EFL instruction but even so, her feedback was not noticeably different from that of other teachers. She thought Korean students needed feedback in grammatical errors. Even though she had near-native intuition in English, she still felt it was difficult to respond to certain areas of writing such as academic discourse style. Therefore, she believed Korean EFL learners should learn grammar and sentence structure first.

"I have confidence in writing (in English), but I still have certain limitations as a non-native speaker. Because I feel the constraints so much in writing appropriate academic expressions and style, I think they need comments on grammar."

Teacher efficacy

As interviews proceeded, how they believed themselves influential to students' learning to write in English was found to play an important role in how and whether participants gave feedback on students' writing.

Although Korean students produced diverse types or levels of writing in college-level English, some participants mentioned that they could deal with most of them. The primary source of their beliefs in teaching EFL writing was their teaching experience. Most participants reported that they had started out nervous and worried about whether they could be of help to their students as non-native writers of English. However, as they gained years of teaching experience in college-level EFL writing classes, they found their own areas of contribution to their students' learning to write. Prof. Baek's first year as an EFL writing instructor turned out to be very favorable. While she was gaining more teaching experience, she found her own area of contribution as an EFL writing teacher. Then, she was able to implement

different methods of giving feedback such as emails and on-line written discussion.

As an exceptional case, Prof. Chang had taught freshman composition classes in an American university as a doctoral student. While she was teaching how to write to native speakers of English, she did not feel intimated at all. She believed that she could accomodate most of her students' needs in learning to write in English. She indicated she incorporated the process approach in teaching EFL writing. She let students brainstorm ideas for writing in groups. Then they would start writing their first draft. Her students were required to revise their first drafts after receiving her feedback. She also kept it a rule to talk to every student in all her writing courses for short individual conferences. However, she did not include many positive comments in her feedback. She directly indicated the problem in the students' writing in content, organization, or grammar. Overall, Prof. Chang evaluated herself as a good EFL writing teacher although she was not as confident in herself as a writer.

"I used to write essays when I had free time. But I became too careful in my English writing after I started teaching writing. So, I don't think I am a good writer, but I am a good writing teacher. I make student believe that at least I enjoy writing."

By contrast, some teachers with longer teaching experience often reported that they feel less efficacious in teaching EFL writing.

"I felt comfortable speaking English with my students. But I don't have to write in English in my daily life. I know what good writing is, ut I should say I am confident in writing itself."

EFL writing teachers must make continuous efforts to sustain their feelings of self-efficacy in EFL writing and in their ability to teach EFL writing. Without supporting and continual experiences in teaching EFL writing, these teachers might feel limited and left behind.

Expectation about students' development

One of the important factors in teacher efficacy is how much a teacher expects students to improve their writing as a result of instruction. Thus, when teachers perceived they did not have control over students' learning how to write in English, they did not exert themselves to develop more effective methods to help students including providing extensive feedback.

The participants help different views about their influence on students' learning to write in English. some teachers stated that they had found students able to produce a better piece of writing. They seemed to eager to develop diverse teaching methods, classroom activities, writing assignments, and to be interested in different ways of providing feedback. One participant indicated that she found her students able to produce much better pieces of writing when she gave them many chances to rewrite.   She lets students keep journals and brainstorm topics for writing. Another participant teaching an intermediate writing course implemented an asynchronous discussion forum for some writing assignments.

"I started the on-line discussion, hoping it would give students chances to write and to be attentive to an audience. They did not receive many responses from students in other countries, though. But it seemed they wrote longer and better when they had less pressure on grades."

Overall, she believed her students benefited from her instruction and improved their writing in the writing course. she also believed that students are able to learn how to write well in English if they have enough time to practice to acquire insight into the language. Therefore, she helped students improved in the areas of making transitions, avoiding their inappropriate expressions, and using proper writing styles with her feedback on their writing.

By contrast, a certain number of participants perceived the students as unmotivated or unable to reach college level writing. These teachers complained that many students turned in copies of somebody else's writing from other sources as their assignments. One participant began all her conversations by talking about students' problems when she was asked about her classroom activities and the feedback she provided.

"Students have too many problems! They are used to passive language learning styles, you know, like reading. But they are terrible at active or creative learning skills such as writing. Furthermore, there are so many students with grammatical problems even though they are college students. So I have to teach what a paragraph is. It is such an endless task."

