

Investigating L2 Teacher-Student Writing Conferences in a College ESL Composition Classroom

YiBoon Chang*

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This study investigated features of L2 classroom-based teacher-student writing conference and student subsequent revision from the perspective of languaging. A non-native teacher and four non-native students participated in the writing conference about two tasks of summary and critical review in an intact college ESL composition classroom. Eight video-recorded conference sessions were analyzed regarding discourse topics (language use vs. content/rhetoric), and configuration of negotiation and scaffolding. Discourse topics were found to interact with task types as more issues about content and rhetoric were addressed for critical review. Configurations of negotiation and scaffolding were found to be similar in both tasks. Scaffolding was dominant in language use talks while negotiation and scaffolding were balanced in content/rhetoric talks. As for making meaning and student revision, the quality of negotiation was more critical than the quantity. Non-extensive scaffolding also led to successful revision along with students' background knowledge and classroom instruction. The findings demonstrate dynamics of writing tasks, conferences, and student revision.

Key words: second language writing, classroom-based writing conference, languaging

*First Author: YiBoon Chang, Lecturer, College of Engineering, Seoul National University; 1, Gwanak-ro, Gwanak-gu, Seoul 08826, Korea; Email: lemon22@snu.ac.kr

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1. INTRODUCTION

Research on writing conference started from the context of writing center in first language (L1) composition studies about native speaker (NS) tutors and NS tutees, and was expanded later to second language (L2) context with non-native speaker (NNS) tutees and NS or NNS tutors (Chang, 2012) and even NNS peers both in writing center and classroom settings. Since writing conference began to appear as an instructional method of regular one-on-one talk with an instructor in L2 composition class in the late 1970s, research on this method started to emerge in the 1980s in L2 writing (Eckstein, 2013). As writing conference interactions earned growing scholarly interests from L2 writing researchers, thorough examination of the practice soon emerged in the late 1990s particularly in terms of its effects on student subsequent revision (e.g., Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990). The interest in the learning effects of writing conference, which is relatively less common in L1 composition studies, largely derived from the fact that L2 writing conferences become more embedded in process-oriented writing classroom pedagogy (Kim, 2018; Maliborska & You, 2016), while L1 writing center conference hardly allows tracking down individual tutees' subsequent revisions. This new strand of "classroom-based writing conference" (Eckstein, 2013, p. 175) should have its own distinctive features from those of writing center conference.

However, the interactional features of L2 classroom-based writing conference has been surprisingly under-researched (Yu, 2020) compared to its pervasive use in practice and extensive research on L1 writing conference. Despite the scanty literature, some empirical studies proposed useful frameworks to analyze L2 writing conference. Haneda (2004) distinguished the structure of L2 writing conference discourse at different levels (conference as a whole, sequence, and exchange) and identified various factors of patterning each level of discourse: discourse topics, teacher's strategies and pedagogical goals, students' L2 proficiency, and the quality of student drafts. Her integration of macro- and micro-level analyses provides a more comprehensive understanding of the stretched discourse in writing conference, which is still being widely adopted to analyze writing conference interactions (Wingate, 2019). More recently, Ewert (2009) proposed an interface framework of negotiation and scaffolding in analyzing teacher talk in classroom-based L2 writing conference. Learner proficiency and discourse topics were the main factors structuring negotiation and scaffolding patterns. Her study showed that extensive negotiation combined with scaffolding promote learner participation, possibly facilitating students' subsequent revisions with more collaborative teacher-student exchanges. She underpinned the interface framework as a more effective methodology to capture the nature of teacher talk with regard to its instructional impacts.

To successfully apply these useful frameworks, conceptualizing L2 classroom-based writing conference should be preceded in the tradition of second language acquisition (SLA), aside from that of L1 composition study. *Languaging* (Swain, 2006), rooted in the traditional notion of negotiation, would be a viable candidate. *Negotiation*, which is often called *negotiation of meaning*, has been the focal type of interactions in the Interaction Hypothesis (IH) in SLA. According to the IH, language learners repair their communication breakdown by engaging in negotiation, through which they enhance mutual comprehension of meaning. The enhanced comprehensibility of input via negotiation of meaning is believed to incidentally increase learners' consciousness in language forms, thus giving rise to language acquisition. However, it has been profoundly criticized that the IH lacks empirical evidence to verify the proposed relations between enhanced comprehensibility of input and the resulting language acquisition (Pica, 1994). The IH researchers were also criticized in their methodology; they did only focus on the quantity of negotiation by simply counting the instances of negotiation, not taking the quality of negotiation into enough consideration (Ellis, 1999).

Responding to such criticism, some researchers adequately called for extending or clarifying the concept of negotiation in relation to language acquisition (e.g., Foster & Ohta, 2005; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Lyster, 2002; Young, 1984) to better represent the nature of instructional interactions, the primary purpose of which is to promote language learning, not mutual comprehensibility of input. Swain and Lapkin (1995) insightfully identified this distinctive nature of instructional interactions and conceptualized language-related episodes (LREs) in which linguistic interactions mediate language learning. To establish this new concept of language use as a mediating tool of language learning, she extended the concept of output in her well-known output hypothesis into a "socially-constructed cognitive tool" (Swain, 2000, p. 112).

The idea is that language-related interactions co-constructed by language learners involving their language output operate as a tool of learners' cognitive development, language leaning in this case. The extended concept of output was embodied into the new term, *talking-it-through* (Swain & Lapkin, 2002), demonstrating that people learn language by producing language. Producing language is a comprehensive process of creating meaning about language, which was finally named as languaging referring to "producing [emphasis in the original] language in an attempt to understand – to problem-solve – to make meaning" (Swain, 2006, p. 96). The conceptualization of languaging corresponds to that of a knowledge-building dialogue (Wells, 2000) and dialogic pedagogy (Wingate, 2019) in that language, as "being an agent", engages in "an activity of the mind" (Swain, 2006, p. 96).

Incorporating these theoretical and analytical frameworks, the present case study aims to explore how the teacher and students make meaning through L2 writing conference

interactions in a college ESL composition classroom. Adopting the notion of languaging, the conference interactions are to “consolidate and reorganize knowledge of the L2 in structural and rhetorical aspects and make this knowledge explicit for each other’s benefit” (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000, p. 65). To identify the features of L2 classroom-based conference interactions, this study integrates the micro-macro interface analysis (Haneda, 2004) with the negotiation and scaffolding interface framework (Ewert, 2009) under the overarching theoretical framework of languaging. To be more specific, the conference interactions were analyzed in terms of its discourse topics at the macro level of sequence and negotiation-scaffolding features at the micro level of exchange. From the perspective of languaging, negotiation is conceptualized in this study as negotiation for making meaning to solve student problems in writing. The concept of scaffolding suggested by Wertsch (1979) (cited in Donato, 1994) is also accommodated to encompass the internalization of L2 knowledge of expert teachers and novice students in their shared interactions.

Specific research questions to guide this study are as follows:

1. How is classroom-based L2 writing conference characterized in terms of discourse topics and interactional features of negotiation and scaffolding?
2. How do the interactional features interact with making meaning and student subsequent revision?

