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Constructing Trust Between Teacher and Students Through Feedback and Revision Cycles in an EFL Writing Classroom

Given Lee
Diane L. Schallert

University of Texas at Austin

The authors’ goal was to model the role played by the relationship between a writing teacher and her students in the feedback and revision cycle they experienced in an English-as-a-foreign-language context. Participants included a nonnative teacher of English and 14 students enrolled in her English writing class in a Korean university. Data came from formal, informal, and text-based interviews; semester-long classroom observations; and students’ drafts with teacher comments. Findings showed that caring was enacted in complex and reciprocal ways, influenced by interwoven factors from the greater society, the course, the teacher, and the student. Students’ level of trust in the teacher’s English ability, teaching practices, and written feedback, as much as the teacher’s trust in particular students based on how they revised their drafts, played a great role in the development of a caring relationship between them.

**Keywords:** teacher written feedback; revision; process writing approach; EFL instruction; teacher trust

For any writing teacher, finding effective ways of helping students develop their writing abilities is a primary concern. Although some studies of composition have questioned the effectiveness of providing written feedback on students’ papers (Hillocks, 1982; Sommers, 1982; Truscott, 1996), such feedback has been used as a popular way to guide students, especially those who are learning the language in which they are writing, in improving their writing. Various reasons have been offered for the effectiveness of written feedback: Written comments can connect a teacher with
a student on an individual level (Ferris, Pezone, Tade, & Tinti, 1997), they affect students’ writing and attitude toward writing (Leki, 1990), and students prefer teacher written commentary over oral or peer feedback (Saito, 1994). However, as several researchers have pointed out (Anson, 2000; Mathison-Fife & O’Neill, 2001; Prior, 1991; Reid, 1994), research on writing and revision has usually analyzed the written comments as texts, overlooking the context or the relationship between teacher and student that might influence how these feedback texts are produced and interpreted and how they participate in the student’s revision process. Goldstein (2005) notes that revision in writing is a process “with multiple factors interacting and mediating each other, through a cyclical process within which these multiple student texts and teacher commentary texts are created” (p. 24). Of these factors, Blakeslee (2001), Dong (1996), and Prior (1995b) have emphasized the relationship between teacher and student as playing a critical role in how a teacher gives feedback to a student’s papers and in how the student responds to this feedback.

Although rarely applied to writing classrooms, one theorist who has contributed to an understanding of the complexities involved in building relationships between teacher and student is the feminist educational philosopher Nel Noddings (1984), with her construct of caring. To her, caring does not refer to a personal characteristic of a good teacher but describes the relationship between teacher and student. In our study, we use a caring perspective to explore how the relationship between teacher and students developed through the processes of a writing teacher providing feedback to students’ drafts and students responding to these comments in revision. What makes our study different from previous work is the kind of composition instruction situation we examined. Where previous work has focused on graduate instruction, native language (L1) writers, or English-as-a-second-language (ESL) contexts, we were interested in an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) composition classroom taught by a teacher in Korea who herself was not a native speaker of the language of instruction, English.

Here we are following the convention of using SL to refer to a second language situation in which one is learning the language in the context in which the language is commonly used and FL to refer to a context in which the second language is more a school subject and the learners are in their native language context. And, by feedback, we meant to include all responses that a teacher makes on a student’s draft including shorthand symbols, punctuation markers, grade earned, and in-text as well as end comments.

We had expected, like Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1994), that environmental factors associated with the language learning environment would
influence what feedback a teacher provided on students’ papers and how students would perceive their writing assignments and view their teacher’s written comments. The following research questions guided our study: (a) What factors influence the development of a caring relationship between teacher and students? (b) How does this relationship affect the ways the teacher provides written comments on student papers and the processes by which students use these comments in revising their drafts?

**Theoretical Considerations for the Study**

In this section, we first describe Noddings’ concept of caring, and related studies, and then we move on to a description of the literature on feedback and revision practices in the composition classroom.

With the goal of nurturing an ethical element in what teachers bring to their teaching, Noddings (1984) developed the construct of caring, locating it in the relation between the one-caring (teacher) and the cared-for (student). In her view, caring is not a feeling, or attribute, or personality trait of one individual. Rather, it is a certain kind of relation or encounter between the person giving care and the one receiving that care (Noddings, 2001). In a caring encounter, the one-caring meets the cared-for with full attention, engrossment, and receptivity and gives primary attention to the wants, goals, and needs of the cared-for, even if only momentarily. The cared-for, consciously or unconsciously, perceives the one-caring as good, which becomes a motivation for the cared-for to continue to strive to accomplish a worthy goal (Noddings, 1984). The hallmark of Noddings’ construct is her claim that although the cared-for does not have to respond to the one-caring in a fully equivalent way, the one-caring and the cared-for are reciprocally dependent. *Caring* is a descriptor of the relationship between the two people, not a characteristic of the one-caring. Noddings emphasizes that just as a teacher’s commitment is essential to the development and sustaining of a caring relationship with a student, for the relationship to be completed, a student’s reciprocal contributions play as vital a role. She also emphasizes that because the conditions that human beings encounter are rarely identical, the construct of caring would need be analyzed in particular lived experiences.

As Goldstein (1999) claims, even though establishing a caring relationship between teacher and students should contribute to the students’ learning, only a few studies have yet explored how caring is actually developed between teacher and student in the teaching and learning process. Some studies have examined, via electronic dialogue journals, how preservice elementary teachers’ notions of caring change over the course of interactions
with students (Goldstein & Freedman, 2003; Goldstein & Lake, 2000). In addition, research on caring has been primarily conducted in K-12 instruction (Goldstein, 1998), not at the college level. One of the few studies that carefully tracked over time the development of caring relations was that of Kim (2005); Kim studied the relationships built by a teacher educator and students preparing to be elementary teachers of reading and reported that trust was a major contributor to differentiating the more caring from the less caring relations between the teacher and his students. Moreover, where Noddings (1984) noted that dialogue serves as the primary tool for cultivating a caring relation between teacher and student, Kim used the written dialogue between the teacher and his students to describe the course of the development of caring relations, encouraging us for our study to focus on the written feedback a teacher provides in response to students’ writing assignments as the dialogic basis of the teacher-student relationship. Finally, Noddings’ concept of caring has been used to analyze the relations between teacher and student in L1 or ESL classrooms, not those in an EFL classroom. Although we can argue that L1 students and, more problematically, ESL students may find it easier to use language input and feedback as the basis for building relationships, many EFL learners must rely solely on their understanding of their teacher’s feedback for such dialogue (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Therefore, we argue that it is important to study the ways EFL students perceive their teacher and their teacher’s written feedback as these perceptions may differ from those of L1 or ESL learners.