The participants were overwhelmed with the struggles they had in helping students improve their writing. It may be that they became discouraged because the students in freshman classes had not shown noticeable improvement in their writing. As a result, they may have adjusted their feedback to student's writing, providing only the minimum possible. They seemed to have decided that it was useless to expend their time and effort in giving feedback.

In addition, the participants' job status was also an important

factor in deciding how much non-native EFL writing teachers could contribute to students' learning to write in English. Compared to full-time instructors, part-time instructors were constrained from opportunities to participate in decision making about the curriculum. In most cases, they did not receive the benefits of full-time instructors such as teaching advanced writing classes with fewer students. In some schools, they were not given their own desks. Such treatment seemed to invite them to consider their job as peripheral and keep looking for better job opportunities, reducing the time available to give feedback to students' writing. By contrast, some full-time instructors were required to present professional papers at conferences or to submit articles to journals, which enabled them to maintain their writing self-efficacy.

5. Discussion

The purpose of this research was to investigate how Korean EFL writing instructors give feedback on their students' writing and to examine their beliefs on EFL writing and teaching EFL composition. In this final section, major findings and implications will be summarized and discussed.

The first lesson from the result of the study was that grammar was still the most frequent concern in giving feedback on students writing. Contrary to the participants report, comments on content and organization were not produced very often. It is consistent with other research findings. Due to situational factors and time constraints, most participants seemed to focus on commenting or correcting surface-level errors on students' writing.

The second lesson came from the interview data. Some aspects of teacher feedback seemed mostly influenced by their beliefs on L2 writing and experience in teaching L2 writing. Most

participants reported that they repeated the classroom activities, teaching methods, and feedback practice that they received as EFL or ESL students. It is also consistent with other research findings.

The final and major lesson was that teachers chose how they would give comments on students writing depending whether they found their feedback helpful in students learning to write. The findings of the study indicated that the teachers' clear conceptions of their role in students' learning to write was crucial to how they produced feedback on their students' writing. However, the corresponding relationship between writing teaching efficacy and their feedback has been overlooked among researchers. Kassen (1991) found that the teachers in advanced level classes wanted their students to do their own rewriting and provided slightly more comments on content because they expected more of their students than teachers of beginning classes. Nevertheless, the teachers' expectation in her study seemed to indicated different concepts from the current study. The teachers' expectation in this study included beliefs about their role in improving students' writing.

EFL writing teachers can produce effective feedback by clearly communicating their beliefs about L2 writing and criteria in their feedback in their EFL writing classrooms. Ferris and Hedgcock (1998) also emphasized the importance of clear communication between ESL teachers and the students in their classrooms in order to develop effective teacher feedback produced on students' writing. However, most research has focused on students' confusions about teacher feedback on their writing. Thus, further research can investigate the impact of EFL writing teachers' misunderstanding on writing with their students.

5.1. Implications

The findings of this study provide suggestions for both teacher

training and writing instruction. This study suggested that non-native EFL writing teachers may not be effective in teaching composition by providing their feedback on students' writing when they are uncertain of their role in teaching EFL writing and less confident in performing their role. Thus, non-native EFL writing teachers could take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about writing instruction by sharing their experiences, feelings, and beliefs in teaching college-level EFL writing as non-native speakers of English. This type of teacher training can be done in the form of workshops for in-service teachers on a regular basis during the semester. In the university context, the benefits of writing workshops should be extended to all part-time instructors in the program. It would also be beneficial for student teachers or new teachers to understand the actual EFL writing classrooms as part of a methods class (Kassen, 1991). Such instruction would help them connect those theories and methodologies they learned to real classroom situations.

The training should include sufficient actual practice in implementing writing tasks and in providing different types of feedback on students' writing. Teachers could develop their own feedback skills by exploring the feedback options available to them in different situations. Especially for some in-service teachers, This practice would be helpful to keep them informed of current developments in writing instruction. By updating their knowledge, they could find the strategies adequate to perform their role in teaching students in a Korean EFL writing context. Moreover, they could discuss how students at different levels may need different kinds of feedback. With this training, teachers could make their feedback on students' writing consistent and effective.