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

2.1. Interactional Features of L2 Writing Conference

Interactional features of L2 writing conference have been explored in SLA from interactionist approach on which oral corrective feedback (CF) research has already capitalized (e.g., Thonus, 1998, 2004). In L2 research, oral CF is inherently featured by interactional properties unlike more unilateral properties of written CF. Oral CF studies adopted the established notion of negotiation of meaning in SLA that interactions are to enhance mutual comprehensibility. Common types of oral CF taken from the interactional strategies for negotiation of meaning are comprehension check, confirmation check, and clarification request, also known as 3Cs suggested by Long (1980) (cited in Foster & Ohta, 2005). Meanwhile, some L2 researchers shifted their attention into negotiation to promote linguistic proficiency, not to enhance mutual comprehensibility, naming it *negotiation of outcome* (Young, 1984) or *negotiation of form* (Lyster, 2002; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). This new perspective on negotiation better reflects interactional nature of CF in L2 context to

increase student awareness of target linguistic forms, contributing to a more complete depiction of L2 oral CF.

These insights on new orientations of negotiation for language form are also observed in the analysis of writing conference in L2 writing. Adopting the notion of negotiation to analyzing writing conference is valid in that writing conference is “a dialogue in which meaning and interpretation are constantly being negotiated by participants” (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 5). In the study of Goldstein and Conrad (1990), one of the most initial and the most thorough characterizations of writing conference, *negotiation of revision* was conceptualized to aim for clarifying the revision strategies, not for clarifying meaning, and embodied into four types of negotiation: (a) confirmation check about revision strategies, (b) comprehension check about revision options discussed, (c) student suggestions for revision strategies, and (d) student questions about why revisions should be made or how to make revisions. While negotiation of form is to enhance student understanding of linguistic forms, negotiation of revision is to enhance mutual understanding about subsequent revision including solving student problems in revision. Considering that revision on writing entails comprehensive aspects of writing in addition to language forms, negotiation of revision in writing conference would be closely in accordance with classroom discourse to promote building knowledge.

On the other hand, negotiation in writing conference has been distinguished from that of traditional classroom discourse in terms of its more collaborative and equalized interpersonal tutor/teacher-tutee/student relationships. King (1993) indicated that the roles of teachers in writing conference are more collaborative than those of classroom teachers, and accordingly students can take the shared control of conversation, cooperatively developing knowledge. This is largely because L1 writing center conference has been traditionally guided to be rather facilitative and cooperative toward student writers (Jones, Garralda, Li, & Lock, 2006; Mackiewicz, 1999), which was transferred into the conference practice in L2 writing context (Yu, 2020). The tutor-tutee cooperative negotiation has taken hold of research on writing conference to give special attention to the tutor-tutee power relationships in which tutors adjust themselves to achieve more dominance and tutors empower students by enhancing student engagement (Belhiah, 2009; Benwell & Stokoe, 2002; Haneda, 2004; Jones et al., 2006; Thonus, 1999; Weigle & Nelson, 2004; Young & Miller, 2004).

However, writing conference in L2 context has been known to somewhat deviate from such cooperative and equal relationships. NNS students are known to be more subordinate to tutors or teachers in L2 writing conference compared to native counter parts in L1 writing conference, both with NS and NNS tutors (Kim, 2007; Thonus, 1999; Wingate, 2019). Like this, the power hierarchy between teachers and students is considered to be critical to understanding the nature of negotiation in writing conference discourse.

In relation to the power relationships, another notable feature of writing conference interactions is the distinction between tutor/teacher-initiated and tutee/student-initiated moves. In L2 writing conference research, the discourse initiation was also indicated initially by Goldstein and Conrad (1990), who elaborated six types of interactional structures by interactional initiation as follow:

1. Teacher talks and student backchannels.
2. Teacher questions and student answers.
3. Teacher talks and student talks.
4. Student talks and teacher backchannels.
5. Student questions and teacher answers.
6. A combination of the above. (p. 448)

This priority on initiation of interaction is closely associated with the field's interests in tutor(teacher)-tutee(student) relationship in writing conference research. Students' taking the floor in conference talk seemingly manifests student dominance and contribution to conference interaction and potentially subsequent revision. Thus, proportion of student-initiated talk in relation to the tutor(teacher)-initiated has been often taken into appropriate consideration to analyses of L2 writing conference (e.g., Haneda, 2004; Walker & Elias, 1987; Young & Miller, 2004; Yu, 2020).

In terms of overall discursive organization of writing conference, identification of constituting elements of conference discourse preceded. For example, Walker and Elias (1987) proposed nine categories of L1 writing conference talk according to its discourse aims: preliminaries, markers, explanations, digressions, procedures, criteria, evaluations, revision, and test questions. Some of them are not directly related to student drafts at hand: preliminaries (to initiate interactions), markers (to indicate understanding or listening to the other's talk), and digression (to talk about generic composing process). The rest deal with responding to student drafts by giving/receiving information (explanation), managing the composition and revision process (procedures), articulating the rules of tasks (criteria), judging the degree of success (evaluation), collaboratively revising student drafts (revision), and checking student knowledge (test questions). These components demonstrate complicated orientations of writing conference to exchange information about tasks, evaluate and problematize student drafts, and revise drafts in accordance to the criteria of desirable writing products.

Among the multiple orientations, identifying and solving the problems of student drafts, which are directly related to revising process, earned a focal attention in analyzing sequential organization of writing conference. Initially, Freedman (1985) adopted problem-solving theory in analyzing L1 classroom discourse and identified three sequential

components: orientation to the problem, the joint solution of the problem, and the packaging. In the orientation to the problem, the teacher set the problem space where students can focus. Then, the teacher helps students to find the solutions at the joint solution stage. Finally, the teacher packages the joint solutions so that students can apply them in the immediate tasks and future ones as well. Williams (2004) consolidated a three-stage prototype sequence of response to writing from the problem-solving perspective as follows. First stage is to evaluate student drafts by comparing them with task criteria or desirable writing products as a basis of detecting problems. Then, identification and diagnosis of problems are followed. The final third stage is to come up with alternatives of problematic expressions and correct the problems by evaluating the alternatives. Except for some detailed configuration, the proposed sequences from problem-solving perspectives correspond to each other mainly consisting of identification/diagnosis of problems, collaborative work on the problems, and reaching final solutions.

This baseline problem-solving sequence has been adjusted to writing conference discourse. For instance, Young and Miller (2004) identified eight sequential components of revision talk in weekly writing conferences in ESL classroom:

1. ATEEND: Both participants display attention to the student's paper.
2. IDENTIFY: Both participants identify a problem in the student's paper.
3. EXPLAIN: One participant explains or justifies the need for revision.
4. DIRECT: The instructor directs the student to produce a candidate revision.
5. CAND REVISION: The instructor directs the student to produce a candidate revision.
6. DIRECT WRITE: The instructor directs the student to write the candidate revision.
7. WRITE: One participant writes the revision.
8. EVALUATE: The instructor evaluates the revision. (p. 522).