Among the few studies that have examined the role that a teacher’s written feedback played in the development of the relationship between teacher and students, Straub (2000) reported that students responded to his feedback more positively when he made comments on their drafts in an informal and oral-like voice. Recently, several researchers (Belcher, 1994; Blakeslee, 2001; Dong, 1996; Prior, 1995b) have documented how the advisor-advisee relationship contributes to graduate students’ learning to write for their disciplines. These studies have demonstrated that a reciprocal, supportive, respectful, and trusting relationship between advisor and advisee helped the students learn to write their dissertations, thereby beginning the process of entering into their research communities. However, whenever they did not develop such a relationship, due in part to their mismatch with, mistrust in, or lack of response to the mentor’s feedback, the students suffered. Prior (1995b) examined how a graduate student learned to write from her professor’s written feedback on her research papers. Initially, the professor made extensive written comments on the student’s drafts, and the student used them unquestioningly in her subsequent revisions, due to her trust in and
respect for her professor and her lack of confidence in her own expertise in the discipline. However, as the semester progressed, the student began to have some reciprocal influence on the professor. Prior concludes that the response and revision rounds were shaped by multiple factors that derived from personal, interpersonal, and institutional histories. Although these studies have provided us with invaluable insights about the relationship between teacher and students and the effect of that relationship on the students’ writing and revising processes, they have concentrated on graduate students in science disciplines in one-on-one teaching situations, a relatively specialized setting.

**Contextual and Methodological Considerations of Our Study**

This brings us to the particular context of our study, an English writing class offered at a Korean university. Although robust research on second language writing has gained recognition as a distinct field of inquiry in the past two decades (Silva & Brice, 2004), research on second language writing, including how writing instructors respond to student papers, is heavily ESL oriented, as some scholars (Braine, 1999; Ortega, 2004) have noted. Much less has been published about how writing instructors in EFL contexts respond to student writing (I. Lee, in press). In particular, there is little research about the process by which comments participate in the relationship that becomes established between teacher and students in a foreign language setting. Recently, several Korean universities have begun to offer English academic writing courses, preferring to employ as writing teachers native speakers of English. However, because of the high need, departments of English frequently resort to hiring nonnative English speakers as part-time or full-time instructors (not regular line professors) who, regardless of their degree of qualifications, suffer from being perceived by popular sentiment as less capable of teaching the language (Braine, 1999; Park, 1999). From a relationship perspective, such teachers may be perceived by at least some of their students in a less-than-positive light, troubling the relationship that could develop between them (G. Lee & Schallert, in press).

In the research on foreign language writing, studies have usually examined the effects of teacher response to student writing by using surveys (Ashwell, 2000; Schulz, 2001) and quasi-experimental methods (Gascoigne, 2004; Kepner, 1991). These studies give us a limited understanding of classroom interactions or relationships that might influence the feedback and revision cycle. To fill a gap in the research discussion on teacher written
response to student writing, we adopted a naturalistic approach influenced by writing researchers (Berkenkotter, Huckin, & Ackerman, 1989; Casanave, 1995; Herrington, 1985; Hyland, 1998; Prior, 1995a) who argued for the need to use qualitative and ethnographic methods rather than to rely on experimental methods in which participants respond under controlled conditions to a prompt supplied by the researcher. For our study, we chose to focus on the students enrolled in a composition classroom taught by a nonnative speaker of English in a Korean university who organized her course using a multiple-draft process-writing approach. As Strauss and Corbin (1998) note, a naturalistic qualitative approach is well suited to the examination of any context, process, and meaning about which less is known. With the first author immersed in the context for the full duration of the semester, we hoped to explore not only the meanings that students made from their teacher’s comments written in the margins of their papers but also how these meanings were influenced by and woven into their experience of the teacher and class as a whole. Such a research focus seems best addressed from a qualitative methodological stance.

Method

Setting, Participants, and Course

Data gathering took place in an advanced college composition course in a major public university in Korea. Because the course was designated as an advanced English course, students were required to meet a certain level of English proficiency as indicated by their scores on the Test of English Proficiency (TEPS, developed by Seoul National University) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

The teacher, Dr. Kim (all names are pseudonyms), had obtained her doctoral degree in American literature from the same Korean university and had been teaching English for 6 years at the college level. Although she had never studied formally in an English-speaking country, she had a high level of English proficiency, as her students noted: “Her English shows that she’s more than qualified to teach us English” (interview translated from the Korean). All 14 students in the class, 10 men and 4 women, agreed to participate in this study. As shown in Table 1, their ages ranged from early to late 20s. Of the 14 students, 3 had lived in English-speaking countries for extended periods of time (3-10 years), 3 more had visited Anglophone countries and studied English there for 2 to 6 months, 1 had served for 2 years as an aide to the U.S. Army in Korea, and 7 had learned English only in Korea.
through their schooling. Note that although the course was listed as an undergraduate course, 1 woman in the class, Minkyung, was in a doctoral program.

The class met twice per week early in the morning for 4 hours for a 6-week summer semester. As per university policy, the course was conducted entirely in English. The teacher sat at a head table at the front of the class, and the students were arranged around the other three sides of the large rectangle formed by three additional tables. As an observer in the class, the first author sat at the end of one of the sides of the rectangle. Because there was no fixed curriculum from the department, the course was designed entirely by the instructor. At the beginning of the semester, she spent most of the class time lecturing about English academic writing and using brief exercises as points of departure for her lectures. Toward the middle of the semester, she shifted her focus to orchestrating whole class discussion on the content and style of short assigned readings, with groups of 2 to 3 students leading the discussions.