One implication of this study may be that EFL writing teachers should incorporate opportunities for recursive writing processes by encouraging the students to revise their drafts with

teachers' feedback provided more on the content of their writing. First, teachers would most likely to benefit by reflecting more explicitly on the objective of each writing task that is drawn from the teaching goals for the course. Second, in planning writing tasks and assignments, teachers should consider how their feedback can be used by students. For example, allowing time for students to revise the content and organization of their writing after they receive feedback from the teacher or from their peers would make the feedback more integral to instruction. Interactive classroom activities in pairs and in small groups with classmates and the teacher might stimulate students' ideas in writing. Finally, writing teachers should allocate time to share ideas before students start writing and to appreciate the students' "final" products in the classroom (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998) This would provide the students opportunities to realize the value of the multi-draft writing process.

The data in this study suggested that the teacher participants were not using explicit guidelines in how to provide feedback on students' writing. As Reid (1993) stated, the purpose of commenting on and evaluating students' writing should be to stimulate improvement in their writing. Although this study did not intend to find out what criteria the teachers were using in giving feedback on and evaluating students' writing, it did seem that some teachers in the study were inconsistent and unclear in providing comments and grades to students. Less specific objectives for their writing assignments mights be responsible for the lack of coherent criteria for giving feedback. Therefore, this study suggests that EFL writing teachers would benefit by having clearer sense of the purpose of writing assignments and the desired features of the ultimate outcome. It will make them feel certain of their to help students to see how to revise their writing from a reader's perspective.

During the interviews with the teachers, it seemed that

computer-assisted writing instruction may soon be widely available in Korean university EFL classes. Several teachers had already implemented on-line discussion forums for a writing task or were using emails in responding to students' writing. However, some teachers in the study indicated that they corrected most of their students' writing before allowing them to post on the internet webpages. This may have resulted from their concerns about being evaluated as teachers of writing if others were to see their students' writing with many mistakes on the internet. It suggests that EFL writing teachers should not be concerned too much about their students' mistakes in their writing in these competer-mediated writing activities. Rather they should consider these mistakes as one aspect of the developmental process. Thus, both teachers and their students can enjoy writing tasks with less anxiety and less self-consciousness. It will help them improve their writing skills in their computer-based writing classrooms.

5.2. Directions for Future Research

Because most research on self-efficacy has been conducted with quantitative research methods, more qualitative research is needed to develop a deeper understanding of their efficacy beliefs in EFL writing and writing instruction. In addition, more research on non-native EFL writing teachers' beliefs on EFL writing instruction and their feedback in different university contexts will expand the understanding of this relationship.

In addition, most research on feedback has focused on the effectiveness of the feedback or on the students' perspective on feedback given on their writing. To decide the effectiveness of teacher feedback provided on students' writing, further research needs data from the students and continual evaluation of ultimate outcomes. Moreover, EFL writing teachers' goals and perspectives on their feedback practices needs to be investigated

using both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

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APPENDIX A

<u>Questionnaire</u>

1. Educational level   (Master's degree   Doctoral degree)
2. Gender   (Male   Female)
3. Years of EFL teaching experience:
4. When you are writing in English, how much attention do you pay to

the following items?

	Not at all		Litttle			Fairly		Very much	
a. grammar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b. content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c. style	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d. organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e. vocabulary choice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

5. Which of the following writing have you done so far?

	Korean	English
a. diary		
b. personal stories		
c. poems, creative stories		
d. summaries of reading		
e. short term-papers		
f. research reports		
g. research proposal		
h. journal articles		
I. other (please, specify)		

6. In your opinion, how important is it for an EFL writing teacher to have experience in the various types of writing on a scale of 1 (not important) to 4 (very important), both in English and in Korean?

	English				Korean			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Email								
Diary writing								
Class paper/report								
Resume								
Application								
Journal article								
others (plz, specify								

7. How would you rate the following aspects of writing on a scale of 1 (difficult) to 4 (easy)?

	English				Korean			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Grammar								
Vocabulary								
Organization								
Transitions								
Style								
Creative ideas								
others (plz, specify								

8. How would you rate your language skills on a scale of 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent)?

	English				Korean			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Listening								
Reading								
Speaking								
Writing								

9. How important are these language skills as EFL writing teacher on a scale of 1 (not important) to 4 (very important)?

	English				Korean			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Listening								
Reading								
Speaking								
Writing								