The eight sequential components embody the basic three-stage problem solving sequence. The initial identification and diagnosis of student problems correspond to identifying problems (2. IDENTIFY) and explaining the need for revision (3. EXPLAIN). The identification and explanation are indicated to simultaneously proceed very often (Williams, 2004). The following stage of collaborative work on solutions ranges from teacher's directing a student to produce alternative expressions (4. DIRECT), to produce alternatives (5. CAND REVISION), and to write them up (6. DIRECT WRITE). The final stage of correcting student problems embraces writing up of the selected revision (7. WRITE) and evaluating it (8. EVALUATE). This elaborated correction process manifests how teachers and students genuinely cooperate with each other in writing conference, evolving their

response through on-site negotiation (Sperling, 1998).

2.2. Student Learning from L2 Writing Conference

Although conference interactions have been conceptualized to promote student revisions as a primary manifestation of learning, the relationship between conference interactions and student revisions has been surprisingly under-researched (Yu, 2020). To introduce a few seminal works, the pioneering studies on the relationship between writing conference and student revision in L2 writing (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997) proposed the importance of extensive negotiation of revision. Goldstein and Conrad (1990) reported that active negotiation of revision promoted successful student revision, as the teacher and the student enhanced mutual understanding of the needs and ways of revision. When specific strategies of revision were extensively discussed and confirmed during the writing conference, students could successfully incorporate the decisions into their subsequent revision. Consistent student reflection of conference talk into subsequent revision was also acknowledged by Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) and later by Williams (2004). This is closely related to a typical patterns of problem-solving in writing conference in which negotiation of revision can play a central role in collaboratively pursuing the solutions of student problems. In this regard, students' successful revision after extensive negotiation of revision is a readily expected outcome.

Features of conference interactions leading to successful revision were more elaborated by Williams (2004) and Ewert (2009) suggesting the importance of scaffolding talk. Conceptualizing conference talk as problem-oriented process, Williams (2004) characterized teacher's scaffolding efforts leading to successful revision; the teacher helped students to clarify their intended meaning, consistently reminded students of the goals of conference, and made challenging revision tasks more accessible to students modeling successful revisions. These interactional features correspond to the notion of scaffolding (Donato, 1994). According to Ewert (2009), conference talk fundamentally incorporates both negotiation and scaffolding exchanges. In particular, extensive negotiation followed by scaffolding promoted more student participation, which suggests that such an interface between negotiation and scaffolding would lead to the effects of conference. In a teacher-student writing conference, scaffolding guidance from the teacher appears to help students to find and apply the solutions to revision.

With regard to relating factors of student revision based on writing conference, a recent study by Yu (2020) examined a series of classroom-based writing conferences in ESL program between a single ESL student and an NNS graduate student tutor about various writing tasks in sequence of comparison/contrast essay, journal entry, topical proposal essay, solution essay, and problem-solution essay. While most empirical studies on writing

conferences have been conducted on only a single writing task at a particular stage of drafting, Yu's study entailed multiple tasks and stages of drafting to investigate how the engagement of the same tutor and tutee evolved in a series of writing conferences across the drafting stages and tasks. It was found that the engagement of tutor and tutee in writing conferences complicatedly interplays with the writing tasks and problem areas, rather than the stages of drafting. First of all, types of problem areas varied according to the tasks; markedly more text-level problems were addressed in the comparison/contrast essay and the problem-solution essay than in the topical proposal essay. Yu attributed the disproportion to the higher complexity of organization in the comparison/contrast and problem-solution essay than that of topical proposal essay. Secondly, the tutor took more direct and explicit approach to addressing text-level issues, while taking more indirect and negotiating approach to addressing sentence-level issues. Yu indicated that the problems at the linguistic level such as vocabulary and grammar aroused genuine interference in the tutor's grasping the student intended meaning, which called for negotiation of meaning with the student. Finally, the writing tasks affected the tutor's approach to guiding the student by asking significantly more open-ended questions to the task of writing the solution essay. In relation to the subsequent student revisions, the problem areas were found to play a major role that the uptake rate of sentence-level issues was much higher (about 90%) than that of text-level issues (about 60%).

In sum, interactional features of conference interactions have been largely investigated regarding student subsequent revision in L2 writing. Traditional notion of negotiation has been reconceptualized specifically to serve student needs for revising their writing through conference interactions. Conventional instructional feature of scaffolding has been also found to play an important role in more instruction-oriented writing conference in L2 writing context. Overall sequence of tutorial interactions also reflects the goal of successful student revision oriented to problem-solving. Features of successful writing conference generally include extensive interactions with more student engagement, while success of writing conference is known to complicatedly interact with various contextual factors including task types and problem areas.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data Collection

3.1.1. Participants

The participants of the present study are one female teacher and four female first year college students who enrolled in an intermediate level ESL composition course of a large American university. The teacher participant was a second year international doctoral student from South Korea in her late 20s, and the given quarter was her second quarter of teaching the course. One of the student participants (S1) was from Hong Kong, and the rest of three were from mainland China. All of them were freshmen and at the age of 19 on average. Three of them started studying abroad at the university with a less than 6 month stay in the U.S., while only one of them (S1) had been staying in the U.S. for about three years having graduated from high school in the U.S. The student participants were assigned to the given course in accordance to their performance on the placement test of the ESL composition program of the university. After the teacher agreed to participate in this research under the permission of the ESL program coordinator, the four students volunteered to join this project based on the detailed introduction of the research project. To compensate for the student contribution, one session of free individual consultation for writing in other courses was offered to the students.

The course was designed to increase awareness and mastery of the organizational and grammatical patterns of successful academic writing, according to the course description. Two target academic writing genres of the course were summary and critical review of fiction and non-fiction texts. According to the course packet, the focal organizational and grammatical patterns of academic summary included presenting the main idea of the source text in the first sentence followed by structuring important information/events, using reporting verbs in a particular tense to paraphrase the source text, and properly citing the source text within sentences following the chosen documentation style. Critical review writing stressed organizing multiple paragraphs with introduction, an one-paragraph summary section, more than two body paragraphs of evaluating the source text from critical perspectives, a concluding paragraph, and the list of works cited. Rhetorical features were emphasized to connect thesis statements and topic sentences, and to support the claims in topic sentence with substantiating sentences. Concerning linguistic features, academic vocabulary for evaluation, comparison and contrast, and presenting opinions was introduced. To create the works cited list, different rules to cite different sources were introduced and practiced during the class instruction. The two genres were designed to

build on each other as commonly seen in ESL program (Yu, 2020) by leading the students to incorporate what they had learned in summary writing into writing the critical review.

A total of four course assignments were given in the following order: summary of non-fiction, summary of fiction, critical review of fiction, and comparative critical review of non-fiction. The assignments were individual writing tasks except the final comparative critical review in which two students wrote one critical review on two non-fiction texts as a collaborative writing activity. For about a couple of weeks for each assignment, the students wrote three drafts for each assignment, receiving written feedback from the teacher on the first draft, having a 30-minute individual writing conference with the teacher on the second draft, and submitting the revised third draft as the final product for grading.