Students wrote five papers spaced across the semester: two short, one-paragraph compositions that were narrative and descriptive in genre, and three five-paragraph argumentation essays. For each assignment, the points a student could earn were designated half to the first draft and half to the final version. At the next class meeting, after they had submitted their first

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Time Spent in English-Speaking Environments</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Minkyung</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Social science</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soojin</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>German literature and language</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumi</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngjoo</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Changsoo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Material science</td>
<td>9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donghoon</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Physics</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Geology</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heetae</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Social science</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>International relations</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>2 months</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Sungjin</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Mechanical engineering</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunwoo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Material science</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
drafts of an assignment, students received their graded papers with the
teacher’s written comments. The students then had at least 2 weeks before
the second draft of that assignment was due. The teacher again provided
feedback on these second drafts and assigned the final grade for the assign-
ment. After her students had submitted their first argumentative essay (the
third assignment) and before the revision of the first assignment was due
back to her, the teacher held an individual conference in the teacher’s
lounge during which both she and the students communicated in Korean.

**Procedure and Data Sources**

Data came from multiple sources and were collected by the first author
using several methods: (a) transcripts of a 50-minute background interview
with the teacher and each student; (b) students’ drafts, first and final, for
each of five assignments, with teacher comments and grades; (c) transcripts
of two 25- to 30-minute text-based interviews with the teacher and each
student; (d) classroom observations and class documents such as the syl-
labus, assignment prompts, and readings; and (e) transcripts and observa-
tion notes of each individual teacher-student conference. All interviews
were conducted in Korean, transcribed immediately, and later translated
into English by the first author.

The background interview with the teacher and each student was con-
ducted early in the semester. These interviews usually began with informal
conversation while having lunch in the school cafeteria and then continued
in a small empty classroom when audiotaping began. The students were
asked about their experience of learning to write in Korean and English,
their self-evaluation of their writing abilities in both languages, their rea-
sons for taking the class, their initial impressions and expectations of the
course and the teacher, their definitions of their roles as writers and text
revisers, and their views about what it means for a teacher to have a good
relationship with students. The teacher was asked to explain her opinions,
beliefs, and practices regarding the goals for the course; her role as a writ-
ing teacher and comment provider; and her views about a teacher’s role in
establishing and maintaining good relations with students.

We collected the first and final drafts of each assignment with the coop-
eration of the teacher. Upon completing their writing of the first draft of an
assignment, the students submitted it to the teacher via e-mail. Before
returning these drafts to the students with her comments and grades, the
teacher photocopied them (a total of 140 drafts for the five assignments) for
us. Two text-based interviews (Odell, Goswami, & Herrington, 1983) were
scheduled with the teacher and each student, once in the middle of the semester and a second time at the end of the course. In these interviews, while reading through each draft with a student, the first author asked the student to describe any particular revising experiences that came to mind. Before the interview, she had also identified several teacher comments she wanted to discuss with the student, choosing those that seemed very general (e.g., “too simple”) or ones the student seemed to have ignored, and then asked the student in the interview to explain how the comments had figured in the revision. In the same way, the first author asked the teacher why she had made particular comments on the draft and what she had expected her student to do with them in revision.

In addition, the first author observed every class session and took notes of what the teacher said in the classroom and of how each student responded to her. For example, the teacher announced to her students on the first class day that they should not take her written feedback “literally” but as cues to improve their writing. In examining each student’s drafts, we could infer how this announcement had been interpreted differently by the students in their revisions. After she had graded the students’ first argumentative essays (third assignment), the teacher held 30-minute individual conferences with each student in the teacher’s lounge. Before these conferences, the teacher had told the students in class that they should bring questions about specific comments she had made on their first three drafts that they wanted her to explain. In the individual conference, the teacher and student sat at a table on which the tape recorder was placed, with the first author observing from a sofa beside the table. These conferences were the only official class activity conducted in Korean.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis was guided by the open, axial, and selective coding strategies developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998). As is usual with qualitative analysis, these different coding strategies did not occur entirely sequentially because data analysis began even in the early phases of data collection, and different phases of coding reciprocally influenced each other. In open coding, all data sources were closely examined and compared within and across data sources to find key concepts relevant to our research questions. For example, after each background interview with the teacher and student, the first author immediately transcribed these recordings, read through them line by line, and wrote key concepts in the margins of the transcripts (e.g., *learned English in Korea; learned English in Canada, America, or Australia; good or poor Korean or English proficiency; good or poor Korean or English writer; feel*...
comfortable speaking or writing in English; “I like feedback and revision process,” “I respect her,” “appreciate,” “Her English is excellent,” “Her English is wordy,” etc.). When she saw similarity across transcripts, she used the same conceptual label so that initial categories could begin to be identified (e.g., educational background, language ability, writing ability, student’s response to the teacher, student’s response to each activity, etc.). The notes from classroom observations and informal conversations with the participants were analyzed in the same manner. In examining the transcripts of the text-based interview data and the students’ writing samples, we focused on what comments the teacher made on each student’s drafts and on whether and how the student incorporated them in his or her subsequent drafts. Also, close attention was given to what factors affected the processes of the teacher providing written feedback to the students’ drafts and of the students revising them from their teacher’s written comments. Analysis of these data allowed us to begin to understand the dynamics of classroom interactions and the developing relationships between teacher and students.

During axial coding, we linked subcategories and categories at the level of properties and dimensions. In this process, we found that because the categories and subcategories were interconnected and interwoven in complex ways, we sometimes had difficulty differentiating clearly one coding category from another. However, there were some overarching categories that more clearly emerged, such as the wider social context, the course activities, and certain constraints that the teacher and each student brought with them that seemed to influence the feedback and revision cycle in more immediate and pervasive ways. In relating the categories to each other, some were discarded or integrated with others. For example, an initial coding referring to the teacher’s personality was eventually discarded because most students did not refer to her personality as an important factor influencing their learning to write in English from her. Instead, what the teacher could do to help them learn to write during the semester seemed to be more important than who she was.