3.1.2. Data collection

Among the four assignments and related writing conferences, only the second and third assignments, summary and critical review of fiction, were chosen for data collection and analyses in order to avoid any potential influences of the genres of source texts and task types, since the first and final assignments involved different non-fiction reading texts and the final assignment was a pair work. The summary of a fiction was to write a single paragraph in 70-100 words, and the critical review of a fiction, multiple paragraphs in 600-1000 words in length. Total eight writing conferences of four students, two conferences per each student for two writing assignments, were video-recorded with the consent from the participants. The reading material of the two assignments is a short fantasy story, "Garage Sale," written by Janet Fox (1984). The conferences proceeded in a quiet room at the basement of the ESL program building with the hardcopies of student drafts and reading materials. The teacher set up a video recorder at a visible location and the student participants were aware of video-recording. They were informed that they were able to always refuse to be recorded whenever they wanted. While the students paid some attention to the video recorder at the beginning of the first recording, they were found to focus on their talk with the teacher later as the conference proceeded.

In addition to the writing conference data for the analysis, student writing drafts for the conference and their revised final drafts were also collected in order to examine how the conference interactions interplayed with the student subsequent revisions. Course packet was also collected to better understand the discourse topics and interactional features of the given classroom-based L2 writing conferences based on the course objectives and target writing conventions.

3.2. Data Analysis

The 8 video-taped conference sessions (in 234 min. and 51 sec. total) were transcribed orthographically along with speech features such as overlaps, intonation, and volume changes, following the transcription symbols (see Appendix). Detailed transcription of paralinguistic cues were not included in the transcript, but some cues indicating the interactants' responses and attention, such as nodding, frowning, and jotting down, were marked in parentheses. Backchannels were counted as turns and some paralinguistic cues such as nodding were also considered as interactional turns. As Goldstein and Conrad (1990) indicated, it is controversial whether backchannels or related paralinguistic cues are reliable markers of independent turns or not. In the present data, the students often indicated their responses to the teacher with backchannels or nonverbal cues instead of producing verbal responses. It is suggested that the lack of extensive verbal responses from students in writing conferences plays an active conversational role of eliciting more direct teacher advice (Newkirk, 1995; Sperling, 1991). Considering these interactional features of the current student participants, this study counted all the student backchannels and nonverbal cues as independent turns. Meanwhile, the teacher's backchannels were counted as independent turns only when no other teacher responses were observed in teacher's turns, because the teacher habitually used backchannels right before verbal responses.

The transcribed data were analyzed at three levels of units from the smallest to the largest, *move*, *exchange*, and *sequence*, following the approach of Haneda (2004). According to the categories of sequential organization of discourse by Wells (1996), which Haneda (2004) adopted in her study, exchange consisting of reciprocal moves is the minimal unit of spoken discourse. As move is generally defined as a single speaking turn, exchange includes the exchange of speaking turns involving an initiating move and a response move. Wells (1996) insightfully indicated that those moves can be occasionally non-verbal. This conceptualization of moves encompassing non-verbal turns fits into the data in this study for the following reasons. The teacher often produced extensive discourse across different topics in a single turn, which corresponds to the findings of Strauss and Xiang (2006). Meanwhile, the students did not often try to take the floor to respond in the middle of the extensive teacher talks; instead, they often returned to the prior topics later, if necessary, when the teacher moved onto other topics in a single turn. Furthermore, the students were found to revise their drafts following the teacher's guidance without verbal responses during the conference interactions, which indicates that the students gave indirect (non-verbal or even silent) responses to the teacher's utterances.

Due to the frequent emergence of prolonged teacher talk and non-verbal student responses, the existing conceptualization of move as a single speaking turn was not an appropriate smallest unit of analysis for identifying exchange in this study. Accordingly,

the definition of move was modified to reflect the discourse features of the collected data adopting the conceptualization of AS-unit (Foster, Tonkyn, & Wigglesworth, 2000); move is a single speakers' utterance contributing new content to the discourse, which consists of at least one independent clause, or sub-clausal unit, together with any subordinate clause(s) associated with either. With this new definition, multiple moves and exchanges can be identified within an extensive single speaking turn of the teacher or the students.

Conference interactions to solve problems in student drafts for revision were identified as the focal interactions for data analysis, i.e., LREs, from the framework of languaging. Following Swain and Lapkin (2002), LREs are defined as "any part of the dialogue where learners talk about the language they produced, and reflect on their language use" (p. 292) mediating language learning in this study. Thus, interactions of managing the interactions such as small talk or assignment guidelines were excluded from LREs. The bottom-up approach, which analyzes data from the smallest unit to the largest unit, was chosen to better reflect the collected data. As the teacher frequently took multiple moves in a single turn and the students often initiated moves not closely related with the current discourse topics, the bottom-up approach is considered to be more appropriate and manageable to figure out the dynamics of current interactional shifts.

To identify interactional features, each exchange was coded as either negotiation or scaffolding according to the features of initiating moves. Bound exchanges (see Haneda, 2004), which often did not clearly manifest the features of negotiation or scaffolding, were coded corresponding to the coding of their nuclear exchanges. To manifest the languaging of the given conference interactions, the extant features of negotiation of meaning turned out to be useful and applicable with appropriate adjustments. Following Ewert (2009), the 3Cs suggested by Long (1980) (cited in Foster & Ohta, 2005) were reconceptualized. Comprehension checks and confirmation checks were subsumed into one category, comprehension/confirmation checks (CC). CC and clarification requests (CR) were to resolve student problems in writing drafts, not to resolve communication breakdown. In this study, the feature of problematizing (P) was newly identified from the students' initiating moves to invite their own difficulties in writing for the given tasks into the negotiation with the teacher. Different from CC or CR, P did not involve interrogative forms or rising intonations to elicit particular responses such as confirmation or clarification. Instead, P attracted teacher's attention, which brought in various responses from the teacher.

With regard to scaffolding, the six scaffolding features (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) were used as the basis for coding. Among the six features, following four features, (a) recruiting interest (R), (b) marking critical features (MCF), (c) controlling frustration (F), and (d) demonstrating an idealized version (D), were finally applied to the collected data because the other three features were not observed as in Ewert (2009). Meanwhile, a new

type of feature, reminding meta-knowledge (RMK), emerged during the coding process. RMK shares its features with MCF in that it indicates the discrepancy between the novice (student) performance and the ideal one from the expert (teacher) perspective. However, the primary function of RMK is to remind or consolidate the target knowledge that was already addressed during the classroom instruction to solve the current student problems. In this regard, RMK is thought to well demonstrate distinctive features of the given writing conferences, which are inherently intertwined with classroom instruction unlike those of writing center. Table 1 illustrates the features of negotiation and scaffolding with exemplary expressions from the data.

TABLE 1

Interactional Features with Examples

Type	Feature	Example
Negotiation	CC	Actually can I just delete this↑
	CR	What are consequences↑
	P	I don't think like my summary is like fraction.
Scaffolding	R	Okay, then let's talk about your draft. OK, uhm is this yours right.
	MCF	So when I first read it, it's its' too *strong*.
	F	No, no, it's pretty they are pretty connected
	D	Just reduce one of them and focus on the three of them with more explanation.
	RMK	The genre of this critical review requires evidence requires explanation

Note. CC = comprehension/confirmation checks; CR = clarification requests; P = problematizing; R = recruiting interest; MCF = marking critical features; F = controlling frustration; D = demonstrating an idealized version; RMK = reminding meta-knowledge

Sequences were identified by discourse topics of student problems as either language use or content/rhetoric topics. Language use topics include grammar, word choice, and mechanics that involve the rules of citing sources in text and in the works cited list. Content/rhetoric topics include text comprehension and interpretation, and rhetorical conventions for each writing task such as maintaining objective perspectives in summary and using supporting evidence for evaluation in critical review. Word choice topics were sometimes difficult to be classified to either language use or content/rhetoric, because word choice is inherently related to both lexico-grammar and meaning (Yu, 2020). When the word choice issues were associated with inappropriate word forms mostly derived from the students' lack of linguistic knowledge, they were categorized as language use topics. Meanwhile, the issues about confusing intended meaning of particular words were categorized into content/rhetoric topics.