In selective coding, the goal was to develop themes that represented how categories were related to each other and how the themes could be represented in a model showing their interrelationship. Having recursively studied all data sources, we produced an initial conceptualization of the relationships among categories. In this model, the wider social context was shown as influencing the classroom, with the feedback and revision process then situated inside of the classroom context showing how teacher and student were connected through writing and with trust identified as sitting “in” the classroom context but outside of the feedback and revision cycle. After much discussion and frequent revisiting of the data, we revised this initial model to produce
the final model we present in Figure 1 and discuss in the Results section. Among several minor changes, there were three major ways the initial and final models differed: First, we moved trust to the very center between teacher and student because we wanted to portray how both the teacher and students seemed to participate in the feedback and revision processes with positive feelings about the other so long as they trusted each other. However, trust was characterized not as static but as a dynamic process that was constructed at each moment, depending on how both parties perceived and interpreted the other, each activity, and each written word. In addition, caring enactment in the feedback and revision cycle in our study was described as bidirectional, not unidirectional. That is, although the teacher’s efforts in building the whole course were important to the development and maintenance of a caring relationship between herself and her students, what was as important was whether the students responded to her written comments with positive and appreciative feelings. Third, we changed writing to the quality of drafts because even though we had evidence that those students who developed a trusting relationship with their teacher had received better grades and had improved their writing more than those who had difficulty developing such a relationship, it seemed fairer to claim that it was not their general ability to write that had improved but their particular drafts. Through the process of refining and redefining each category and looking for how these categories related to each other, we were able to construct a comprehensive and explanatory model to represent the central theme, what is called the central phenomenon in grounded theory analysis, of our inquiry.

In this study, we sought for credibility by engaging in the site sufficiently long to construct a deep understanding of the development of the interpersonal relationships between teacher and students in context. We also collected data from multiple sources and used methods that allowed for describing the same phenomenon from different perspectives. In addition, to corroborate our interpretation of the data, we presented our initial conclusions and sought input from some of the participants via e-mail. We discussed our interpretations and analyses at length with each other in numerous peer debriefing meetings. Finally, throughout the process, we returned to the published literature to evaluate and deepen our interpretation.

**Results**

Having developed themes and categories from the several passes through the data, our final step was to construct a grounded theory model,
a representation that showed how processes exemplified in our data unfolded in a particular context. This model is shown in Figure 1. As with any grounded theory, variables that appear in the model depend on there being variation across participants for each category that contributes to a central phenomenon, the focusing theme of the model. Thus, the resulting theory represents the particular data analyzed and not all potentially reasonable factors and conditions one could infer about similar situations. Instead, in a grounded theory model, conditions represent factors that impinged on and constrained the emerging central theme or phenomenon represented in the data, with categories showing how the central phenomenon was expressed, all embedded in a particular context.

As a result of our analysis, the central phenomenon that emerged and around which we organized several categories was trust as a catalyst for caring encounters in the feedback and revision cycle in an EFL writing...
course. By calling it a catalyst, we were pointing to how trust seemed to act as a critical factor affecting how the teacher and students saw each other through the words the teacher provided on their drafts and through the revisions the students wrote. In what follows, we describe each part of the model depicted in Figure 1, beginning with the outermost layer, the contextual factors that impinge on the process of trust, before moving to a description of the actual process representing our central phenomenon. This process is itself represented in two layers in the model. The layer labeled *caring encounters between teacher and students* begins to show how the teacher and students enacted their relationships such that caring was variably constructed, with characteristics that the teacher and students brought to the situation acting as *conditions* or *constraints* on the relationship. At the heart of the model is the *feedback and revision cycle* wherein trust acted as the catalyst to build the relationship between teacher and students. In describing the very core of our grounded theory, we use the stories of three students to illustrate how exactly trust was (or was not) constructed between teacher and student and contributed to caring encounters through the feedback and revision cycle.

**Contextual Factors**

The outer layer of the figure depicts the contextual factors, represented here as sociocultural and program influences, that had a pervasive impact on the development of a caring relationship between teacher and students in this English writing course in Korea.

*Sociocultural influences.* The sociocultural influences included, but were not limited to, the teacher’s and students’ backgrounds as well as their beliefs, values, and practices about teaching and learning English writing in Korea. In particular, the backgrounds that the teacher and students brought with them to the classroom played a complicating role in connecting the teacher with the students. Although similarities in their backgrounds seemed to contribute to the development of caring relationships with each other, differences seemed to have the opposite effect on their relationships. For example, the students like Sangho who had learned English only in Korea seemed to regard their teacher as an expert in teaching English writing and responded to her comments conscientiously and with care. By contrast, students like Jongmin who had studied English for an extended period of time in an English-speaking country frequently ignored the teacher’s feedback, trusting their own sense of what was appropriate English usage.
Whenever these students did not respond to her comments as she had expected, the teacher interpreted their oversight as a lack of trust in and appreciation for her and her written comments. In the face of these students’ lack of reciprocal response to her feedback, she nevertheless provided thorough feedback but only out of obligation as a composition teacher.

**Program influences.** Several factors that stemmed from the program, including the teacher’s status in the program, a lack of variety in the writing classes available to students, the requirement to use English as the medium of instruction both orally and in written feedback, and the assigned class hours, influenced the development of caring relationships. Although the program valued English writing as important for students’ future careers, writing classes were predominantly staffed by temporary part-time and full-time instructors who were universally looking for permanent positions elsewhere. Dr. Kim’s unstable status in the program directly constrained her ability to devote more time to this writing class, affecting the degree to which she could make the optimal level of written comments on each student’s drafts. When asked why she no longer provided end comments to her students, Dr. Kim stated,

> It took 30 minutes to provide written comments on each paper. If I make such end comments, it would take at least another 20 minutes per paper. I cannot do that at this point because I don’t have time and I am too exhausted. . . . In an unstable situation like this when I have to look for a job, I’m doing the best I can do for my students. (Dr. Kim, second text-based interview)

Additionally, because the program did not offer the students many writing courses, the students could not choose just the right course appropriate to their English level and writing development. Although the students’ language proficiency had been screened by standardized tests, their English proficiency nevertheless varied from the native-like English proficiency of some students to that of others who struggled to understand the teacher’s lessons. That the teacher and students were required to speak only in English in class affected their ability to develop relationships. As class observation and informal conversations out of class revealed, some students had difficulty understanding the lecture and written feedback on their drafts, which were delivered almost entirely in English. Additionally, even if the teacher was a fluent English speaker, the fact that she had to speak only in English constrained her ability to express herself more freely. Finally, although some students preferred the summer course because it could be completed within
a short period of time, they generally commented that the length of each class meeting, at 4 hours, made it difficult for them to be fully attentive to class activities throughout each class session or to trust that they would remember what they had learned. As Donghoon stated in his first text-based interview, “Sometimes, I feel afraid that I may not remember anything that I have learned because we do not have enough time to digest it.”