To analyze the conference interactions, LREs were first identified and transcribed by the researcher. Then, the units of analyses of sequences, exchanges, and moves were identified by the researcher and then only confusing LREs were discussed with the outside coder

who was in doctoral study in SLA with experiences of spoken data analyses. As these initial processes were time-consuming and required solid understanding about the given context, the researcher played a major role in the analyses. Transcripts were coded for interactional features by the researcher and the outside coder. Among the data of four students, those of two students were analyzed both by the researcher and the coder to measure interrater reliability and achieved a reliability of 93.2%. After that, any discrepancy between the researcher and the coder was discussed to reach the agreement. The data of the other two students were then divided into the researcher and the coder one to each, and any confusing parts were discussed by the two to reach the agreement. In the whole process of coding, the researcher and the coder consulted student drafts to better understand the conference interactions. Also, the course packet was used to identify RMK features by matching the meta-knowledge for each task with the related conference interactions.

Based on the coding results, overall distributions of discourse topics at the sequence level and negotiation-scaffolding features at the exchange level were analyzed across the four student participant cases. As the extent and initiation of interactions have been known to play an important role in featuring writing conferences, the mean length of each sequence and the agent of initiating moves were also counted. Then, each sequence of LREs was carefully re-examined, and the sequences with distinctive features were matched with the related subsequent revisions for more in-depth qualitative analysis on how the conference interactions contributed to making meaning to solve student problems in writing drafts. Comparisons between the conference interactions and subsequent revisions were also conducted in a reverse manner. When noteworthy subsequent revisions were observed, the related sequences were analyzed to get a meaningful insight on the languaging through writing conferences.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Features of Writing Conferences in Summary and Critical Review

Section 4.1. addresses the Research Question 1 about how to characterize features of the given classroom-based L2 writing conference about the two tasks of writing summary and critical review. To be more specific, distribution of discourse topics and interactional features of negotiation and scaffolding are discussed in in subsection 4.1.1. and 4.1.2., respectively.

4.1.1. Distribution of discourse topics

As for the relations between discourse topics and writing tasks, topic distribution appeared to be different between the two tasks. As shown in Table 2, in summary, topic distribution was inconsistent across the students. Conferences of two students (S2 and S4) produced content/rhetoric topics three times as many as language use topics. Conversely, the conference of S3 contained more language use related sequences than content/rhetoric sequences by three times (72.7% vs. 27.3%). The conference of S1 showed an even distribution of language use and content/rhetoric topics. However, topic distribution in critical review appeared to be more consistent: an even distribution of both topics was found in S2, S3, and S4. Only the case of S1 involved content/rhetoric related sequences three times as large as language use sequences (25% vs. 75%).

TABLE 2
Distribution of Discourse Topics Across Students and Tasks

	Student 1		Student 2		Student 3		Student 4	
	L	C/R	L	C/R	L	C/R	L	C/R
Summary	8	8	6	13	8	3	8	17
	50.0%	50.0%	31.6%	72.7%	72.7%	27.3%	32.0%	68.0%
Critical review	5	15	16	14	8	11	11	11
	25.0%	75.0%	53.3%	46.7%	42.1%	57.9%	50.0%	50.0%

Note. L = language use topics; C/R = content/rhetoric topics

Numbers are raw counts of exchanges and the percentages are indicated underneath.

The difference in topic distribution between the two tasks can be aligned with the finding of Yu (2020) that types of writing tasks played a significant role in the configuration of conference interactions when the same teacher and student engaged in multiple writing conferences about different tasks. The more balanced topical distribution in critical review could have associated with the instructional focus on content and rhetoric in critical review compared to that of summary as demonstrated in the course pack, presumably due to the inherent complexity of content and rhetoric in critical review. As Freedman and Sperling (1985) indicated early, the variations in writing conferences “signal the possibility of differential instruction” (as cited in Goldstein & Conrad, 1990, p. 445), which implies that classroom-based writing conference is reflective of the instructional objectives in the given classroom.

As for the relations between discourse topics and the mean sequence length (MSL), topic distribution significantly interacted with MSL, regardless of the task type, revealing a greater MSL in content/rhetoric topics than in language use topics. MSL of each conference session was calculated by dividing the total number of exchanges into the number of sequences. With approximately 3.5 exchanges in the overall MSL across the

four students, the MSL of language use sequences was substantially smaller than that of content/rhetoric sequences by 1.8 exchanges versus 4.65 exchanges on average. The result indicates that more extensive conference interactions were generally constructed about content/rhetoric topics than language use topics, which corresponds to the findings of Haneda (2004).

4.1.2. Interactional features of negotiation and scaffolding

Along with the difference in MSL between discourse topics, interactional features of negotiation and scaffolding were also differently distributed according to discourse topics in both tasks. As shown in Table 3, in summary, distribution of negotiation and scaffolding was different between language use sequences and content/rhetoric sequences. In language use sequences, more scaffolding exchanges than negotiation exchanges were observed; although the sequences of S1 and S3 revealed slightly lower ratio of 1:1.86 and 1:1.86, respectively, the sequences of the other two students showed more than twice greater scaffolding exchanges than negotiation exchanges. In content/rhetoric sequences, on the other hand, negotiation and scaffolding exchanges were more evenly distributed, although the conference of S3 showed relatively greater scaffolding exchanges to negotiation exchanges (1.75:1) than the rest of three. The more balanced ratios of negotiation to scaffolding in the sequences of rhetoric/content topics imply that more negotiation exchanges are constructed in the interactions about rhetoric/content than those of language use.

TABLE 3

Distribution of Negotiation and Scaffolding in Relation to Discourse Topics in Two Tasks

		Student 1		Student 2		Student 3		Student 4	
		N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
Summary	L	8 (1)	15 (1.86)	2 (1)	9 (4.5)	7 (1)	13 (1.86)	4 (1)	10 (2.5)
	C/R	15 (1)	17 (1.13)	24 (1)	27 (1.13)	4 (1)	7 (1.75)	45 (1)	33 (0.7)
Critical review	L	1 (1)	6 (6)	5 (1)	21 (4.2)	3 (1)	6 (2)	2 (1)	15 (7.5)
	C/R	29 (1)	36 (1.24)	21 (1)	46 (2.19)	34 (1)	32 (0.94)	25 (1)	39 (1.56)

Note. L = language use topics; C/R = content/rhetoric topics; N = negotiation; S = scaffolding
Numbers are raw counts of exchanges, and the ratio of negotiation and scaffolding is presented underneath in parentheses.

Similar tendency was found in the conference interactions of critical review. More scaffolding exchanges, twice greater to the least and more than seven times greater to the

most, were observed in language use sequences, while more balanced ratios of negotiation to scaffolding were found in content/rhetoric sequences.

This tendency of more extensive and balanced negotiation-scaffolding interface in the interactions about content and rhetoric issues may reflect the nature of writing tasks. Source-based writing such as summary and critical review involves “the recontextualisation of the original meanings into a new context” (Hood, 2008, p. 355). These meaning change processes dwelling in content/rhetoric knowledge often required extensive negotiation between the teacher and students to discuss how to interpret the source text and accommodate the comprehension into individual writing.

Speaking of detailed functional features of exchanges, CC was the most frequently observed negotiation feature with 161 occurrences out of total 229 negotiation exchanges (70.3%) as shown in Table 4. The predominant occurrences of CC type exchanges in negotiation interactions echo the influence of source-based writing tasks on constructing conference interactions, which necessitates extensive process of checking teacher-student mutual understanding about the source texts and student drafts for successful integration of sources into individual writing (Wette, 2018). Even if the source text and target rhetorical knowledge had been already examined and discussed in the classroom instruction, students’ (and the teacher’s) individual understanding of the source text and content/rhetorical knowledge was in a great diversity necessitating individualized recontextualization.

TABLE 4
Distribution of Negotiation and Scaffolding in Relation to Writing Tasks

		Student 1		Student 2		Student 3		Student 4	
		Sum	CrR	Sum	CrR	Sum	CrR	Sum	CrR
N	CC	18(5)	23(3)	14(1)	16(2)	8(4)	26(11)	35(23)	21(9)
	CR	3(2)	7(1)	12(7)	10(0)	3(2)	10(7)	12(4)	6(0)
	P	2(2)	0	0	0	0	1(1)	2(2)	0
S	R	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	MCF	9(0)	14(0)	9(0)	3(0)	4(0)	17(1)	7(3)	13(0)
	F	2(0)	2(0)	3(0)	7(0)	0	1(0)	2(0)	4(0)
	D	14(2)	26(1)	19(0)	57(3)	15(1)	19(4)	32(3)	34(10)
	RMK	6(0)	0	5(0)	0	1(0)	1(0)	2(0)	2(0)

Note. N = negotiation; S = scaffolding; Sum = summary writing task; CrR = critical review writing task; CC = comprehension/confirmation checks; CR = clarification requests; P = problematizing; R = recruiting interest; MCF = marking critical features; F = controlling frustration; D = demonstrating an idealized version; RMK = reminding meta-knowledge.

Numbers are raw counts of exchanges. The number of student initiated exchanges is in the parentheses.

In scaffolding interactions, D and MCF were the most common features occupying 65.1% (216 occurrences) and 22.9% (76 occurrences) of total scaffolding exchanges (total

332 occurrences), respectively. Such extensive occurrences of D and MCF in scaffolding exchanges correspond to the results of Ewert (2009), while Ds were remarkably more frequent than MCFs in the present data. Considering that the teacher dominantly initiated scaffolding moves (91.57%, 304 exchanges out of 332 exchanges), teacher's personal preference to demonstration for scaffolding help might account for the predominant occurrence of Ds.

Meanwhile, students were found to more actively initiate negotiation exchanges by 37.55% (86 exchanges out of 229 exchanges). Except P, which was inherently initiated by students, both CC and CR involved an almost similar proportion of student-initiated exchanges by approximately 36%. Compared to students' marginal initiation in scaffolding exchanges by less than 9%, student initiations in negotiation exchanges were notably frequent, which also illustrates the student efforts to enhance the mutual understanding about the source text and student drafts with the teacher for successful revision.

4.2. Meaning-Making via L2 Writing Conference Interactions

In-depth analyses of the L2 writing conferences and subsequent revisions revealed dynamics of meaning-making via languaging of L2 writing conference interactions. In this section, several examples of common and noteworthy interactional sequences are demonstrated along with the related subsequent revisions: negotiation-scaffolding interface interactions in Subsection 4.2.1., non-negotiated scaffolding interactions in Subsection 4.2.2., and extensively-negotiated but problem-unresolved interactions in Subsection 4.2.3.

4.2.1. Negotiation-scaffolding interface interactions

The current writing conference interactions were featured by extensive (scaffolding-) negotiation-scaffolding sequences, which contributed to resolving student problems and successful subsequent revisions, as suggested by Ewert (2009). In the negotiation-scaffolding interface, negotiation exchanges served as the basis for subsequent scaffolding from the teacher. Excerpt A demonstrates how S3 and the teacher (T) increased S3's understanding of content/rhetoric knowledge and co-constructed a more appropriate L2 representation to describe a character of the fiction in summary writing. The interaction was triggered by T indicating the expression of "filling with mysteries" in the sentence of draft; "Jen meets a woman filling with mysteries trying to make her purchase a man". In response, S3 spontaneously explained that the expression was to represent the features of "Jen" being like a witch who has a lot of secrets. After checking the feature in the source text, T acknowledged the expression and finished the negotiation.

However, S3 brought up the issue again by initiating a negotiation exchange about revising the expression, as can be seen in Line 1 in Excerpt A. Comprehension and confirmation check on student-proposed revisions was a typical type of student-initiated negotiation moves in the present data. The proposed revision in Line 1 directly reflects S3's explanation in the prior negotiation exchange. In response to the proposed revision, T started scaffolding in Lines 7-10 by marking critical features of the expression that confused T herself and thus might confuse the readers of the summary, and finalized the sequence by acknowledging the student proposed revision.

Excerpt A

- 1 S3: OK Can I use Um Jen meets a woman who looks like a witch ↑
 2 T: Yes ↑ yes ↑
 3 S3: So instead of this
 4 T: Right ↑ right
 5 S3: A little Um un..uncomfortable.
 6 T: Yes yes ▲ uncomfortable
 7 ▲ Filling with mysteries What does that mean↑
 8 So yes after you explain it to me I can understand
 9 but your reader will be little bit confused
 10 ▲▲ What does that mean↓ Filling with mysteries.
 11 Yes but you say Oh look like a witch. Then OK she is that type of woman
 12 who has a kind of supernatural power
 13 S3: Yes
 14 T: Not just general mysteries.
 15 S3: Yes
 16 T: OK that would be fine. That would be much better.

Noteworthy evidence of languaging in these two discontinuous sequences is observed in two folds. First, T enhanced her own understanding of the source text by problematizing the student expression and solving the student problem. Considering that T did not give S3 her complete acknowledgement of the expression until she had checked the relevant information in the source text, T herself seemed not to be confident about the adequacy of S3's representation of the character at first. Second, S3 did not realize the possible confusion in understanding the original expression of "filling with mysteries" until T pointed it out during the conference talk. This realization made S3 feel "uncomfortable" in keeping the expression and initiated negotiation exchanges later to revise it. The successful languaging via extensive negotiation-scaffolding interface interactions brought in the following subsequent revision: "a woman, who looks like a witch".