**Caring Encounters Between Teacher and Students**

In Figure 1, the middle layer of the model represents caring encounters between the teacher and the individual students in the writing course. Although the written feedback the teacher provided on the students’ drafts played a major role in connecting the teacher with each student individually, all class activities and other interactions, to some degree, affected the development of a caring relationship between them. We discuss three aspects of how caring encounters were enacted between teacher and students: their views of their roles and of their relationships, the nature of the teacher’s teaching practices and the students’ responses to each activity, and the constraints and conditions on their relationship that influenced the teacher and students as they worked together to help students write and revise their drafts.

**Teacher’s and students’ views of their roles and of their relationship.** The teacher’s roles and views of herself as a writing teacher or comment provider and each student’s conception of his or her roles and self-concept as text writer or reviser influenced the development of a caring relationship between them. When asked to describe her views of herself in this course, the teacher replied that she saw herself as a guide who could help her students understand the basics of English writing (e.g., “I have many roles, such as a lecturer, an evaluator, etc., but I consider myself a guide”). She had similar views of what it meant to be a caring teacher in the writing class. “For me, a caring teacher is a teacher who organizes class activities appropriately, provides substantial written comments on students’ drafts, and helps them understand English writing.” In our analysis of her written comments on students’ drafts, she seemed primarily to adopt what Smith (1997) called an *evaluator* role (e.g., “good intro”) or a *coaching* role (e.g., “needs an active verb”).

Most students in this study saw themselves as less competent writers of English than of Korean due to their lack of experience in writing in English. They generally felt frustrated with writing in English, as Minho described in the first interview:
I feel confident when writing in Korean. . . . As I write in English, I lose my confidence. When I write in English, I brainstorm my ideas in Korean and make an outline. While translating in English, I lose my focus because I cannot clearly describe my ideas. Then, my writing becomes very plain. (Minho, background interview)

Accordingly, the students generally defined the primary role of a caring teacher as one who could guide them to write English effectively. Based on her learning and teaching experiences in Korea, the teacher structured class activities and assignments very precisely, made many written comments on the students’ drafts, and encouraged them to follow her suggestions. In response, most students thought of her as a highly competent English writing teacher, used her comments as guidance to revise their drafts, and expressed their appreciation for her efforts.

I think she is a great teacher. She organizes the class activities very precisely. I like the multiple feedback and revision process she uses for this course the most, because I can think about the same writing from different perspectives. I really appreciate her making such efforts. (Changsoo, first text-based interview)

The nature of the teacher’s teaching practices and the students’ responses to each course activity. The series of interactions the teacher and students had with each other throughout the semester also influenced the development of a caring relationship between them. The teacher structured her course in various ways, including lectures, writing assignments, individual conferences with each student, readings, discussions, and team presentations. Among these activities, the students generally evaluated the lectures and the individual teacher-student conference as most useful in learning to write and revise their drafts. In particular, they considered the conference a watershed event in the semester because it was conducted in Korean.

It is easy to fix grammatical mistakes. . . . However, in terms of content feedback, if my teacher gives me comments like “vague” or “unclear,” I don’t know how to revise my draft based on these comments. . . . Particularly, in class, we have to speak in English. When we speak in English, I sometimes experience that everything is vague. I don’t have a clear idea of what we have discussed. This conference helped me have a clearer understanding of my teacher’s perspectives on writing and revision because we talked in Korean. (Minho, first text-based interview)

Transcripts of the 14 individual conferences additionally revealed that although much of the conversation consisted of the teacher’s explanations,
the students not only asked about how to revise their drafts but also sought advice about how to improve more generally their English writing abilities.

Sangho: You commented that this [“she seemed estranged”] is not clear.
Dr. Kim: Yeah, tell me this sentence in Korean. What do you mean by this?
Sangho: It means “she looked excited but uncomfortable” because it was her first trip to Korea.
Dr. Kim: Then, how about using “looked very excited” instead of “estranged”? (Dr. Kim and Sangho, individual conference)

Heetae: Do we really have to keep the format as we write an essay?
Dr. Kim: Yes, you need to. As I told you in class, it is important to follow the format at this point because this is a basic academic English writing class.
Heetae: If I follow the English format, I cannot recognize myself in my writing.
Dr. Kim: I see. But in one-paragraph writing, if you don’t clearly state your intention at the beginning of your essay, people won’t read your writing . . . .
Heetae: I see. Thanks. (Dr. Kim and Heetae, individual conference)

The teacher also used many encouraging words and light banter (e.g., “Donghoon, you are a sophomore. You have millions of years to improve your English writing before graduation”), which she rarely included in her lectures conducted in English or in written comments on the students’ drafts.

By contrast, students’ responses to the class discussions and presentations were less positive. Some students questioned why she devoted so much class time to discussions and presentations in a writing course. Sungjin expressed his frustration with discussions: “I don’t know why she put so many discussions and presentations into a writing class.” Class observations also made it clear that as the discussions and presentations continued, some students did not seem very engaged. Other students seemed to listen actively but did not volunteer any comments unless directly called upon. Most of the talk in discussions was carried by the same few students. Nevertheless, despite the students’ preferences or dislikes for certain class activities, most students reported sentiments similar to Youngjoo’s:

She knows what and how to teach English writing. . . . She has prepared good materials and organized class activities well. . . . For each activity and assignment, she provides a precise and clear plan for us, including when we need to submit our papers and when we receive our comments. The comments she provided to my drafts were very helpful as I revised my papers. I feel I have learned a lot about English writing within a short period of time. I really appreciate her efforts. (Youngjoo, second text-based interview)
At the last interview, when asked if they would be willing to recommend this course to their friends, almost all students answered that they would.

**Constraints and conditions on the teacher-student relationship.** Various factors that the teacher and students brought with them into the classroom as a package played a critical role in the development of a caring relationship between them, because these factors continuously influenced how the teacher organized class activities and provided written comments to the students’ writings and how the students responded to these activities and comments.

The major constraints and conditions operating on the teacher were time and effort conflicts, beliefs and goals about teaching English writing, language ability, content knowledge, and memories of past encounters with these and previous students. Like most writing teachers, the teacher in this study was constrained by conflicts she faced in the time and effort she could devote, conflicts that immediately affected what feedback she could provide and how she could make comments on the students’ drafts. For example, she had provided end comments on each student’s draft on the first three assignments but stopped giving these comments on the last two because of her busy schedule. Several students commented that they wished their teacher had continued to provide these end comments.

One thing I really liked about this course was the summative comments my teacher made at the end of the paper in colored pens because these comments gave me an idea of the good and poor aspects of my writing. . . . I wished we could have had them more. (Changsoo, second text-based interview)

In addition, because her beliefs and goals about teaching English writing included the idea that her written feedback would help her students learn to write in English, she pushed herself to make many written comments on their papers. Although her ability to speak Korean was perceived by most students as an asset in facilitating their writing and revising process, a few students saw her nonnative status as a source of mistrust or doubt in the aptness and accuracy of her feedback.

Well, from the class activities and her written comments on my drafts, I can say that she is an expert in teaching English writing. . . . It is difficult for her to read all students’ papers carefully within two or three days and to provide many comments on them. But she does. I think she cares for us a lot. I really respect her. (Sangho, first-text based interview)
Her English is different from that of teachers who have learned English in an English-speaking environment for an extended period during their schooling. . . . She does not focus on expressions but on grammar or format. I think that’s because she learned English only in Korea. (Jongmin, background interview)

Relatedly, some students thought that she could have assisted their writing and revision process more effectively if she would have known more about their major areas, something the teacher herself did not feel was a problem in her ability to help them develop as English writers.

She is a very good teacher. . . . However, sometimes, I notice she does not seem to know the specific terms used in our areas. For example, in social science, we frequently use the verb, “connote.” When I used it in my writing, she commented that my use of the verb was awkward. (Joonki, second text-based interview)

Finally, memories of past encounters constructed from previous contacts or subsequent interactions in class had a great impact on how the teacher and the students interpreted and built trust in each other. From the beginning of the semester, the teacher had difficulty developing a trusting relationship with Jongmin and Sumi at least in part because she had heard from her colleagues that Jongmin did not have much trust in nonnative English teachers and that Sumi did not pay full attention to class activities.

The students were also constrained and conditioned by multiple factors such as their writing ability, English proficiency, motivational goals, general knowledge, and memories of past encounters. The students’ writing ability in Korean seemed to play a positive role in their writing and revising process in English. Most students who identified themselves as good Korean writers wrote and revised their drafts better than those who described themselves as poor Korean writers, as suggested by the fewer number of written comments the teacher made on these students’ second drafts than on their first drafts and on their later assignments compared to their earlier assignments. By contrast, Donghoon, who stated that he was a poor writer in Korean, received almost the same number of written comments on first and second drafts and did not show much decrease across assignments in the semester.

The students’ perceptions of their English proficiency also affected their attitudes toward using their teacher’s written comments. The students who evaluated their English proficiency as lacking, true of most of the students in the class, seemed to put in more effort in writing their initial drafts and
to attend to their teacher’s comments more carefully in revising their drafts than those students who were confident in their English. Thus, the students who identified themselves as poor English writers were eager to receive the teacher’s feedback on their drafts. These students would immediately begin to review her comments on their papers, spending many hours in revising their drafts. In contrast, Jongmin, who described his English as excellent, seemed to do neither, spending little effort in writing his first drafts or in reviewing his teacher’s written feedback when it came time to revise.

Even when they were motivated to improve their English writing ability, some students did not develop a constructive relationship with the teacher, as they could not respond to her feedback effectively, mainly due to their lack of English and writing abilities. Donghoon entered the course with high motivation, and the teacher worked hard to help him revise his drafts. However, in the end, their relationship seemed to suffer as a result of his continuously ineffective response to her comments. For example, on the first draft of his second writing, Donghoon had written, “A monastery may make these small rooms to pray without other’s bothering,” to which the teacher wrote “faulty connection” with a line connecting the words monastery and pray (along with several other comments just on this short sentence alone). Donghoon could not understand why his teacher had made such a comment, misunderstanding what the problem was with his use of the word monastery. However, he felt that he had to change something because his teacher had made a comment on his draft. His choice, to split the sentence into two (“Monasteries constructed these isolated tiny rooms. They prayed in there.”), was of course not seen as acceptable by the teacher, and she found herself repeating almost the same comment on his second draft.

As for the constraining effect of general knowledge, the students who had depth and breadth of knowledge generally were able to produce strong first drafts and to revise them without much difficulty by quoting a phrase or sentence from other sources and by inserting it at the right place. For example, in the first draft of his fourth assignment, as Joonki wrote about his second argumentative essay, he compared “False Promise of Globalization” to the specter of communism by effectively quoting from Karl Marx’s The Communist Manifesto.

Lastly, the students were affected in developing trust in their teacher from their memories of past encounters and continuous interactions with her in class. Even before taking this course, most students had gathered some information about her from the school Web site or from friends who had taken the class. The information they had read and stories they had heard affected how they interpreted their teacher’s written comments on
their drafts. For example, when asked in the interview about the many comments on grammar or format on the first and second assignments the teacher had made, a few students complained. Yet, because the students had heard she would eventually provide more comments on content, organization, and idea development in later drafts, most, like Sangho, maintained a high level of trust in their teacher: “The comments I received on my first two drafts were not the ones I had expected. But I am sure she will give us more feedback on content, organization, and others later. . . . I trust her.”

The Place of Trust in the Feedback and Revision Cycle

In Figure 1, the inner layer of the model shows teacher feedback and student revision portrayed as a cyclical process involving obligation and reci-procity. The thermometer between the depiction of teacher and student variables at the center of the figure is meant to portray the varying degrees of trust they held toward each other. Each student and the teacher constructed a different level of trust at each moment depending on what feedback the teacher gave or how she responded to a student’s draft and how the student interpreted and used her comments in revision. Most students understood clearly their teacher’s expectations about how they should interpret her comments, that is, not literally but as guidance to a re-envisioning of their drafts. Thus, even when she used rather unspecific words such as “too simple” or “unclear,” they spent several hours, sometimes days, reviewing her feedback and reconstructing their drafts. As we illustrate below, the students’ reciprocal responses contributed to the development of caring relationships with their teacher.