4.2.2. Non-negotiated scaffolding interactions

Unlike the apparent languaging in the negotiation-scaffolding interface interactions, some conference interactions did not reveal tangible languaging in non-negotiated scaffolding interactions but resulted in successful revisions. Possible sources of these successful revisions are demonstrated in Excerpt B. First, student background knowledge in basic L2 linguistic rules seemed to enable successful subsequent revisions for relevant student problems. Excerpt B contains two sequences about grammatical issues (“meet” and “attract”), and two sequences about content issues (“the wrong turning” and “Stella”) in the following summary draft from S2 (The target expressions are marked in bold).

Janet Fox’s story “Garage Sale” (*100 Great Fantasy Short Stories*, 1984) takes place inside a garage sale where Jen **meet** the witch and her future husband in a summer afternoon. **The wrong turning** makes **Stella attract** by the garage sale, though Jen isn’t interested in.

The sequence about “meet” was initiated by T’s demonstration of the correct verb form of “meets” with the 3rd person singular subject in Line 17. S2 accepted T’s demonstration with an exclamation of “Ah” without negotiation, which strongly suggests that she had already known the target linguistic rule, then copied the demonstration to the subsequent revision. When it comes to “attract”, the problem was also resolved by T’s demonstration of correct passive complement form, “attracted” in Line 38, and S2’s acknowledgement of her error with laugh (Thonus, 2008) in Line 39. This sequence, meanwhile, brought about an interesting subsequent revision by replacing “attract by the garage sale” with “leads Jen towards the garage sale”. Such brief scaffolding sequences were often observed in the interactions about language use topics such as basic grammar or mechanics. As the ESL student participants had extensive L2 educational background in their home countries, they could readily grasp the nature of scaffolding on basic L2 knowledge without class instruction. In this way, a simple scaffolding move from T induced instant student acknowledgement during the conference interactions and successful student uptake of T’s corrections to the subsequent revisions.

Excerpt B

- 17 T: “takes place inside in a garage sale” where Jen meets↑
 18 S2: Ah yeah
 19 T: “the witch↑ and her future husband in one summer afternoon.” Yeah OK
 20 “The wrong turn it makes Stella attracts by garage sale.”
 21 Uhm OK (pause) Maybe you need some extra information about Stella.

- 22 S2: Stella.
- 23 T: Yeah, because you didn't mention (pause) her in your first sentence.
- 24 So you can add some information like ah Jen's friend.
- 25 S2: Jen's friend
- 26 T: Yeah, or Jen's accompany. Yeah, Jen's company.
- 27 S2: OK (nodding)
- 28 T: "The wrong turn" "wrong turn" (pause) "wrong turn" (pause) "wrong turn"
- 29 Because Uhm it does not provide any information of the setting
- 30 Because they they were driving
- 31 S2: Yeah
- 32 T: But in this sentence
- 33 S2: Yeah
- 34 T: We don't know. Yeah. It's like they make a wrong turn in in walking ↑
- 35 S2: Ah (Nodding)
- 36 T: Yeah, so you need some information like driving.
- 37 S2: Uh huh
- 38 T: make Stella *attracted*
- 39 S2: Yeah (laugh)

Second, classroom instruction appeared to help the students to understand and acknowledge T's scaffolding about content/rhetoric issues. The sequence in Lines 21-27 deals with introducing one of the main characters, "Stella", in the source text. T used various scaffolding moves of guiding S2 to provide more information about the character to help readers understand the summary: a directive in Line 21, marking a critical feature in Line 23, and demonstration in Lines 24 and 26. This sequence resulted in student uptake in the revision, "Jen's friend, Stella". The following sequence in Lines 28-37 was also about the content of summary, introducing the setting of fiction. T extensively marked the critical features this time through Lines 29-36 about insufficient information about the setting, and completed her scaffolding with demonstration in Line 36 of adding proper information. This sequence resulted in replacing "the wrong turn" with "drives the wrong direction" in the subsequent revision.

In both sequences, S2 acknowledged all teacher scaffolding moves without any trials of negotiation. Considering that the two elements of fiction, setting and characters, had been already covered in the classroom instruction before the writing conference, the non-negotiated student acceptance of teacher's scaffolding should be attributed to the nature of classroom-based writing conferences, which is featured by shared target knowledge between the teacher and students leading to the successful agreement in the lack of extensive negotiation.

These successful revisions by reflecting teacher's demonstration correspond to the "nonnegotiated successful revision" (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990, p. 454), which was attributed to specific instructions on simple mechanical revisions. However, the findings in this study suggest that student-shared target knowledge, whether from their background knowledge or classroom instruction, also contributes to non-negotiated successful revisions. One thing also noteworthy is that student autonomy interplays in the revisions. It is well illustrated in S2's dropping T's demonstration of "attracted" in the subsequent revision and generating her own revision by using a different word and sentence structure. It shows that S2 did not make mechanical revisions blindly following T's specific scaffolding instructions, but integrated her own decision into the subsequent revisions. In this respect, the success in nonnegotiated revisions might not necessarily require the specificity of instructions or the simplicity of target knowledge. When students fully understand and acknowledge the nature of teachers' scaffolded help as in the case of S2, they are able to make complex and autonomous revisions even without extensive negotiation with teachers. This student autonomy mirrors the current philosophy of writing conference that "focuses on the change of the writers" (Kim, 2018, p. 110).

In addition, as Williams (2004) claimed, certain types of scaffolding strategies lead to successful revision and identified the features of those strategies. Two of the features, "clarification of critical features" and "modeling" by tutor (Williams, 2004, p. 190), are directly associated with the most frequent scaffolding strategies in the present study, MCF and D. The teacher's prevalent use of these strategies is thought to set the ground of student uptake in the revision. Along with the student shared knowledge from the classroom instruction, these interactional features account for the successful student revision driven by non-negotiated scaffolding exchanges.

4.2.3. Extensively-negotiated but problem-unresolving interactions

As opposed to frequent successful revisions with extensive negotiation exchanges in the present data, some extensive negotiation did not lead to successful revisions or successful meaning making. For example, S4 and T had extensive negotiation about the following sentences in her second draft of critical review.

There are two reasons why Jen wants to buy the husband. The first one is Jen cannot get a husband in a normal way, because she is not a social person, she don't even talk a lot (Fox, 103). The other one is because she don't want to see the innocent man die when she leave (Fox, 103).

With regard to the two reasons suggested by S4, T questioned the first reason indicating

that it was not the cause but the result of the character's purchase of husband in the story, as illustrated in Excerpt C. T marked the critical feature in Line 45, and S4 and T went through extensive negotiation exchanges about the interpretation of the text.

Excerpt C

- 40 T: Yeah. There is no definite reasons↑
 41 "cannot get a" Oh, OK, this is a misinter misunderstanding. (Underlining)
 42 The thing that you found the evidence that because Jen had no luck to have
 43 Uhm, this part. (Pointing out the text)
 44 "hadn't had a much luck to getting the husband in a usual way"
 45 So that is the result. That is not the reason why she bought him.
 46 S4: Oh, is this kind of some kind of xxxx by this↑
 47 T: Uh huh
 48 S4: Like is not that important but xxxx just a part of reason.
 49 But if she can get a husband or get a boyfriend.
 50 T: Uh huh
 51 S4: then she will not thinking about buying that.
 52 T: Uhm But, yeah, that's possible. That's definitely possible.
 53 But for that interpretation, you need the evidence↑
 54 But is there any evidence that she's not social here↑
 55 S4: She's quiet↑
 56 T: Quiet↑
 57 S4: Or luck getting a husband unusual way
 58 T: OK, that's what I am talking about. It is the result.
 59 Because Jen bought the husband↑ in a garage sale,
 60 that's why the author said she hadn't had much luck to getting a husband
 61 the usual way. That's why she talked about it.
 62 This is not the reason why she decided to buy her husband. This is a result.