Thus, in terms of our model, the feedback and revision layer in which trust was a catalyst can be read as starting from the point at which a student has turned in a first draft of an assignment. The teacher, out of obligation in her role as a writing teacher and with the intention to help her student’s development as a writer of English, reads the draft, apprehends what may be problematic about it, attends to her goals as a writing teacher and the needs of the particular student, and writes comments on the draft to help the student in his or her development. The student, for his or her part, then reads the comments, and to the degree that he or she can comprehend and appreciate what the teacher is indicating by the comments she has made, revises the draft. By appreciation, we mean that the student has come to see that the original draft is lacking in some particular way that is within his or her ability to change. When the student turns in the second draft, the teacher now sees not only whether the student has improved the writing but also whether the student has responded or reciprocated in accepting her vision for the piece. In this way,
the trust cycle is completed, and when things are going well, as was true for most students in the class, trust increases. However, in at least two cases, the cycle did not turn out so well. We next present three examples of how a caring relationship was enacted in the feedback and revision cycle: one that was like most student-teacher relationships in this class where the connection between teacher and student was easy and the other two for whom the relationship with the teacher was never smooth, but for different reasons.

Sangho and his teacher. Sangho was a 25-year-old male student majoring in material science who had learned English only in Korea. Although he evaluated his Korean and English writing ability as poor, he nearly always produced good first drafts on assignments throughout the semester. He had chosen to take this course to improve his English ability because he had decided to study abroad for a graduate degree. He preferred to receive more feedback on how to develop his ideas and organize them than on grammar, but he believed that “all feedback from my teacher is helpful.” He began this course with high expectations and a high degree of trust in Dr. Kim. He commented in the first interview, “Her syllabus on the school website was well organized. . . . She is an excellent English teacher. . . . The feedback she makes on my drafts is very helpful for revising my writing.” Sangho appreciated all of his teacher’s efforts in commenting on his drafts, reviewed her feedback very carefully, and changed his texts substantially. As seen in Figure 2A, when he received the comment from his teacher, “too broad, not interesting enough,” on the first draft of his fifth assignment, he read the problematic parts, understood her expectations for the texts, and transformed the paragraph, now introducing the character Janus from Roman mythology (see Figure 2B). As Sangho responded to her comments appreciatively and positively and changed his texts substantially, the teacher felt very pleased with his revisions and, along with assigning him good grades, wrote positive comments on his final drafts (“interesting!”). Throughout the semester, Dr. Kim and Sangho continued to develop and maintain a caring relationship with each other by the process of her provision of detailed written comments to his writing and his faithful use of them in revision.

Jongmin and his teacher. Jongmin, a 20-year-old male sophomore majoring in social science, had learned English in Canadian, Australian, and U.S. schools for 10 years before entering this university. Although comfortable when speaking and writing in Korean, he felt more confident in his use of English, which was one of his reasons for taking this course.
Jongmin brought somewhat negative experiences with Korean teachers of English (“Even when I did not cite references correctly in my writing, my teachers [Korean teachers of English] did not point it out”), which seemed to influence how he saw Dr. Kim as an English teacher. Toward the beginning of the semester, he stated, “Like other Korean English teachers, she is wordy, focusing on format and grammar.” The teacher, in turn, had difficulty building trust in Jongmin:

I don’t know how much he considers my feedback useful for revising his drafts. One of my colleagues who taught him English writing last year told me that he does not have much trust in non-native English speaking teachers. (Dr. Kim, background interview)
In writing and revising his drafts, Jongmin neither put in as much effort as other students nor did he closely follow her suggestions. As shown in Figure 3, when the teacher provided feedback, even writing in both English and Korean—“not bad, but too long and not coherent enough”—and making detailed interlinear comments on his fifth assignment, Jongmin only responded to some of the simplest comments (e.g., changed the to its, added s to storyline) and did not change the text as the teacher had expected. In the text-based interview, when asked why he had not responded to his teacher’s suggestions, he stated in a frustrated tone, “I think feedback is relative. She thinks my writing has problems, but I think it is fine.” Even though she invested much time providing written comments on his drafts and explaining problematic parts in his writing to him during the individual conference, to which he had mostly agreed as he admitted he had not put much effort in his drafts, the teacher interpreted his lack of responsiveness as a lack of trust in her as an English teacher and gave her feedback on his drafts only out of obligation.

Sumi and her teacher. A senior pharmacy major in her late 20s, Sumi also had had different schooling experiences from the other students in this class. She had obtained two college degrees from other universities before being admitted to this university: one degree from a Canadian university and the other from a Korean university. She evaluated her Korean and English writing ability as “comfortable.” The main reason she had for taking this course was to meet a graduation requirement. Although she stated that she had trust in her teacher’s comments on her drafts (e.g., “Is there any feedback from the teacher not helpful?”), over the course of the semester, she rarely revised her drafts beyond the bare minimum indicated by her teacher’s written comments and often ignored particular requests altogether. The teacher, in turn, began to wonder whether Sumi was willing to work to improve her writing and gave low grades to both drafts of each assignment. Upon receiving low grades, Sumi for her part began to express frustration with her teacher (e.g., “I expected a better grade than this”).

An example excerpted from one assignment illustrates how Sumi typically responded to her teacher’s feedback in revising her drafts. The teacher had provided Sumi feedback about the importance of stating a thesis statement, topic sentence, or controlling idea as well as using appropriate format rules, such as asking for normal spacing between paragraphs, an extra space between the title and the first paragraph, and no underlining of the title. She had done this in various ways: in an early lecture in class, on each of Sumi’s earlier drafts, and during the individual conference in the teacher’s lounge:
This paragraph does not have a clear controlling idea. . . . Think about the exercises we did in class about how to make strong argumentative writing . . . If you want to argue that the length of imprisonment for sex criminals is too short in Korean society, you need to state that the punishment for sex criminals should be augmented by increasing the length of imprisonment. . . . I will check this part first on your second draft. . . . Sumi, check the format rules again. (Dr. Kim and Sumi, individual conference)

Although the teacher emphasized that she would check whether Sumi had included a controlling idea and obeyed the format rules in her second draft, as shown in Figures 4A and 4B, Sumi changed the first sentence only minimally by replacing *is* with *seems*, simply deleting the parts the teacher had indicated without transforming her writing or adding new material. She even kept the extra spacing between paragraphs. Despite her efforts, as the
revisions seemed to be only minimal, the teacher interpreted Sumi as lacking motivation and interest in improving her writing from her feedback. At the end of the semester, although she expressed some guilt about her feelings, the teacher stated that she had stopped feeling any obligation to help Sumi.