In Lines 43-44, T checked the source text for scaffolding; the expression that the character, Jen, hadn't had a much luck to getting the husband in a usual way was the result of her buying a husband, not the reason in the story. Then, S4 explained that it was not the major reason, and Jen's character of not being social was more important in her argument in Lines 46-51. As S4 shifted the issue, T followed up in Line 52 with negotiating moves in Lines 53-54. Talking about the textual evidence about Jen's character, S4 returned to the problematic expression in Line 57, reflecting her interpretation that Jen's lack of luck to getting the husband in a usual way was the reason for her buying a husband. Problematizing the interpretation, T returned to and elaborated her original scaffolding in

Lines 58-62. Nonetheless, the gap in the interpretation between T and S4 was not bridged even after this extensive scaffolding-negotiation interface. In the following exchanges after Excerpt C, S4 revolved on her perspective on the first reason by saying that: “This is part of the reason because She can’t find it, don’t have a look, she never got one. So it’s cause why she herself just thinking about to buy her husband.” T finally acknowledged S4’s interpretation and guided her to add more discussion into her revision. However, S4 was found to delete all those three sentences in her revision.

The student decision to drop the original expressions, along with the unsuccessful meaning-making during the conference interactions, reflects the failure of resolving the student problem. According to the three-stage revision process (Williams, 2004), the given sequence sustained at the first two stages of evaluation and diagnosis of the problem, not going further to explore and evaluate alternatives to improve the student draft at the final stage of revision. S4 could have undertaken the final stage on her own, but decided to drop the whole idea by deleting the part in her revision. Although deletions are considered to be one of the revision types in the literature (see Faigley & Witte, 1981), deletions as revision changes usually accompany equivalent alternatives (in meaning changes) or explicit inferential cues (in meaning-preserving changes). Considering that the conference interactions did not tackle possible alternatives for meaning changes, S4’s deletion is more likely to be reflective of her struggle to the problem, not a resolution in any forms.

In this regard, extensive negotiation as in the case of Excerpt C does not always stimulate immediate meaning making to resolve problems and successful revision. It is the case especially when the negotiation revolves around the disparity in opinions or understanding between teachers and students. Too much laborious or conflicting negotiation hardly sets the ground for the follow-up teacher scaffolding for successful joint construction of meaning or subsequent revision. Accordingly, the common belief on the positive relations between extensive negotiation and successful revision (e.g., Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Williams, 2004) needs to be carefully reconsidered. The findings suggest that the quality of negotiation significantly matters (Horowitz & Wilburn, 2017) concerning its influence on subsequent revision rather than the quantity.

Thus, a more careful interpretation is called for about the relations between conference interactions and subsequent revisions. As Excerpt C illustrated, the lack of negotiation about solutions for student problems might result in students’ abandoning the problems, no matter how extensively the problematic issues were negotiated. Any potential contribution of extensive negotiation to making meaning and successful revision can be realized only when it is appropriately ranged across detection, diagnosis, and correction of the target problems. Compared to Excerpt C, the student initiated negotiation exchanges in Excerpt A centered on the student’s check on her own proposal of revision. Student participation in these exchanges is qualitatively differential from that of Excerpt C in that the student

devoted herself to elaborating or asserting her existing understanding. Even though both interactions gave rise to making meaning at any rate, only the former encompassed problem-solving process. The latter was committed to the detection and diagnosis, not the solution, of the problem, which derived from the misunderstanding between the teacher and the student. In this regard, conference interactions should be thoroughly examined in terms of its properties, not simply its length.

5. CONCLUSION

This case study in an intact ESL composition class investigated how L2 classroom-based writing conferences about two different tasks are characterized and interact with solving student problems in writing from the perspectives of languaging. The interactional features of writing conferences were found to interact with the writing tasks in terms of topic distribution. In the task of writing critical review, the issues about content and rhetoric were more discussed than those of language use. The analysis of MSL showed more extensive exchanges about the topics of content and rhetoric than those about the topics of language use. On the other hand, the writing tasks did not interact with the configuration of negotiation and scaffolding in the conference interactions. In both tasks, scaffolding was dominant in the topics of language use while it was balanced with negotiation in the topics of content and rhetoric. The most frequently observed feature of negotiation was comprehension/confirmation check, the moves of which were much more actively initiated by the students than in scaffolding. The teacher predominantly used the strategies of demonstrating an idealized version and marking critical features for scaffolding. The qualitative analyses of conference interactions in terms of making meaning and subsequent revisions revealed that non-negotiated scaffolding interactions led to making meaning as successfully as extensive interactions of negotiation-scaffolding interface did. It was also found that even very extensive negotiations cannot succeed making meaning to resolve student problems.

The significance of these findings is twofold. First, the nature of classroom-based L2 writing conferences was better manifested in this study by incorporating the notion of languaging. From the perspective of languaging, conference interactions per se are one of the external manifestations of making meaning on its own, not merely a means of it, which represents the nature of writing conferences to “instruct writing by talk” (Kim, 2018, p. 109). While the meaning making through conference interactions has been conceptualized largely by the overarching Vygotskian socio-cultural perspectives in learning (Kim, 2018; Yu, 2020), the concept of languaging materializes the role of language in language learning by focusing on solving the problems about language, so that your language means “what

you want it to mean” (Swain, 2006, p. 96) in L2 writing. Relevant future works would thus answer the call for “applying experimental research about languaging to authentic classroom pedagogy” (Niu & Li, 2017, p. 1227), and fill the gap of knowledge in oral languaging in L2 classroom-based writing conferences.

Second, the findings helped to better understand dialogic features of L2 classroom-based writing conference interactions. To extend the dialogic features of teacher talk in writing conferences by Ewert (2009), this study demonstrated how the interfaces of negotiation and scaffolding vary in the situated tutor-tutee collaboration, and how different interfaces interact with subsequent student revisions. In particular, the findings suggest dynamics of context-specific factors inherent in L2 classroom-based writing conferences including student backgrounds, writing tasks, and classroom instruction, particularly addressing the lack of research on the influence of writing tasks on writing conferences. This dynamics provides important cues to understand the interactional features of situated L2 classroom-based writing conferences, thereby giving insight into improving the conference practice. It should thus be further scrutinized in various contexts with various participants in future work.

Applicable levels: Tertiary

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APPENDIX

Transcription Symbols

↑: rising intonation at end of utterance

↓: falling intonation

XXXX: undecipherable

▲: more volume

▲▲: greatly increased volume

▼: less volume

vowel+: elongated vowel

*: voice, pitch, or style change

words: boundaries of voice, pitch, or style change

┌: line 1

: overlap

└: line 2

Nonverbal behavior or transcriber comments for clarification purpose within parentheses.