Sumi seems to accept my suggestions without any noticeable resistance, but does not act on them. . . . There may be some ways I could help her, but I don’t have time. If a student does not have interest and motivation to improve his or her writing from my feedback, I find myself caring less about the student. (Dr. Kim, second text-based interview)

**Conclusion**

In sum, our data and the model we developed from them led us to portray trust as an important force in how a writing teacher and her students could build caring relationships with each other. When, as for most in this class, students trusted the teacher and continued to have reason to trust her, their willingness to follow her suggestions for their writing allowed her then to see the effectiveness of her teaching and the value of the effort and time she had spent in providing detailed feedback. When in a few cases there was reason for either a student or the teacher not to trust the other, the student’s draft revealed the teacher’s feedback to be ineffectual, and the relationship between teacher and student seemed consequently to suffer. Our model captured the reciprocity explicitly claimed in Noddings’ (1984, 2001) construct of caring. As we saw in our data, it was not the teacher alone who could determine the quality of the relationships she established with her students. Instead, caring encounters were reciprocally and dynamically produced by both teacher and student over time, influenced by the degree of trust experienced.

**General Discussion**

In this study, we examined the factors that influenced the development of the relationship between teacher and students and the effects such relationships had on the feedback and revision cycle in an EFL college composition classroom. As seen in the model, building trust in teacher-student relationships was influenced by interactive factors coming from the greater society and program context, the course, the teacher, and the students. As our data demonstrated, the relationship between teacher and students was a reciprocal one built from obligation on the part of the teacher and responsiveness
on the part of the students. The fact that English was taught by a nonnative speaker of the language complicated the development of the reciprocal relationship that depended on teacher feedback and student revision. Despite various constraints and conditions, the teacher committed herself to helping her students learn to write in English, and most students responded to her with respect and appreciation. Different kinds of relationships were built depending upon how the teacher organized class activities and provided written feedback to students’ writing and how each student perceived and interpreted each activity and feedback. In particular, the comments that the teacher chose to make on students’ papers allowed her to meet most students as the one-caring and the students to respond to her as the cared-for.

In fulfillment of caring encounters, students like Sangho demonstrated a high level of trust in the teacher’s feedback, reviewed her written comments...
carefully, and used them faithfully in revising their drafts. Looking at the improvement in their subsequent drafts, the teacher, in turn, felt confident in giving feedback knowing that the students would seriously attempt to follow her suggestions. However, for a few students like Jongmin and Sumi, developing such a reciprocal relationship with their teacher was much more problematic due to the mistrust they had in their teacher’s language ability or to a lack of or ineffective response to her feedback in their revisions. Because these students’ drafts did not improve to the same degree as those of other students, reciprocity was not shown. In such nonreciprocal encounters, the teacher made written feedback on students’ drafts only out of obligation as a writing teacher, sometimes doubting whether her students would consider her feedback helpful in revising their drafts or would use the feedback to help themselves develop as writers of English.

In sum, as Murphy (2000) has noted, the feedback and revision cycle seems to be a dynamic, bidirectional, and social process between the teacher and each student, and as our study has demonstrated, this process depends on trust. For caring to be developed and sustained in the feedback and revision process, it needs to be provided by the teacher and perceived by the students in reciprocally beneficial ways. However, it seems that the caring relationship is technically always fulfilled by how the students respond to the teacher’s feedback in an appreciative and trusting manner when caring is established. When the teacher-student relationship is more troubled, trust seems to be the issue.

Although Noddings’ (1984) concept of caring helps us understand how caring was actualized between teacher and students in a composition classroom, it is important to note that caring relations must not be analyzed solely based on principle but rather as they are embedded in a concrete situation, because each context bears different contextual, cultural, and educational expectations, values, beliefs, and practices. The ways caring is enacted between teacher and students in a Korean college composition classroom may differ from the caring enactment in other college composition classrooms in other cultures. For example, many of the written comments that Dr. Kim provided to the students’ drafts took directive (e.g., “provide examples,” “make it short,” “double space!”) and evaluative forms (e.g., “good intro” or “incoherent sentence”), which were perceived by her students as natural experiences in learning to write in English. However, given that the L1 students in Straub’s (2000) study did not consider similar comments by their teacher helpful in revising their papers, it is possible that Dr. Kim’s comments might be perceived by other students as noncaring or unhelpful, putting into question how such comments can play a mediating role in developing a caring relationship between teacher and students and contribute to
their learning to write in English. As several scholars (Atkinson, Churchill, Nishino, & Okada, 2007; Casanave, 2007; Connor, 1996; Fox, 1994) have also commented, there are important cultural differences in what is considered appropriate and normal in how teachers interact with students and how students in turn respond to their teachers.

Our study contributes to the literature on teacher response to student writing in three ways. First, it extends Noddings’ (1984) concept of caring to the composition classroom, especially to an examination of the role of a teacher’s written comments to students’ writing assignments. Where one might argue that relationships between teacher and student are best built through face-to-face encounters, we are pointing to the importance of the particularized responses a writing teacher gives to each student’s draft, thereby displaying a heightened degree of attention and responsiveness to the work of the student. In this way, our data illustrate the teacher’s role in caring as enacted in the margins of students’ drafts. Second, our study adds focus on the role of the relationship between teacher and student to descriptions of revision such as those of Flower, Hayes, Carey, Schriver, and Stratman (1986) in which the success of writing and revision is seen as a purely intellectual activity. Lastly, our study contributes to the literature on second language writing that has often based implications on data that were experimentally derived, rather than on actual observations of practice, or that focused solely on teacher comments as products. In our study, insights draw from data that came from the actual teaching practices of a teacher as she developed relationships with her students as they learned to write.

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Having received her doctoral degree in Foreign Language Education from the University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin) in May 2007, Given Lee is presently working at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, California. Prior to this, she taught English to secondary school students in Korea for many years and Korean to U.S. undergraduate students at UT-Austin. Her research interests include second language (L2) students’ writing processes, reading, and writing connections, as well as L2 students’ enculturation into the target culture.

Diane L. Schallert has been a professor of educational psychology at the University of Texas at Austin since 1979 and a member of the program faculty in foreign language education. At a broad level, her research interests are on the interface of language and learning and on how emotions participate in this interaction. Current research programs include attempts to understand how students learn from classroom discussions, both oral and online, and how students regulate their well-being as they manage their goals across the semester.